



**KNOWLEDGE SHARING USING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN IMPROVING
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT TAI SOLARIN
UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how knowledge sharing through the use of social media platforms has influenced the academic performance of undergraduate students, and to investigate the extent to which knowledge sharing on these platforms has improved their academic performance. The study was carried out at Tai Solarin University of Education. The survey research design was adopted. Subjects were drawn from the Tai Solarin University of Education, using the simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling. Research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The sample comprised of 200 students, and questionnaire was used to collect data, which were analyzed by use of qualitative and quantitative techniques. The findings revealed that a great number of students in Tai Solarin University of Education had access to the internet. Also, there is no statistically-significant difference in the use of social media application between the male and the female in improving their academic performance. Finally, positive influence is significantly more than the negative influence of the usage of social media application on students' behavior. The study recommended that social media websites be created for strict educational purpose to create a balance between social networking and academic work of students to guide against unnecessary failure in the academic performance of undergraduate students.

KEYWORDS: *Knowledge sharing, Social media, Academic performance, Undergraduate students*

Introduction

The introduction of modern technology in communication has no doubt turned the entire world into a "Global Village. Technology itself is like two sides of a coin, because it brings along with it, negative and positive sides: helps people to be better informed, enlightened, and kept abreast with world developments. It also exposes mankind to a better way of doing things. Social media has become one of the most important communication means in recent times, thus, social networking exist to provide communication among people regardless of the distance, making it easier for people 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 buddies and co-workers so easily and effectively. It also strengthens the ties between people of those systems. The favorite in the realm of Internet social sites are Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram and others. These websites and social forums are way of communicating directly with other people socially and in media. They are playing a large and influential role decision-making in the occasions from the global world economically, politically, socially and educationally. Experience has shown

that no advent of technology had ever left the society the same, the technological advancement in the communication sector is not an exception.

Majias (2005) observed that people use social networking sites for analyzing and sharing information, reflection, establishing and maintaining spontaneous social contacts and relationships and supporting informal learning practices. Social networking sites are considered to play an active role in younger generation's daily lives (Lenhart, 2009), as most of the active users are students of tertiary institutions. Against this backdrop, social networking sites have become excellent tools for communication and could be adopted socially and collaboratively between learners and teachers as well as amongst students. For instance, Asabere (2012) noted that current ICT trends are providing accessibility to online services such as social networks and these enable collaboration amongst students and contribute a lot to social learning activities. Students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria are keying into the limitless opportunities. The rapid growth of this technology has improved and enabled collaborative and learning activities especially because of its high level of interactivity, accessibility and affordability.

However, exposure and use of these networks tend to have both positive and negative implications on the students. Oye, Helou and Rahim (2012) buttress this in their assertion emanating from their findings that "as a result of more time being dedicated to the use of social networking sites for non-academic usage and less time to academic usage by students, it tells considerably on what becomes their academic output". In view of this, the use of social networking sites has raised dust among researchers. Some see it as distraction to learning for the students as it involves multitasking, while others attest to the potentials of social network sites for learning. There are also those who argue that young adult learners view and use social networking sites as a platform for socializing more than learning.

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that undergraduate students put more concentration and attention to social media platforms than they do to their academics. With its advent, social media has glaringly reduced the time that undergraduate students dedicate for academics. Invariably, this is resulting in low performance in their studies and causing a lot of loopholes and challenges. Therefore, this study will proffer solution to the question raised in the study: how can knowledge sharing through the social media platforms influence the academic performance of undergraduate students?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

- 1) examine how knowledge sharing through the use of social media has influenced the academic performance of undergraduate students at the Tai Solarin University of Education;
- 2) determine the length of time that undergraduate students spend on social media networking activities daily;
- 3) identify the social media websites the undergraduate students had access to for knowledge sharing and;
- 4) examine how often the undergraduate students surf the Internet for information.

Research Questions

- 1) How has knowledge sharing through the use of social media influenced the academic performance of undergraduate students at the Tai Solarin University of Education?
- 2) How many hours do the undergraduate students spend on social networking activities on daily basis?
- 3) What social media websites do the undergraduate students have access to for knowledge sharing?
- 4) How often do the undergraduate students surf the Internet for information?

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: There will be no significant difference in the effective usage of social media application between the male and female in improving academic performance.

H0₂: There will be no significant difference between positive influence and negative influence of the use of social media application and knowledge sharing on the behavior of undergraduate students.

Review of Related Literature

Social media is that means that employs mobile and web based technology to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and community share, co-create, discuss and modifies users' generated content (Kietzmann, 2012). Social networks are increasingly gaining momentum in the world of information and communication. It has without doubt altered the conventional method of news gathering and dissemination, a confirmation of what seems to be paradigm shift from print and broadcast media to the more effective and efficient rave of the moment. Social networking has indeed played a pivotal role in information and communication in Nigeria in recent years. The increased use of Social Networking Websites has become an international phenomenon in the past several years. What started out as a hobby for some computer literate people has become a social norm and way of life for people from all over the world (Boyd, 2007). Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and showcase their social lives (Boyd, 2007).

According to Paulin and Suneson (2012), while quoting Schwartz (2006) 'Knowledge sharing is defined as the exchange of knowledge between and among individuals, and within and among teams, organizational units, and organizations. This exchange may be focused or unfocused, but it usually does not have a clear a priori objective. An exchange of knowledge between two individuals: one who communicates knowledge and one who assimilates it. In knowledge sharing, the focus is on human capital and the interaction of individuals'. Many people actively participate in content generation and value creation, and several researchers (Young, Dutta & Dommetty, 2009; Vasalou, Joinson & Courvoisier, 2010.) have examined their profiles to determine why and to what extent they are keen on posting their entire identity, sharing pictures and videos, and indicating their religious affiliations, marital status, and political orientations on the Internet. In September, 2005, out of total adult Internet users (18-29 years), 16% were those who were using one or more social networking site and this percentage increased to 86% on May, 2010 (www.marketingcharts.com).

Shah, Kwak & Holbert (2001) proposed that students are affected by the Internet and this impact is determined by the type of Internet usage. They are positively affected by the informative use of Internet while having drastic impact of recreational use of Internet facilities. Also, Oskouei (2010) proposed that Internet is advantageous to both students and teachers if used as a tool of knowledge creation and dissemination. Several studies have been done regarding social networking and students' grades. Whittemore School of Business and Economics (2014) recently conducted a survey of over 1,000 students. They asked questions regarding which social network sites were used, how much time they spent on a site, what their grade point average (GPA) was, and what they were going to school for. It was concluded that there is no correlation between how much time is spent on a social networking site and students' grades (Martin, 2009).

The University of New Hampshire agrees, and believes that current college students grew up in the technology era and social networking is now just a part of a student's daily routine. Their research show that '63% of heavy users received high grades, compared to 65% of light users' (Jabr, 2010). The University of New Hampshire said that a majority of students use social networking for social connections and entertainment, but are also using it for education and professional reasons. Kirschner (2009) revealed that students who multi-task between social networking sites and homework are likely to have 20% lower grades than a student who does not have a social networking site in visual range. Enriquez (2010) believes that even running a social networking site on the background on a student's PC while studying or doing homework could lower a student's grade. He believes that "the problem is that most people have Facebook or other social networking sites, their e-mails and maybe instant messaging constantly running in the background while they are carrying out their tasks". American Educational Research Association (2004, p5) conducted a research and it was

declared on its annual conference in San Diego, California (2009) that SNSs users study less and generated lower grades eventually (21stcenturyscholar.org). Similarly, Banquil, Chuna, Leano, Rivero, Bruce, Dianalan, Matienzo & Timog (2009) found a continuing drop of grades among student users of social networking sites. However, many researchers also found a positive association between the use of Internet and SNS and academic performance of the student users. Students, using Internet frequently, scored higher on reading skills test and had higher grades as well (Linda, Alexander, Frank, Gretchen, Yong, & Hiram, 2006). The advent of social network platforms may also be impacting on the way in which learners engage with technology in general. A national survey in 2009 found that 37% of online teenagers use social networking site which increased to 55% three years later (Len Hart, Purcell, Smith & Zickuhr, 2010). It has also shown that it provides opportunity within professional education but however, there are constraints in such areas.

Methodology

The study used survey method approach and employed the natural-science inquiry paradigm. The paradigm portrays that there is a reality out there which is tangible, stable and apprehensible; and can be investigated independent of the researcher by observing, experimenting on a large number of participants resulting in the finding that can be analyzed statistically and pruned for the purpose of generalization. The study was conducted among two hundred participants made up of undergraduate students of Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State. Out of the 200 participants, 110 were males and 90 were females. The respondents' age ranged between 16-20 years, 21-30 years and thirty-one years and above. Students were asked to write their exact age. With regard to students' educational level, 36 were in 100 level; 61 in 200 level, 47 in 300 level, while 56 are in 400 level. Stratified sampling was used to select the respondents. This type of sampling requires each stratum to be represented in the research. From each department, which took part, the researcher had to identify relevant strata and their actual representation in the population. Then random sampling was used to select participants from each stratum.

After the collection of data, the results were analyzed with the use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and the result shown in tables with corresponding frequencies and percentage. After the distribution of the questionnaire, two hundred copies were retrieved. This gave a response rate of 95.5%, which was representative of the sample. The impressive response rate was obtained because the data was collected during lecture hours in the various departments. Respondents were given between 20-30minutes to complete the questionnaires.

Results and Discussions

When the questionnaires have been duly completed a total of two hundred copies was used for the final analysis. These results were interpreted and used for the presentation of findings.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage%
Male	110	55.0%
Female	90	45.0%
Total	200	100%

Table 1 shows that 110(55.0%) of the respondents are males while their female counterparts are 90(45.0%). Thus, the result reveals that male respondents constitute the highest in the study population.

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage%
16 - 20	53	26.5%
21 - 30	92	46.0%

Above 31	55	27.5%
Total	200	100.0%

Table 2 shows that 53(26.5.0%) of the respondents are between the ages of 16-20, 92(46.0%), and 55(27.5%) above the age of 17. Hence, those respondents who are between 21-30 constitute the highest in the study population.

Table 3: Distribution of the Respondents by Level

Level	Frequency	Percentage%
100	36	18.0%
200	61	30.5%
300	47	23.5%
400	56	28.0%
Total	200	100.0%

Table 3 shows that 36(18.0%) out of the total respondents were in 100 level, 61(30.5%) in 200 level, 47(23.5%) in 300 level, while 56(28.0%) in 400 level. Furthermore, those respondents in 200 level constitute the highest in the study population.

Table 4: Number of Hours Spent on the Social Network Sites on Weekly Basis

Hours	Frequency	Percentage%
1-3	11	5.5%
4-6	35	17.5%
6-10	56	28.0%
> 10	98	49.0%
Total	200	100.0%

Table 4 shows that 11(5.5%) of the respondents spent 1-3 hours on social network sites weekly, 35(17.5%) 4-6 hours, and 98(49.0%) more than 10 hours on social network sites weekly. Hence, those respondents who spent more than ten hours weekly on social network sites constitute the highest in the study population.

Table 5: Distribution Respondents on the Most Often Visited Social Network Sites

Social network sites	Frequency	Percentage%
Face book	86	43.0%
Twitter	12	6.0%
You tube	69	34.5%
2go	30	15.0%
Others	3	1.5%
Total	200	100.0%

Table 5, shows that 86(43.0%) use Facebook often, 12(6.0%) use Twitter, 69(34.5%) use Youtube more often, 30(15.0%) use 2go, while 3(1.5%) use other form of social network sites, which include Imo, Badoo and Whatsapp. However, the outcome of the result reveals that those respondents that use facebook constitute the highest in the study population.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents on the Purposes for using Social Network Sites

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage%
Making Friends	53	26.5%
Exchange Ideas	29	14.5%
Entertainment	32	16.0%
Searching for Information	49	24.5%
Learning	37	18.5%
Total	200	100.0%

Table 6 shows that 53(26.50%) of the respondents use the social network sites to make friends, 29(14.5%) for exchange of ideas, 32(16.0%) for entertainment, 49(24.5.0%) for searching for information, while 37(18.5%) use it for learning. However, the outcome of the result reveals that those respondents that use the social network sites for making friends constitute the highest in the study population.

H0₁: There will be no significant difference in the effective usage of social media application between the male and female in improving academic performance

Table 7: Summary Table of T-test for independent sample mean

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Crit-t	Cal-t.	DF	P
Male	120	49.12	7.63	1.96	1.25	198	>.05
Female	80	48.91	7.61				

Table 7 shows that there is no statistically significance difference in the use of social media application between the male and the female in improving their academic performance ($t=1.25^{**}$, $df=198$, $P>.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

H0₂: There will be no significant difference between positive influence and negative influence of the use of social media application and knowledge sharing on their behaviour.

Table 8: Summary Table of T-test for independent sample mean

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Crit-t	Cal-t.	DF	P
Positive Influence	138	39.9410	3.1193	1.96	2.091	198	<.05
Negative Influence	62	33.0682	2.2551				

Table 8 shows that the positive influence is significantly more than the negative influence of the usage of social media application on students' behaviour ($t=2.091^{**}$, $df=198$, $P<.05$). However, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.



Discussion of the Findings

In the discussion of the findings, a strong positive relationship exists between academic performance and the time spent SNSs. This indicates that more time spent on social media affects excellent academic performance. Therefore spending much time on social media contributes to low academic performance. Choney (2010), in looking at the time spend on Facebook and its effect on academic performance said a user of Facebook has an average “GPA of 3.06, while non users have an average GPA of 3.82”. In other words, the more use of social media on knowledge sharing, the less academic performance students will record. This implies students who use the social media sites frequently turn to perform poorly academically. San Miguel (2009), focused on the relationship between the use of Facebook and the academic performance of students. The findings indicated that more use of Facebook result in lower grades. In his study, the average Facebook user had a GPA of 3.0 to 3.5, while the non Facebook user had a GPA of 3.5 - 4.0. Also, the average Facebook user study for 1 – 5 hours per week, while the non Facebook user would study 11 – 15 hours per week.

Conclusion

The use of SNSs for knowledge sharing is growing rapidly daily by undergraduate students which has therefore called for the need by parents, school administrators and the general public to efficiently manage its usage by students so as not to inculcate bad behaviours through their use. It is therefore imperative to enlighten the students on how they can use the social network sites positively rather than stopping the students from their use.

Recommendations

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

- (1) SNSs should be expanded and new pages should be created institution of learning to enhance academic activities to avoid setbacks in the students’ academic performance.
- (2) The students should create a balance between chit-chatting and academic activities. More attention should be directed to research.
- (3) Students should be advised to limit the time they spend on social media sites per day and encourage them to rather substitute those hours to read novels and relevant academic books to improve their knowledge.
- (4) Students should be advised during orientation of the dangers of addiction to SNSs.
- (5) Lecturers should help the students to prepare ahead of the class by giving them the course content, and encouraging them to search for the topic on YouTube and learn about it. This will not only keep them busy, it will also make the class an interactive process during the actual teaching of the topic.
- (6) Parents should help to monitor the activities of their children on the social network sites, by giving words of advice, and occasionally checking their browsing history on the SNSs visited in order to ensure that they are not exposed to negative behaviours such as nude pictures and pornography.

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