

**SOCIAL MEDIA UTILISATION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, ILORIN, NIGERIA**

Saheed Olalekan YAHYA Ph. D.^{*1}; Taye IBRAHIM Ph. D.²

Department of Curriculum and Instruction,
School of Education, Kwara State College of Education (Technical),
P.M.B.001, Lafiagi, Kwara State, Nigeria

And

Ibrahim Ahmed KAREEM Ph. D.

Department of Curriculum and Instruction,
School of Education, Federal College of Education (Special),
Oyo, P.M.B. 1089, Oyo State Nigeria
E-mail: iaabdulkareem2009@gmail.com

Abstract

The study was a survey type using purposive and proportional sampling techniques to draw a sample of 300 undergraduates in 300 and 400 levels of the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria respectively. The main research instrument employed for data collection was researchers' designed questionnaire entitled utilization of social media among undergraduates in University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering twenty copies of the questionnaire to randomly selected undergraduates of Al-Himah University, Ilorin. Cronbach alpha reliability was used to check for the instrument's internal consistency which yielded 0.79 showing that the instrument was reliable. Four research questions were answered using frequency counts and percentages for research questions one to three and research question four answered using mean and rank order. Two hypotheses were generated and analysed with t-test for hypothesis one and ANOVA for hypothesis two. The findings of the study indicated that over 50% of the respondents subscribed to and used most of the social media listed, 129 (45%) of the respondents used social media for educational purposes, 98 (32.7%) of the respondents used social media for entertainment and 73 (24.3%) of the respondents used social media for socialization. It was recommended among others that: undergraduates should give priority to academic utilization of social media than to entertainment and socialization. Undergraduates from other discipline should emulate the medical, sciences, engineering and law undergraduates' habit of using social media for educational purposes than for entertainment and socialization.

Keywords: Social Media, Utilization, Undergraduates

Introduction

There are clear indications that many individuals, particularly the younger generation such as university undergraduates, use social media like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, imo etc. for everyday life information seeking. This has raised the fear of parents, administrators as well as the government about the potential threat such as misinformation and information overload this trend can pose to undergraduates because

of the ease and speed with which misinformation can be transmitted to a large audience. Many undergraduates lack the skill or motivation to properly seek and evaluate information. (Karlova& Fisher, 2013). Social media may also facilitate information seeking. Individuals can build social capital through social media (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007), which makes it easier to seek information and advice from weak ties or even virtual strangers worldwide which may result in better information seeking outcomes. For example, among international students, those who used SNS frequently are more likely to report that the information they found are useful in meeting their daily needs than did infrequent users (Sin & Kim, 2013).However, since social media offer both opportunities and challenges for information seeking, empirical studies are needed to investigate the extent of social media utilization among undergraduates of our contemporary world. Thus, the need for this study.

Concepts of Social Media

The definition of social media is the relationships that exist between network of people (Qingya, Wei & Yu, 2011). Social media emerged as a term frequently used to describe different types of electronic communication platforms. The availability of high-speed internet broadband connection with massive use of desktop computers, laptops, e-readers, tablets and smart phones enable millions of undergraduates to actively engage in social networking, text messaging, blogging, content sharing, online learning, and much more.

Social media, as defined by Bryer and Zavatarro (2011), are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies now include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms, and virtual worlds. Social Media Online (2011) defined social media as primarily internet-and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information by users. The term, according to Andreas and Michael (2010), referred to a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Web 2.0 was coined by Darcy DiNucci in 1999 to describe interactive social websites which allow users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue.

For simplicity purpose, social media is regarded as comprising online applications for social networking sites, social bookmarking and sharing tools, social citation tools, blogging and microblogging tools, virtual worlds, e-conference presentation sharing tools, audio and video tools, e-project management tools, and research and writing collaboration tools; primarily developed to foster user-centered social interaction.

Categories of Social Media used by Undergraduates

Social media could be categorized into eight areas that are inter-dependent by their mode of usage. Examples of sites listed are not exhaustive.

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Sylvia, Moonhee and Sangwon (2013) explained that social media includes a diversity of applications with different core functions and structures, it was further explained that the most popular and high-profile social media are:

Social Network Sites (SNSs): These allow people to create their own Web pages and then share contents and communicate with online friends. Unlike other social media, SNSs let users articulate their social networks by providing visible lists as well as traversing them easily (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Hence, rather than expanding networks to new people, offline acquaintances are the primary communication groups within SNSs and the main activities are based on relationship management. Best examples of SNSs are *Facebook*, *MySpace*, *Bebo*, and *Linked In*.

Weblog or blog: Is a web information sharing technology functioning as an online journal. Blogs have unique date entries about an issue with the most recent comments shown first in reverse chronological order composed of text, image, videos, commentary, and links to other Web sites. The contents are contributed by individuals or a group of both professionals and amateurs. Mayfield (2008) distinguished blogs from generic Websites in terms of tone, topic, and ease of inserting links and trackbacks. Moreover, blogs are easily subscribed through RSS technology. Popular blogs like *Huffingtonpost.com* reached over 5.6 million readers in 2009 (Lipsman, 2009).

Micro-blogging: This combines the characteristics of both SNSs and blogs; it allows users to write brief updates—up to 140 characters—through the mobile text message, Instant Messaging, and a desktop application (Mayfield, 2008). *Twitter* and *Jaiku* are examples of micro-blogging services, micro-blogging offer users an efficient means of sharing information about their activities and opinions

Wiki: It is a communication mechanism to create Web-based contents that require group collaboration (Mayfield, 2008). It allows users to easily create, modify, and disseminate information; anyone can participate in elaborating information as an author or editor. Due to the absence of an actual monitor for content quality, wikis sometimes contain inaccurate information which can be quickly halted and reversed to a previous version. *Wikipedia* is the most well-known example of wikis.

Forums or online message boards: It is the longest established form of social media that are usually developed with specific topics and interests such as music, car, and new gadgets, in mind (Mayfield, 2008). Rather than idle chats, dynamic debates, active advising, and news sharing on specific topics characterize online forums/message boards. This forum is commonly used in education; it is considered a virtual learning place that shares common interests and topics. Online forums are usually moderated by an administrator whose job is not to lead the discussion but to delete inappropriate contents or spam. The major difference between forums and blogs places on who are in charge of leading the sites; blogs are maintained by a clear owner while a forum is typically initiated by its members (Mayfield, 2008).

Content communities: It focuses on sharing a certain type of content, such as photo, video, music, and bookmark (Mayfield, 2008). Contents are easily shared by a networked

group with a tag to the content. *Flickr*, *YouTube*, and *del.icio.us* are widely known content communities for photos, videos, and bookmarks, respectively.

According to Sylvia, Moonhee and Sangwon (2013), a growing number of today's undergraduates often referred to as Net Generation students (those born between 1980 and 1989) consumed approximately 9 hours of social media per day with most of them using social network sites (SNS) with Blogging and Microblogging tools. Prensky (2001) described them to be heavily involved in computer games, email, the Internet, cell phones and instant messaging as parts of their lives. To Prensky, this group of students functions best when networked. They prefer games to serious work. The I Generation (those born between 1990 and 1999) even consume more time on social media particularly on chatting platforms such as Facebook Chat, 2GO and Google Chat than they do with their friends Face-to-Face. These two generations spend more time on social media than the Generation X (those born between 1965 and 1979) who spend approximately from 20 minutes to 3 hours on social media (Sin & Kim 2013). By implication, most undergraduates running full time programmes in Nigerian universities spend more time on social media than any other activity of the day, including academic work. In a study conducted by Junco and Cotten (2012) it was testified that large proportion of young people checks their Facebook when they first wake up, even before going to the bathroom. In other words, as students become addicted to social media, it split their attention, causing massive decrease in knowledge retention (Junco & Cotten, 2012).

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in the study:

Research Question One

Which Social media do undergraduates subscribe to and use?

Research Question Two

What do undergraduates use Social media for?

Research Question Three

What number of hours do undergraduates spend daily on Social media usage?

Research Question Four

What is the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media?

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: there is no significant difference in the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media based on gender

H₀₂: there is no significant difference in the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media based on their course of study

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The population for the study comprised all undergraduates of university of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria, while the target population consisted of 300 and 400 levels undergraduates of the University of Ilorin. The procedures used in selecting sample for this study were purposive and proportional sampling techniques. The purposive sampling method was used to select 300 level undergraduates from Faculties of Education, Sciences and Social Sciences as well as 400 level undergraduates from Medicine, Law and Engineering in University of Ilorin because they are not new in the school and not in their final year of their study. The proportional stratified sampling technique was adopted to select 150 respondents from four years courses and 75 respondents each from five years and six years course making a total of 300 respondents

Methodology

The research instrument that was used to gather the relevant data for this study was researchers–designed questionnaire titled “Questionnaire on Social Media Utilization among Undergraduates in University of Ilorin” with two sections. Section A deals with respondents’ personal information such as name of institution, department and academic level; while section B composed of list of Social media and 10 items questions which was formulated with multiple choice where respondents ticked (√) as appropriate for their response. Frequency counts and percentage, were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were analysed using t-test and ANOVA. After the administration and retrieval of the completed instrument, the questionnaire items were subjected to statistical analysis using Cronbach alpha reliability statistics to check for the instrument’s internal consistency. The Cronbach’s alpha value obtained for the reliability of the instrument was 0.79 at 0.05 level of significance.

Procedure for Data Collection and Data Analysis Techniques

The copies of the research questionnaire were administered to the university’s undergraduates through personal contact by the researchers to ensure the questionnaire items were properly filled without delay. The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected and data gathered from the questionnaire were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, t-test and ANOVA.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	166	55.3
Female	134	44.7
Total	300	100.0

Table 1 showed the percentage of the respondents by gender where that of male was 166 (55.3%) while that of the female was 134 (44.7%). It is evident from Table 1 that there were more male undergraduates who participated in the study than female students based on the sample selected for the study.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Course of Study

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Education	62	20.7
Sciences	43	14.3
Social Sciences	45	15.0
Medicine	75	25.0
Law	36	12.0
Engineering	39	13.0
Total	300	100.0

A glance at table 2 indicated that 62 (20.7%) of the respondents were education undergraduates, 43 (14.3%) were Sciences undergraduates, 45 (15%) were Social Sciences undergraduates, 75 (25%) of the respondents were Basic Medical Science undergraduates, 36 (12%) were law undergraduates and 39 (13%) were Engineering undergraduates.

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Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Academic level

Academic Level	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
300	150	50.0
400	75	25.0
500	75	25.0
Total	300	100.0

Table 3 revealed the percentage of respondents by academic level where 300 level undergraduates had 150 (50.0%) while those in 400 and 500 levels had 75 (25.0%) each.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 states that:

Which Social media do undergraduates subscribe to and use?

Table 4 presented data on the social media undergraduates subscribe to as well as the social media they use. From the 300 respondents, a total of 1132 subscribers and 1062 users were gathered, the detailed information is presented in table 4.

Table 4: The Social media students subscribe to and use

Social Media	Subscribe to		Use	
	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.
Facebook	300	100	286	95.3
Academia	222	74	200	66.7
Twitter	126	42	98	32.7
WhatsApp	300	100	300	100
Skype	46	15.3	40	13.3
YouTube	138	46	138	46
Total	1132		1062	

Table 4 showed that 300 (100%) of the respondents subscribed to Facebook, 222 (74%) subscribed to Academia, 126 (42%) subscribed to Twitter, 300 (100%) subscribed to WhatsApp, 46 (15.3%) subscribed to Skype and 138 (46%) subscribed to YouTube. It was also indicated in the Table that 286 (95.3%) of the respondents used Facebook, 200 (66.7%) used Academia, 98(32.7%) used Twitter, 300 (100%) used WhatsApp, 40 (13.3%) used Skype and 138 (46%) used YouTube.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 states that:

What do undergraduates use social media for?

Table 5 presents detailed information on data gathered on the purposes undergraduates use social media for. The purpose is classified as Educational, Entertainment and Socialization and presented in table 5 as thus:

Table 5: Different purposes undergraduates use social media for
Variables Purpose: Educational Entertainment Socialization

	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.
Education	15	5	25	8.3	22	7.3
Sciences	24	8	11	3.7	08	2.7
Social Sciences	15	5	20	6.7	10	3.3
Medicine	46	15.3	17	5.7	12	4
Law	15	5	12	4	09	3
Engineering	14	4.7	13	4.3	12	4
Total	129	43	98	32.7	73	24.3

Table 5 showed that 129 (43%) of the respondents uses social media for educational purposes, 98 (32.7%) of the respondents uses social media for entertainment while 73 (24.3%) of the respondents uses social media for socialization. However, it is clear from the table that medical as well as sciences undergraduates are the undergraduates who uses social media for educational purpose the most.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 states that:

What number of hours do students spend daily on social media usage?

Table 6 presented data on the number of hours students spend daily on social media usage. 300 respondents were sampled and the time spent was given as 45 minutes, 1 hour, 1 hour, 30 minutes and 2 hours, the respondents responses were presented in table 6.

Table 6: The number of time undergraduates spends daily on social media usage

Time	Frequency	Percentage
45 minutes	76	25.3
1 hour	162	54
1 hour, 30 minutes	52	17.3
2 hours	10	3.3
Total	300	100

Table 6 showed that 76 (25.3%) spent 45 minutes, 162 (54%) spent 1 hour, 52 (17.3%) spent 1 hour 30 minutes and 10 (3.3%) spent 2 hours daily on social media.

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Research Question 4

Research Question 4 states that:

What is the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media?

Feedback from the respondents on their intention to utilize social media were analysed as indicated in Table 7.

Table 7: Intention of Respondents to Utilize Social Media

S/N	Intention to Utilize Social Media	Mean (\bar{X})
1.	I wish to use social media to access personal information but not for academic purposes	2.49
2.	I would like to use social media to source for information on daily happenings	3.27
3.	I used social media majorly for interacting with friends and families	2.59
4.	I prefer to receive updates and news from social	2.90
5.	I will be more comfortable in using social media for social engagement	2.68
6.	I do not want to make use of social media for learning because of network that can fail anytime	2.90
7.	I prefer learning through social media than face-to-face method in the class	3.03
8.	I wish the use of social media become part of my daily routines to get information	2.90
9.	I use social media for keeping updated on political information globally	2.70
10.	Using social media will improve undergraduates' ability to express academic views without social and personal obligations	3.18
Grand Mean (\bar{X})		2.864

Table 7 revealed obviously that item 2 had the highest mean value of 3.27 indicating that respondents would like to use social media to source for information on daily happenings. This item was followed by item 10 which was the preference of respondents that using social media will improve ability to express academic views without social and personal obligations that had a mean score of 3.18. The mean scores of other items are shown on Table 7. However, the grand mean score for the intention of the respondents to use social media was 2.864. Hence, using 2.0 as the bench mark, it can be deduced that the respondents had a very strong intention to use social media.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: there is no significant difference on the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media based on gender

Data collected for testing hypothesis 1 were subjected to t-test and revealed the results in Table 8.

Table 8: t-test of Male and Female undergraduates' Intention to Utilize Social Media

Gender	No	\bar{X}	SD	df	T	Sig. (2- tailed)	Remark
Male	166	28.81	3.39	298	2.21	.03	Rejected
Female	134	28.31	4.07				
Total	300						

Table 8 indicated that $t(300) = 2.21, p = .03$. This means that the stated null hypothesis was rejected. This was as a result of the t-value of 2.21 resulting in .03 significance values which was less than 0.05 alpha value. By implication, the stated null hypothesis established that there was significant difference between male and female undergraduates' intention to utilize social media. In other words, male undergraduates had more intention to utilize social media than the female since the male had higher mean than the female as shown in Table 8.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: there is no significant difference on the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media based on their course of study

In order to test this hypothesis, the data collected were subjected to ANOVA test that yielded the results in Table 9.

Table 9: ANOVA of undergraduates' Intention on the Utilization of Social Media Based on Course of Study

Sources of Variance	Sum of square	df	Mean square	f	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	32.07	2	101.39	3.03	.000	Rejected
Within Groups	120.26	298	13.37			
Total	152.833	300				

Table 9 showed significant difference in undergraduates' intention to utilize social media based on course of study because $[F(2,298) = 3.03, p = .000]$ which implied that the null hypothesis was rejected due to the fact that the significant value (.000) was found to be less than the alpha value (0.05). This means that there was a significant difference among undergraduates' intention to utilize social media based on course of

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study. Thereafter, a further examination on the group difference was carried out using Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT), post-hoc test.

Table 10: Duncan Multiple Range Test Showing the Magnitude of Differences in Undergraduates' intention on the utilization of Social Media based on course of study

Area of Specialisation	Mean	N	Group	Duncan's Grouping
Education	21.11	80	3	C
Sciences	21.75	35	2	B
Social Science	21.00	35	4	D
Medicine	21.88	60	1	A
Law	21.00	43	4	D
Engineering	21.11	47	3	C

Table 10 showed the magnitude of differences in undergraduates' intention on the utilization of social media based on course of study. The information on the table revealed that group1 (Medicine) had mean score of 21.88 slightly different from group 2 (Sciences) with mean score of 21.75 and group 3 (Education and Engineering) with mean scores of 21.11 while group 4 (Social Science and Law) both have 21.00. Hence, it can be concluded that undergraduates from Medicine and Sciences contributed to the difference noted in the table 10 and thus had higher intention to utilize social media than Education, Social Science, Law and Engineering.

Discussion

Research question 1 was used to establish which social media undergraduates subscribe to and use. The result of the finding indicated that majority of the respondents subscribed to and used most of the social media under investigation. Research question 2 was used to confirm what undergraduates use social media for. The result of the finding indicated that educational purpose topped what undergraduates used social media for followed by entertainment and socialization respectively. Research question 3 was used to ascertain the number of hours undergraduates spend daily on social media usage. The result of the finding indicated that 25.3% spent 45 minutes, 54% spent 1 hour, 17.3% spent 1 hour 30 minutes and 3.3% spent 2 hours daily on social media. Research question 4 was used to find out the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media. The result showed that undergraduates have strong intention to use social media with

2.864 grand mean which is greater 2.0 bench mark. Significant difference on the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media based on gender was determined using hypothesis one. The result of the study established a significant difference between male and female undergraduates' intention to utilize social media with t-value of 2.21 resulting in .03 significance values which was less than 0.05 alpha value in favour of male undergraduates while the significant difference on the intention of undergraduates on the utilization of social media based on their course of study was determined using hypothesis two. The result revealed significant difference in undergraduates' intention to utilize social media based on course of study with $[F(2,298) = 3.03, p = .000]$, since the significant value (.000) was found to be less than the alpha value (0.05).

Since their introduction, social media have attracted millions of users and most importantly adolescents in various higher institutions of learning in the world today have embraced social media usage in their daily activities. However, it would be noted from the result of this paper that undergraduates particularly those in Basic Medical Sciences, Pure and Applied Sciences used social for educational purposes than entertainment and socialization while undergraduates from Engineering, Law, Education and Social Sciences used social media for entertainment and socialization than they did for educational purpose. Hence, undergraduates (Education and social sciences) are expected to give priority to the educational utilization of social media than for mere entertainment and socialization. Lecturers should build upon the positive attributes that social media have by encouraging undergraduates to join student groups and share educative information on the platform, lecturers can do this by giving classroom presentations and assignment on the platform and allow different opinions and comments on the posted topic, and later give verdict after going through students' comments and opinions.

Conclusion

The results of this study have shown that most of the undergraduates subscribed to and used most of these social media daily and stayed long on the platform for educational as well as entertainment and socialization. The media have the potential to distract undergraduates from studying and do other academic activities when not properly managed, but can also benefit undergraduates if managed appropriately by the lecturers as earlier stated.

Recommendations

Some of the recommendations are:

1. Undergraduates should give priority to academic utilization of social media than to entertainment and socialization.
2. Undergraduates should spend less time on social media platform especially if it is not for educational purpose and devote their time to class attendance and other academic works rather than spending it on social media.

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3. Undergraduates from other discipline should emulate the medical, sciences, engineering and law undergraduates' habit of using social media for educational purposes than for entertainment and socialization.

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