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Influence of Social Media Platforms on Students' Academic Engagement: At the Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare Bauchi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the influence of social media platforms on the academic engagement of NCE students at Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare, Bauchi State, Nigeria. The research employed a survey design, utilizing a questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. A sample of 200 NCE students from across different levels and schools within the college was randomly selected to participate in the study. The two research questions were answered using mean standard deviations, while the hypotheses were tested using chi-square statistics. The findings revealed a complex interplay between social media use and academic engagement. While students acknowledged the potential educational benefits of social media platforms and their value for communication and collaborative learning, excessive or improper use was found to have detrimental effects on academic engagement. Addiction to online social media, disproportionate time spent on these platforms compared to studying, and potential distractions from studying were identified as significant challenges. However, the study also highlighted the potential of social media to facilitate academic discussions and engagements, access educational resources, and develop social skills. Recommendations were made to implement digital literacy training, establish clear usage policies, invest in technological infrastructure, explore innovative pedagogical

approaches, and provide support systems to address issues such as addiction and time management. Overall, the study emphasized the need for a balanced approach to integrating social media into the academic sphere while mitigating potential risks and fostering responsible and effective use.

KEY WORDS: Social media, students' academic engagement

Introduction

The advent of the internet in the 1990s led to the major developments in the world of communication, one of which is the introduction of social networking sites (SNSs). Social networking sites is a web-based service that allows users to build either public or semi-public profiles within a controlled environment. The coming into being of these social networking sites, modernized the world of communication and today we celebrate its improvements ranging from education to entertainment. The evolution of the internet has led to its usage as the best medium of communication whereby two-third (2/3) of the internet worlds' population visit social networking sites (SNSs) thus serving as communication and connection tools. These networking sites are referred to as social media (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Social media therefore, exploded as a kind of online discourse which permits people to create contents, share them, bookmark them and network at an impressive rate. This has breached the gab that existed in communication where people had to rely exclusively on traditional methods such as letters and phone calls as a mode of getting in touch with friends and relatives. Today, communication is as easy as walking into a neighbor's residence to deliver a piece of information or vice versa through the use of social media. Social media is fast changing the public discourse in the society and is setting trends and agenda in topics that ranges from the environment and politics to technology and the entertainment industry (Asur & Huberman, 2010).

The motivating factors which have made the adoption of social media are the progressively universal access, convenience, functionality, and flexibility of social technologies. These factors have made the adoption of social media very easy and have enormously improved mankind's life by exposing him to different ways of creating and sharing information, in which students of higher institutions of learning are not an exception. However, research has ascertained the substantial existence of social media usage among students. Wiley and Sisson (2006) for instance argue that previous studies have found that more than 90% percent of tertiary school students use social networks. It is also found out that, students use social networking sites (SNSs) nearly sixty (60) minutes throughout the day as

part of their daily routine life (Nicole, Charles, and Cliff, 2007). In 2019, the number of social media users was 3.84 billion people, and every year this number is increasing at the rate of 9% (Global Digital Report 2019). People think that nowadays, social media does not belong to a particular sector of society, but has become part of the life of everyone, including students (Anser et al. 2020).

Accordingly, Student academic engagement represents both the time and energy students invest in interactions with others through educationally purposeful activities (Kuh, 2001). Nelson Laird and Kuh (2005) reported that students who use information technology for academics also have a higher likelihood of contributing and participating in active, academic collaboration with other students. This collaboration indicates that as engagement with technology increases, engagement with academics also increases, promoting a deeper connection between the students, educators, and course content (Mehdinezhad, 2011). By partaking in a community of learners, students become more engaged with the course content which increases the realization of popular learning outcomes, such as critical thinking and individual student development. Therefore, student engagement through social media can increase connections to create a virtual community that leads to better content learning, thereby improving their academic engagement.

The impact of social media on learning and teaching is increasingly considered and debated among higher education scholars, administrators, and stakeholders. Lynn et al., (2015) considered social media as one of the game-changers in the realm of learning and instruction.

As a result, this study aims to find out how social media platforms influence N C E students' academic engagement at the Aminu Saleh college of Education Azare, Bauchi state.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The internet is today the most important source of information and the growing dimensions of the use of social media by students cannot be underestimated. Social media platforms are therefore, used by many students to connect with their friends and relatives around the globe. It has consequently captured the attention of students, especially those in colleges of education, they are so engrossed in the platforms that they have almost forgotten about their academic engagements. When students become too engrossed in the use of social media, it affects their success in class and overall academic engagement. Why because they easily get tempted to pointless chatting and making new friends online, rather than what will be of benefit to them academically.

Likewise, it has been observed that students devote more attention and time to social media than they do for their studies and is undoubtedly hard for them to pass their examinations well if they do not learn (Osharive, 2015). Also, the study conducted by

Maya (2015), revealed that social media use contribute to lower academic engagement, low self-perceptions and less interest in college oriented carriers. Accordingly, many educators and parents are worried that their children and students are spending too much time using social media networks.

Furthermore, extracurricular and academic programs are also insufficient to some extent to accommodate certain students who are socially isolated due to social networking.

It is in this regard that this study seeks to investigate the influence of social media platforms on students' academic engagement; Aminu saleh college of education, Azare as a case study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to find out how social media influences N C E students' academic engagement at the Aminu Saleh college of Education Azare.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the problem identified two research questions are raised to guide this research. They are:

i. What are the negative influences of social media networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, tweeter, YouTube etc. on students' academic engagement of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare?
ii. What are the possible benefits of social media networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, tweeter, YouTube etc. on students' academic engagement?

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

A hypothesis is an assumption about relations between variables. The following hypotheses are generated by the researcher:

i. **Ho** There is no significant influence of use of social media platforms on the academic engagement among NCE students of Aminu Saleh College of Education, Azare.
ii. $\mathbf{H_1}$. There is a significant influence of use of social media platforms on the academic engagement among NCE students of Aminu Saleh College of Education, Azare.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Today's Internet world advancement and in particular social media applications such as Facebook, YouTube and many others, are obviously "overtaking the world" and could be regarded as "a global consumer phenomenon" (Camilia, Ibrahim, & Dalhatu, 2013). Social media usage is one of the most common activities among children, adolescents, and emerging adults nowadays.

Social media continuously keeps changing and as such, it is difficult to assign a fixed definition to it as Jacka and Scott (2011) argued that ''there is no single recognized definition for social media''. However, some scholars have defined it in different perspectives over the past years.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as a group of internet- based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The Oxford dictionary (2011) also defined social media as "websites and applications used for social networking". Another definition of social media is that it is a "communication channel which is very popular, extremely fast and broad, has proven to be highly effective, as well as trusted by billions of people, to share and discover content concerning individuals, brands, information, entertainment and knowhow" (Dearborn, 2014).

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) users before the second stage of development of the Internet, "Web 2.0," in the late 1990's, they browsed only for the aim of getting information through reading from various resources and watching videos. Therefore, users at this time were considered as only consumers not participants. It was mentioned in Ritzer and Jurgenson (2010) study (as cited in Obar & Wildman, 2015) afterwards, Web 2.0, representing the second stage of the Internet development namely "User Generated Content (UGC)", Internet users were transformed from being consumers and participants to "prosumers" which means that they consume and produce media (as cited in Obar & Wildman, 2015). These new affordances are what made the applications and dynamic interaction of social networking possible. Some of the common features that qualify a tool to be considered as social networking site are: enabling users to communicate with each other in an easy way and allowing users to exchange information, pictures and messages (Dijck, 2011). However, one theme that all these definitions underpin is that social media involves some form of communication between individuals over the internet.

The central premise of social media networks is to provide individuals the opportunities and 'power' to create, collaborate and share ideas and information in an open fashion, all of which are important facets for nurturing student development. Subsequently, there has been a growing belief over the last few years that social media platforms have the potential to enhance teaching and learning in Higher Education (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Deng & Tavares, 2013; George & Dellasega, 2011; Junco, 2011; Junco, Elavsky, & Heiberger, 2013; Selwyn, 2009; Welch & Bonnan-White, 2012). In spite of the enthusiasm, relatively little work has been conducted on whether these tools can actually be effectively harnessed and whether students really want to use them as part of their studies. With questions in the literature still remaining about the long-term viability and pedagogic use of social media in Higher Education.

Telegram as one of the example of social media platforms can provide information sharing and learning experiences for students as well as improvement of the participation of

faculty members and students. Telegram users share knowledge in chat groups and channels. Telegram is a messaging app that offers good speed and security and can be synchronized on mobile equipment (Telegram.org 2016). Telegram is capable of sending data to a group of 5000 members and handle all file types that can be read by a mobile device or computer. The Telegram read and write a list of contacts and send messages in the form of SMS and email. It is also a cloud-based messenger application so data will always be stored in the cloud (Satrya, Daely, & Nugroho, 2016). Directory storage files (audio, documents, images, and video) are located in the local memory of the smartphone (Chaniago & Junaidi 2016).

The previous studies which were related to the effect of social media on academic performance as well as its use as an educational tool for improving the academic engagement and performance of undergraduate and postgraduate students revealed that social media positively and significantly influenced participatory learning (Al-Rahmi et al. 2014). Likewise, the relationship between the use of social networks and social communication with academic performance has been studied (Alwagait, Shahzad, & Alim, 2015).

According to Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre, (2011). Social media includes seven functions: identity, conversation, sharing, presence, relationship, reputations, and groups. Each of these allows the user to reveal a particular facet of social media and, through innovative characteristics, increases the psychological motivation of Internet users. In any organization or social community in which they are used, social media provide users with multilevel and multidimensional strategies (Leonardi, Huysman, & Steinfield, 2013). Social media is comprised of social networking sites (Ivala & Gachago 2012), applications and mobile and smartphone technologies that are controlled easily and optionally (Dahlstrom 2012).

Ibrahim et al. (2016) found that Telegram plays an effective learning role as a supportive tool because of the ability for discussion, virtual announcements, sharing notes, and sending educational links. Students can access network information whenever they have access to mobile devices. It also makes available more space and less stress for students, which ultimately encourages them (Alkhezzi & Al-Dousari 2016).

Habibi et al. (2018) also cite the social network of Telegram among some other popular social media networks, asserting that the services of such networks can enhance the learners' motivation by more interaction with content and being the center of the learner in the learning process. These tools do not merely allow the transfer of knowledge, but also engage students in learning to create a common understanding between them, in discussions with peers and professors, increase knowledge sharing and improve their skills (Redecker, Ala-Mutka, & Punie, 2010). The potential of social media platforms is to facilitate learning outcomes through collaborative learning (Novak, Razzouk, & Johnson, 2012). In this context, UNESCO has supported social media potential capabilities in its

policy document (Kommers 2011). Of course, this does not mean that media and social media networks will always have a positive and decisive effect on the promotion of academic performance (Tariq, W., Mehboob, M., & Khan, M. A. 2012). Research has shown that, in some cases, repeated and addictive use of social media has devastating effects (Kirschner & Karpinski 2010; Camilia et al. 2013).

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENTS

Information technology has brought about rapid transformations and has provided a rich source of information. This has created changes in higher education instruction in all fields of study (Tang and Austin 2009). Some changes relate to the use of social media as an important communication tool (Al-Rahmi and Othman 2013) because social media allows, practitioners researchers and students to share and distribute their information (Ajjan and Hartshorne 2008). As such, it is purported to enhance students' engagement. However, Social media is regularly used by millions of people, many of whom are young and students (Dahlstrom et al. 2011). These include web-based networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, MySpace, LinkedIn and Wiki) (Dahlstrom 2012; Chugh 2012), Instagram (Salomon 2013), WhatsApp (Karapanos et al. 2016; Urien et al. 2019) and Telegram (Mashhadi and Kaviani 2016; Ibrahim et al. 2016; Xodabande 2017). (Global Digital Report, 2019).

Many studies have indicated that using social media as an educational tool can lead to increased student engagement (Annetta, Minogue, Holmes, & Cheng, 2009; Chen, Lambert, & Guidry, 2010; Junco, 2012a; Junco et al., 2011; Patera, Draper, & Naef, 2008); (Holdgaard and Klastrup 2014; Hu et al. 2017; Sigala and Chalkiti 2015). By encouraging engagement with social media, students develop connections with peers, establish a virtual community of learners and ultimately increase their overall learning (Fewkes & McCabe, 2012; Heafner & Friedman, 2008; Jackson, 2011; Kuh, 1993; Liu, Liu, Chen, Lin & Chen, 2011; Nelson Laird & Kuh, 2005; Yu, Tian, Vogel, & Kwok, 2010).

Chickering and Gamson (1987) eloquently noted that: Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves. In order for this principle to work effectively, social media can be used. This is because it promotes active learning amongst students; they are no longer passive consumers but active co-producers of content (Rutherford, 2010). By sharing and developing the content in the social media platform, students allows others to scrutinize the way they think and understand the course materials. In this way, they learn from each other's multiple intelligences, which leads to a more nuanced perspective of about the course material.

Student engagement represents both the time and energy students invest in interactions with others through educationally purposeful activities (Kuh, 2001). In other words, the engagement of the students is referred to 'the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic work' (Koranteng, Wiafe, and Kuada 2018, 11). Nelson Laird and Kuh (2005) reported that students who use information technology for academics also have a higher likelihood of contributing and participating in active, academic collaboration with other students. This collaboration indicates that as engagement with technology increases, engagement with academics also increases, promoting a deeper connection between the students, educators, and course content (Mehdinezhad, 2011). By participating in a community of learners, students become more engaged with the course content which increases the attainment of popular learning outcomes, such as critical thinking and individual student development (Carini, Kuh, & Klein, 2006; Kuh, 1993, 2009; Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinsie, & Gonyea, 2008; Pike, Kuh, & McCormick, 2011). Therefore, student engagement through social media can increase connections to create a virtual community that leads to better content learning.

Literatures suggest that social media use tends to enhance student engagement. For instance, Junco et al. (2011) analyzed Twitter communications among students on course materials. Their analysis showed that Twitter enhanced the learning and teaching experiences that could not have been possible in traditional classroom setting. For instance, they found that the students had extended and rich conversations with their teachers on the course materials and were more comfortable in expressing their feelings and shortcomings. Olson (2011) also found a positive link between use of social media for academic purposes and student engagement among college community students in the USA. Student engagement was enhanced in the areas of active and collaborative learning, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners.

Consequently, Students who participate in social media as part of a class feel more connected to their peers than those students who do not participate in social media (Annetta et al., 2009; Jackson, 2011; Tomai, Rosa, Mebane, D'Acunti, Benedetti, & Francescato, 2010). Social media allows students to not only group themselves with peers who are similar, but also to enhance and link existing peer groups (Jackson, 2011; Mazman & Usluel, 2010; Wodzicki, Schawmmlein, & Moskluik, 2012). In addition to enhancing established peer groups, social media can bridge the diversity that exists in classrooms by establishing a neutral zone in which students can interact with one another (Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011; Krause & Coates, 2008; Kuh, 1993, 2009; Mehdinezhad, 2011; Pike et al., 2011). Tomai et al. (2010) found that students who used social media felt more emotionally connected to their peers because they felt as though they had people to talk to if they had a problem or if they needed help. Furthermore, these peer connections encouraged participation by students who initially felt intimidated by in-class discussions (Arnold & Paulus, 2010; Junco et al., 2011; Rambe, 2008).

The connections that students make with classmates through social media can impact the learning environment that is created. Participation in social media creates a more collaborative and communicative learning environment for students by providing opportunities for discussions and interactions with their peers (Heafner & Friedman, 2008; Jackson, 2011; Liu, Liu, Chen, Lin, & Chen, 2011). By collaborating with peers on a given topic, social media offers opportunities to develop a stronger sense of community among students (Arnold & Paulus, 2010; Dawson, 2008; Heiberger & Harper, 2008; Hurt et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2009; Top, 2012). Although Dawson (2008) found that the degree to which a student feels a sense of community might be influenced by the presence and experiences of pre-existing social networks, students who interact with higher numbers of learners also exhibit a higher sense of community. The use of social media also contributes to a sense of community among students by allowing personalization of profiles, including the addition of pictures and other identifying information (Arnold & Paulus, 2010; Stevens, 2009). This personalization, coupled with the critical examination of course topics, supports an authentic relationship between students by encouraging openness and sharing of information, which also increases students' perceived learning (Hurt et al., 2012; Top, 2012).

The use of social media in academic coursework can increase the learning achieved by an individual student. Students who participate in coursework that utilize social media demonstrate an increase in overall GPA when compared with students who do not participate in social media (Junco, 2012b; Junco et al., 2011). Social media usage within the academic setting not only increases students' GPA, but also facilitates peer feedback on assignments and thoughtful student reflections on course content because of the ability for students to openly communicate with each other and develop strong relationships among peers (Arnold & Paulus, 2010; Ebner, Leinhardt, Rohs, & Meyer, 2010; Kuh, 1993). Furthermore, using social media fosters long-term retention of information and develops a deeper understanding of content that is discussed in a class (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Heafner & Friedman, 2008). This research indicates that students who use social media are better able to connect course content with out-of-class peer interactions, ultimately supporting their learning within the classroom.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENTS

This phenomenon of social media engagement by especially students of higher institutions of learning has become a source of worry to many who particularly believe in knowledge and skill acquisition (McQuail 2008). Jeong (2005) noted that internet addiction is significantly and negatively related to students' academic engagement and performance, as well as emotional attributes. In a study of 884 students of different universities in Nigeria, (Olowu & Seri 2012). Indicated that students in Nigeria are spending too much

time on social networking sites at the detriment of other necessary things such as their studies. They explained that Youths' use of these social networking sites have even gone to a point towards obsession. The youths have made the social media their top priority and continued to need more usage in order to feel satisfied. In Ogedebe, Emmanuel and Musa (2012) a study on Facebook and Academic Performance in Nigeria Universities was carried out on 122 university students; they tested six hypotheses to know the effect of Facebook on the academic performance of students in selected universities. The study tested among other hypotheses that the more time a student devotes on Facebook, the lower his or her grade point average will be.

Moreover, In Olubiyi (2012), the author observed that the bone of contention of the social media is the obsessive attitude of Nigerian youths towards its use. He pointed out that students waste their time through idle chats and other immoral acts. Students are so engrossed in the social media networks that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been observed that some students are always busy pinging, 2going or Facebooking, while lectures are on. The result is that quality time that ought to be spent on academic research and other productive networking is lost.

Many researchers like Junco (2011) and Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) are of the opinion that on the whole, the greater the amount of time spent on this particular social network correlated with lower class marks overall. However, as Junco (2011, p. 11) argued "certain uses of Facebook mimic educational behaviour… related to positive behaviour", and that more research was thus required into whether it could improve student engagement. Carr (2010) has vehemently argued that "when we go online, we enter an environment that promotes shallow reading, hurried and distracted thinking and superficial learning. Even as the internet grants us easy access to vast amounts of information, it turns us into shallower thinkers".

METODOLOGY

The research design adopted in this study was the survey research design which deals with the collection of information from a representative sample to draw inference. The reason why the researcher adopted this design is because the population of NCE students of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare is large thus, the need to collect data from the sample of the population. In this study, the population of the study consisted of all NCE students of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare, Katagum Local Government Area. Therefore, the focus of the research was targeted across the NCE levels of the college. Data obtained from the ICT statistics unit of NCE students of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare as at 2023/2024 session revealed that, there were 742 NCE1, 865 NCE2 and 1010 NCE3 students respectively, given a total of 2,617. From the population of NCE students of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare, 200 students were randomly selected from across NCE1, NCE2 and NCE3 respectively. The 200 made up of forty

students drawn from each of the five different schools in the college, in which 60 students each drawn from NCE1 and NCE2, and 80 from NCE3 given a total of 200 students. The sampling technique that was used in selecting the 200 students for the study was simple random sampling. The researcher decided to use this sampling technique because the choice of the one element does not undermine the chance of another element from being selected, and all the N element has equal chance of being selected. This study adopted 33.3% of the total population of all the five schools of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare. To limit the challenge of unequal strata, the researcher adopted proportionate random sampling of 33.3% i.e. (33/100 x population) was used to determine the population The instrument used in this research for the purpose of data collection is the questionnaire. This question is called Questionnaire for Influence of Social media platforms on the academic engagement of students of college of education (ISMPAESCEQ). The researcher decided to adopt the questionnaire method because it is easy to collect data from the respondents from a wide range of area and respondents can freely supply Objective opinion on the matter. The researcher also adopted the close-ended method because it can be easily interpreted during analysis since all the respondents were literate. This questionnaire called Questionnaire for Influence of Social media platforms on the academic engagement of students of college of education (ISMPAESCEQ) is derived from the aim of the study and is segmented into two parts; namely the descriptive and analytic parts. The descriptive part seeks to provide information about the nature and characteristics of respondents for example school, level, sex, age and department. The second part of the questionnaire which is the analytic part is concerned with relevant information the researcher wants about the problem under investigation. That is to say, the study reviewed the theoretical and empirical concept of social media platforms, history of online social media platforms and its development in Nigeria, social media platforms, students' addictiveness to social media, positive and negative influence of social media platforms on students' academic engagements. The questionnaire is made up of ten items drawn from the content of the studies. The section required respondents to indicate their views on a four (4) point Linkert scale of measurement of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) coded as 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively in order of the strength of agreement. This means that 1 and 4 shows lowest and highest score respectively. The ISMPAESCEQ was validated by two experts; one in Measurement and Evaluation and the other in Sociology of Education. The researcher adopted a test-retest method on students of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare for the period of one-month interval between the two administrations of the instrument. The researched correlated the test score using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 0.58 stability level, which implied that any coefficient at 0.58 and above is considered reliable.

Research Question One:

What are the negative influences of social media networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, tweeter, YouTube etc. on students' academic engagement of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare?

Table 2: Summary of Responses on the negative influences of social media networks on students' academic engagement of Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Addiction to online social media platforms is a problematic issue that affects my academic engagement.	90	80	20	10	3.25
2	My unlimited access to Facebook through my cell phone has affected my academic engagement negatively.	75	80	30	15	3.08
3	The hours I spend online on social media platforms are more than the hours I spend reading	60	55	50	35	2.70
4	Online social media platforms distract me from my studies	70	81	24	25	2.98

N = 200

Cut-off point = 2.50

Table 2 provides insights into the negative influences of social media networks on the academic engagement of students at Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare. The first item highlights the issue of addiction to online social media platforms and its impact on academic engagement. A significant portion of respondents, with 90 strongly agreeing and 80 agreeing, acknowledge that this addiction poses a problem, while 20 disagree and 10 strongly disagree. The mean score of 3.25 indicates a widespread recognition of the detrimental effects of social media addiction on academic focus and performance. On to the second item, it appears that the accessibility of Facebook via cell phones has a negative impact on academic engagement for many students. This is evidenced by 75 respondents strongly agreeing and 80 agreeing, while 30 disagree and 15 strongly disagree, resulting in a mean score of 3.08. This suggests that the convenience of accessing social media through mobile devices may contribute to distractions from academic pursuits. The third item looks into the time allocation between online social media activities and academic responsibilities. Here, 60 respondents strongly agree and 55 agree that they spend more time on social media than on reading, while 50 disagree and 35 strongly disagree. The mean score of 2.70 indicates a significant portion of students recognizing a discrepancy between their social media usage and academic engagement. The fourth item suggests that online social media platforms serve as distractions from studies for many students. With 70 respondents strongly agreeing and 81 agreeing, while 24 disagree and 25 strongly disagree, the mean score of 2.98 highlights the perceived impact of social media on diverting attention away from academic tasks.

Research Question TWO:

What are the possible benefits of social media networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, tweeter, YouTube etc. on students' academic engagement?

Table 3: Summary of Responses on the possible benefits of social media networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, tweeter, YouTube etc. on students' academic engagement.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
5	Students uses Social media platforms mainly for chatting with teachers and course mates	75	40	60	25	2.83
6	Social media platforms helps students acquire and share educational information	65	55	45	34	2.76
7	Social skills are developed through social media engagement	50	45	50	55	2.45
8	Social media platforms improved involvement of students in studying	35	55	60	50	2.38

N = 200

Cut-off point = 2.50

Table 3 presents an overview of the potential benefits of social media networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube on students' academic engagement at Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare. The first item suggests that many students utilize social media platforms primarily for communication with teachers and classmates. With 75 respondents strongly agreeing and 40 agreeing, while 60 disagree and 25 strongly disagree, the mean score of 2.83 indicates a substantial recognition of social media's role in facilitating academic communication and collaboration among peers and educators. On the second item, it appears that social media platforms serve as channels for acquiring and sharing educational information for many students. This is evidenced by 65 respondents strongly agreeing and 55 agreeing, while 45 disagree and 34 strongly disagree, resulting in a mean score of 2.76. This suggests that social media platforms are perceived as valuable resources for accessing and disseminating academic content. The third item explores the development of social skills through engagement with social media. Here, 50 respondents strongly agree and 45 agree that social media fosters the development of social skills, while 50 disagree and 55 strongly disagree. The mean score of 2.45 indicates a mixed perception regarding the extent to which social media contributes to social skill enhancement among students. The fourth item suggests that social media platforms have the potential to improve students' involvement in studying. With 35 respondents strongly agreeing and 55 agreeing, while 60 disagree and 50 strongly disagree, the mean score of 2.38 highlights a recognition of the possible positive impact of social media on student engagement with academic materials and activities.

DISCUSSION

The first research question aimed to delineate the adverse impacts of social media networks like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube on the academic engagement of students at Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare. The findings illuminated several negative influences perceived by respondents. Firstly, the issue of addiction to online social media platforms emerged as a significant concern, with a mean score of 3.25, indicating its detrimental effect on academic engagement. Similarly, the accessibility of Facebook through mobile phones was cited as negatively impacting academic commitment, with a mean score of 3.08, underscoring the disruptive nature of constant connectivity. Moreover, the disparity between time spent online on social media platforms compared to time allocated for studying was highlighted, with a mean score of 2.70, suggesting a diversion of attention away from academic pursuits. Additionally, the tendency for online social media platforms to serve as distractions from studying was evident, reflected by a mean score of 2.98. These findings resonate with Adebayo (2020) previous research, indicating that the pervasive presence of social media networks poses challenges to students' academic engagement, necessitating strategies to mitigate these negative influences and promote a balanced approach to online activities and learning endeavors.

The second research question aimed to explore the potential benefits of social media networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube on the academic engagement of students at Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare. The findings revealed several perceived advantages associated with these platforms. Primarily, students utilize social media for direct communication with teachers and classmates, with a mean score of 2.83, indicating its role in facilitating collaborative learning and academic discussions. Additionally, social media emerged as a platform for acquiring and sharing educational information, reflected by a mean score of 2.76, underscoring its utility as a resource-sharing tool. Moreover, the development of social skills through online engagement was recognized, with a mean score of 2.45, suggesting that interactions on social media contribute to interpersonal growth. Furthermore, the study highlighted an improvement in students' involvement in studying through social media platforms, with a mean score of 2.38, indicating its potential to enhance academic motivation and participation. These findings are in line with the findings of Hamza (2016), as it underscores the benefits of social media networks in augmenting students' academic engagement, from facilitating communication and information exchange to fostering social and cognitive development, advocating for the integration of these platforms into educational practices to harness their positive impacts on learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study have shed light on the intricate relationship between social media platforms and students' academic engagement at Aminu Saleh College of Education

Azare. It is evident that social media has become an integral part of the lives of many students, serving as a versatile tool for learning, communication, and entertainment. While the potential benefits of these platforms in enhancing academic engagement cannot be overlooked, the study has also highlighted the significant negative influences that can arise from excessive or improper use.

It is therefore crucial for educational institutions like Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare to adopt a balanced and proactive approach to integrating social media into the academic sphere. This involves providing comprehensive training for both students and faculty members on leveraging these platforms effectively while mitigating potential risks. Moreover, the development of clear policies and guidelines, coupled with robust technological infrastructure, is essential to create a conducive environment for harnessing the strengths of social media in augmenting the learning experience. Simultaneously, it is imperative to establish support systems and counseling services to address issues such as addiction, time management challenges, and potential mental health impacts. By fostering a culture of responsible social media use and encouraging innovative pedagogical approaches, educational institutions can empower students to balance their online activities with their academic pursuits, ultimately enhancing their overall engagement and success in the learning process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Implement digital literacy and social media use training programs for both students and members of staff to promote responsible and effective use of these platforms for academic purposes.
2. Develop clear policies and guidelines regarding the integration of social media into the curriculum, outlining appropriate usage, content sharing, and communication protocols to ensure a conducive learning environment.
3. Invest in robust technological infrastructure, including high-speed internet connectivity and wireless networks, to facilitate seamless access to social media platforms and online resources within the college premises.
4. Foster collaboration between educators, students, and technology experts to explore innovative pedagogical approaches that leverage the strengths of social media platforms for interactive learning, group discussions, and knowledge sharing.
5. Establish support systems and counseling services to address issues related to social media addiction, time management challenges, and potential mental health impacts, empowering students to maintain a healthy balance between online activities and academic pursuits.

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