

**ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION FOR SOCIAL NETWORK AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AREA OF EDO STATE**

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ABSTRACT:

This study was aimed at investigating attitude and motivation for social networking among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. It seeks to find out whether secondary school students like social networking and if there is gender factor influencing use of social networks and students' level of access to phones/computers and the internet. The study adopted descriptive research design; simple random sampling was used to select ten public and private secondary schools out of the lot in the area. The research instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The data obtained from respondents were analyzed using simple percentage and the results were briefly discussed. The findings revealed that students engage in social networks to make friends and connect with people; both male and female students engage in social networks; students have access to phones, computers and other communication devices and the internet. Facebook is the most popular social network used by more

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students. It was recommended that students should use social networking to enhance their academics; to keep abreast with current international trends in technological innovations, politics, and economic, financial and social matters and so on.

Keywords: Social networks, information and communication technology, computer and communication devices.

1. INTRODUCTION

New inventions and innovations brought about by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have greatly affected the lives of people in several ways. ICT allows computers and telecommunication gadgets or devices to be linked thereby providing opportunities for interested users to access information, education and knowledge via the internet.

One of the definitions of internet given by the Federal Networking Council (FNC) of United States of America (1995) is ; “internet refers to the global information system that provides, uses or makes accessible, either publicly or privately, high level services layered on communications and related infrastructure described herein”. The Internet was the result of some visionary thinking by people in the early 1960s that saw great potential value in allowing computers to share information on research and development in scientific and military fields (Howe 2014). January 1, 1983 is considered the official birthday of the Internet, prior to this, the various computer networks did not have a standard way to communicate with each other (On line library learning 2015).

The internet has turned the whole world into a global village and it only a split second to send and receive information. A Nigerian residing in Benin City can send electronic mail to a friend or a brother in far away Australia, which can be received in seconds. The internet has indeed made information and communication very easy. Gone are the days where in order to communicate with somebody abroad letters are written which usually takes between two to three or more weeks to reach their destination.

The awareness of the internet and the services it provides to subscribers/users has more than doubled in the Nigerian society. Nigeria is one of the fastest growing countries in global information technology access, rising above United Kingdom (UK) in ranking (This Day Live online 24th March 2014). In last years (about 10–15 years back), awareness of the internet was mainly amongst students in higher learning institutions and a few elites had the privilege of travelling abroad. Today, both the educated and uneducated use internet facilities in one way or other. According to Internet world statistics report (November, 2015), Nigeria accounts for 28% of internet usage in Africa with 92,699,924 estimated users.

The term “social network was coined by Barnes in 1954 (Webopedia 2015). Social network is a network of social interactions and personal relationships; a network of friends, colleagues, and other personal contacts. (Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary online, 2015). Majority of social networking in our present day are done on the internet (online), which means they are web sites used principally for modern day social interaction like posting information, pictures, images and comments.

Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to:

- (1) Construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system,
 - (2) Articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and
 - (3) View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.
- The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site. Flad (2010) investigated the influence of social network with gender. Chris (2015) studied the effect of social media on undergraduate students’ academic performance/in Kenyan Universities.

According to Walker (2011), social networking started in 1978 with the Bulletin Board System (BBS); BBS was hosted on personal computers and it was the first system that allowed users to sign in and interact with each other. Geocities was the first web-based social networking site developed in 1994. It allowed users to create their own

websites (Kumarjit n,d). Other social networking sites have evolved over the years, notable among them are; Friendster in 2002, MySpace in 2003 and Facebook in 2004.

There are presently thousands of social networking sites all over the world. The

Table below shows ten social networks and their estimated users.

Table 1: The World's most used ten Social Networks and their estimated users

Number	Social Network	Estimated Users
1	Facebook	1.35 billion
2	Qzone (China)	629 million
3	Google plus	343 million
4	LinkedIn	332 million
5	Instagram	300 million
6	Twitter	248 million
7	Tumblr	230 million
8	Sina Weibo	157 million
9	Vk	100 million
10	Snapchart	100 million

Source: Social Times (December, 2014)

Internet and social networks are relatively new in the Nigerian society. This also applies to our educational system especially among secondary school students except in tertiary level education.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The increasing awareness in the advantages of information and communication technology has led to an increase in the use of many communication gadgets and media by people. Examples of such communication gadgets include computers - (desktops, laptops, notebooks & palmtop), cell phones, smart phones, I-pads, Androids, tablets among others. In the 70s, and 80s, the main form of communication among teenagers in this part of the world was through letters. Late 90s and entering the new century created awareness on electronic mail on the internet for communication. Internet social networking which

started gaining ground about five years back has attracted many teenagers. Social networking is therefore new to our dynamic way of life (culture). This is unlike in developed nations where social networking is not new to both young and old. Steve Massi (2010) opined that meeting friends, connecting with people for esteem and self actualization motivate people to join social media networks. The question is, what is the attitude of secondary school students towards this new form of socializing in Nigeria and what motivate them to do so.

3. GENERAL AIM/PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of social networks on the studying habits of senior secondary school students in some selected schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo state.

Specifically, the study will find out;

- If students like social networking?
- If social networking have positive or negative effects on their studying habits.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the attitudes of students towards social networking?
2. What motivates them to join social network?
3. Do students have access to phones/computers and internet facilities?

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teenagers and young adults all over the world have many interests and they also participate actively in social networks. According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), “since their introduction, social network sites (SNSs) such as MySpace, Facebook, Cyworld, and Bebo have attracted millions of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices”. The increased usage of social networking websites in Nigeria is a national phenomenon in recent years. Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites in order to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and show case their social lives (Boyd 2007, as cited by Flad 2010).

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Flad (2010) states that there is no disparity in gender involvement in social networking. This view is shared by Chris (2015) who observed that “gender variations in the use of social media is not prominent it is closely similar”. Flad (2010) postulated that social networking can have a negative impact on study habits and completion of homework assignments. According to her “though most students spend a lot of time on these websites, they still realize that what they learn in school is important in meeting their future goals”. Her study revealed that, “there is not a drastic difference in GPA (Grade Point Average) between students who spend more time on social networks and those who do not” and “there is no connection usage of Social networking sites d poor performance in school”

Helton, (n,d) in a study on “the effects of Facebook habits on academic success” asserts that Facebook habits can be detrimental to GPA. He however adds that “it may not be the website in its entirety that causes this even though Facebook in some way distracts college students and it is harming the academic success of students that have the potential to achieve a higher grade points average”.

According to Abdulahi, Samadi and Gharleghi (2014) “Social network sites can impact student performance ” and that there is a close relationship between students’ performance and using social sites, the relationship however is low but increased usage of social network sites poses treat to students’ privacy and security including identity theft.

Srivastava (2012) outlined the cons of social networking sites regarding students’ academic achievement as;

- (a) Lack of concentration
- (b) Time consuming
- (c) Reduced focus on learning and retaining information
- (d) Negative publicity
- (e) Living in the virtual world
- (f) Negligence of grammar and spelling.

The big question is that do social networks have positive impact on students study habits? Some studies affirmed to the fact that social networks do have positive impact on students' study habits. Srivastava (2012) enumerated the pros of social networking sites regarding students' academic achievement as follows;

- Collaboration of education and information (educative information)
- Development of creativity.
- Ease of communication
- Development of domains (cognitive, affective and psychomotor)

Mehmood and Taswir (2013) findings revealed that more students confirmed they use online networks to write their class assignments and for other academic purposes. They observe that some students perceive social networking sites as a distraction and were hesitant to share their feelings, a high percentage of respondents viewed it an avenue for searching for information, join educational networks and look for career opportunities. Mehmood and Taswir concluded that social networking sites can be useful instrument for improving students' academic performance.

Chris (2015) findings showed that students responses indicated that social media does not affect their studies negatively during the day. They acknowledged that "social media in deed contributed positively to their study habits by sharing study materials, receiving class updates and facilitates their group discussions. On the other hand, night addiction to social media impacts negatively on their revision time.

Based on the literature review, it is clear other scholars have researched this topic which include:

- Flad (2010) "The Influence of Social Networking participation on student academic performance across gender, - Helton, (2012), "The effects of Facebook habits on academic success"
- Chris (2015), "The influence of social media on study habits of undergraduates students in Kenyan Universities

- Srivastava (2012), “Social networking and its impact on education-system in contemporary era.
- Mehmood and Taswir (2013), “The effects of social networking sites on the academic performance of students in college of applied sciences, Nizwa, Oman.
- Abdulahi, Samadi and Gharleghi (2014), “A study on the negative effects of social networking sites such as Facebook among Asia Pacific University scholars in Malaysia.

These studies were geared towards finding out effects of social networking on students’ study habits/academic performance. These studies apart from Chris (2015) were conducted in advanced countries where Computers, communication gadgets and internet access are common features. The reverse is true of Nigeria, where internet access and the rate of ownership and usage of computers are still low. In fact, in many secondary schools where computer studies are taught cannot boast of a good computer laboratory.

This study is peculiar to Nigeria being a developing nation and social networking is not part of its culture and social networking is relatively new, therefore, this paper seeks to find out if senior secondary school students in Nigeria delight or embrace this new fast spreading “culture” and the impact it has on their study habits.

6. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used is descriptive research design. Descriptive research describes and interprets the current status of the subject or topic of study. It seeks to find out the conditions or relationship that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing (Akuezuiilo 2003). Descriptive research can provide information about preferences, attitudes, practices, concerns, interest and so on. Descriptive research gathers quantifiable information that can be used

for statistical inference of your target audience through data analysis; this type of research uses closed-ended questions (Penwarden 2014).

This study is descriptive in the sense that it is concerned with attitudes opinions and interest of a particular age group (teenagers); closed-ended questions were used for easy understanding and response by targeted students.

Population and Sampling Technique

The population of the study comprises secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo state. The population was drawn from both public and private owned secondary schools, single sex or/and mixed; as male and female student schools. The sample for this study was selected using simple random sampling. Simple random sampling is unbiased representation of a group (Investopedia, 2015). A random sample of twenty (20) students was drawn from ten (10) selected schools in the Local Government Area. Five (5) public schools and five (5) private schools participated in this study. The schools were single and mixed sex secondary schools.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for data collection is a standardized closed-ended questionnaire. Prior to the main survey the questionnaire was pre-tested on to twenty (20) students that were not part of the main study. This was done to determine the reliability of the instrument and the ease or difficulty of students' response, question clarity and questions that did not yield useful answers were revised or discarded. Findings from the pre-test became the basis for improving the instrument. Pearson's product moment correlation was used to calculate the reliability of the questionnaire, a reliability coefficient of 0.65 was obtained, which showed that the instrument is reliable.

Administration of Instrument & Data Analysis

The questionnaires were self-administered to respondents and responses collected on the spot, and also on a second visit for those who could not finish on scrutiny that day. The questionnaire were correctly filled and considered useful for the study. Two hundred (200) questionnaires were administered and returned.

The analyzed data is presented in infrequency tables and simple percentages. Raw scores were converted to percentages and the findings obtained.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

What are the attitudes of students towards social networking?

Table 2: Responses on attitude towards social networking(N=200)

VARIABLE	Category	YES	%	NO	%
Attitude towards social networking	I like social networks	172	86	28	14
	I use social network when I am supposed to be reading	18	9	182	91
	Social networks are good for students, it does not matter if they miss some lessons	22	11	178	89

Source: Field data, Oredo LGA, Edo state (2018)

Table 2 shows that students have high interest in social networks. 86% (172) respondents like social networks while 14% (28) don't like social networks. 9% (18) respondents use social networks when they are supposed to be reading while 81% with 182 responds don't use social networks when they are supposed to be reading. The respondents agree that social networks are good for students but not for them to miss some lessons as shown by 22% with 22 respondents saying it does not matter if students miss lessons because of social networks while 89% with 178 responses say the contrary.

It was discovered that 23.5% with 47 respondents don't use or belong to any social network while 76.5 i.e. 153 respondents use/belong to one social network or another with 37% of these use/belong to multiple (more than one) social networks.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What motivates students to social network?

Table 3: Responses on what motivates students to social network (N=200)

VARIABLE	Category	YES	%	NO	%
What motivates me to social network	To chat with friends	150	75	50	25
	To seek information regarding my studies	177	88.5	23	11.5
	Just to socialize	110	55	90	45

Source: Field data, Oredo LGA, Edo state (2018)

From Table 4.2 above, 150 (75%) of the respondents agreed that chatting with friends motivates them to socialize while 50 (25%) i respondents said they are not motivated to social network to chat with friends.177 (88.5%) of the respondents said are motivated to social network to seek information concerning their studies while 23 (11.5%) are not motivated to use social network to find information for their studies.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Do students have access to phones/computers and internet facilities?

Table 4: Responses on access to phones/computers and internet N=200

VARIABLE	Category	YES	%	NO	%
Access to phones/computers and Internet	I have a phone/computer of my own that i can browse	146	73	54	27
	I use my parents'/other relations phone/computer to browse	80	40	120	60
	I always have enough megabytes to browse/social networks	100	50	100	50
	The network that I use to				

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	browse is always accessible	153	76.5	47	23.5
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Source: Field data, Oredo LGA, Edo state (2018)

Table 4 shows that 146 (4, 73%) of the respondents said they have access to phones or computers of their own they can browse while 54 (27%) of the 54 respondents said they don't have phones or computers of their own that they can browse through. 80 (40%) of the respondents said they use their parents or other relations phones or computer to browse while 60% with 120 responses don't use their parents or other relations phones or computer to browse through.

Fifty percent of the respondents said they have more megabytes to browse/social network another 50% don't have much megabytes to browse/social network. The network used by 76.5% of the respondents to browse is always accessible while networks used by 23.5% of the respondents are not always accessible.

7. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The result of this study concerning research question one (1) revealed that senior secondary school students like social networking. This corroborates Flad (2010) who noted that the increase in usage of Social Networking Websites has become an international phenomenon in the last seven years and Chris (2015) who opined that youth are fully involved in social networking all the time. Results from the respondents indicated that Facebook is the most popular social network used by secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area.

Results from research question two (2), showed that meeting with friends and connecting with people are what motivate students to join social network. This agreed with findings by Steve Massi (2010) who found that meeting friends, connecting with people for esteem and self actualization motivate people to join social networks. Results from research question three (3), shows that students have access to phones and computers for browsing and to access the internet and have enough megabytes for browsing. This

corroborates with the internet world report (November, 2015), which indicates Nigeria accounts for 28% of internet users in Africa.

8. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from this study, secondary students are interested in social networking irrespective of gender, because they can communicate with friends all over the world chatting or sending messages and pictures about themselves and happenings in their environment. The relatively fall in the prices of phones and computers have made this gadgets readily available and affordable.

Computer literacy, internet awareness and access have increased unlike some years back when it was only accessible to a few elites who were privileged to travel abroad or were in the university system. Deregulation of the telecommunications industry in Nigeria facilitated connectivity to the global system of mobile communication and privately owned telecommunication companies. The competition among has resulted in lowering telecommunication and internet connectivity to faster internet access.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are put forth based on the study findings.

1. Parents and guardians should not discourage their children from using social networks; but should monitor what they do when social networking.
2. Students should use social networking to update themselves on current affairs, academics, technological innovations, international/regional/sub-regional politics, social trends, economic and /financial affairs.
3. Social networking should not be used in “negatively ” way such as for joining cults, examination malpractices, or for social and religious discrimination..
4. Students should spend not spend too much time social networking at the expense of the academics.

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