



Influence of Social Media Network Usage and Addiction on Self-Perception of Undergraduate Students at University of Ibadan, Nigeria

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. Author II designed the study, performed the statistical analysis and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors AAE and IJI did literature searches, finalized the manuscript and extensively reviewed and edited the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Students' self-perception has been described as having the ability to determine their performance in all areas of life. In as much as social media networks have a great potential to facilitate collaboration, communication and sharing of information among students, its usage and addiction have been found to have the potential to determine the way students would perceive themselves. This study therefore, examined the influence of social media utilisation and addiction on self-perception of undergraduate students in Nigeria's premier university.

The study adopted the survey method of ex-post-facto design. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select nine hundred and seven (907) undergraduate students from seven (7) faculties at University of Ibadan. A questionnaire titled "Social Media Utilisation, Addiction and Self-Perception Questionnaire" was used for data collection. Three research questions were answered in the study. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's Product moment correlation and Multiple regression.

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Findings reveal that self-perception is significantly positively related to social media utilisation just as social media utilisation and social media addiction were found to relatively contribute significantly to self-perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan. To ensure development of a positive self-perception of students, adequate attention should be given to undergraduate students' level of social media utilisation. Addictive behaviours however should be discouraged.

Keywords: Social media networks; social media utilization; social media addiction; self-perception; undergraduate students; University of Ibadan; Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technological revolutions have made communication and exchange of information take a dimension that before now would have being thought-of as impossible. A fairly recent major technological revolution that has altered the way humans communicate and share information is the social media. Social media is often used as a general term to describe the collection of online communication channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. [1] identified four different social media platforms that are popular among people to include Facebook, Twitter, Blogs and client hosted forums. Just as the case in most countries, young adults form the bulk of users on social media networks.

Studies abound that buttress the importance of social media networks in education. [2] stressed that educational institutions are realising that engaging in social media can allow for "highly participative" interaction with students and educators which makes them feel more involved in their institutions. Furthermore, she added that social media networks have become more and more popular among students by allowing them to make connections not only on campus but with friends outside of school. In line with this opinion therefore, [3] argues that Facebook as a type of social media network has become an important site for the informal, cultural learning of 'being' a student with online interactions and experiences allowing roles to be learned, values understood and identities shaped.

Besides these positive impacts of using social media networks, there are obvious negative consequences of its usage and addiction. [4] listed some of the negative consequences to include interference with academic achievement, conventional social interaction and exposure to undesirable cultural experiences. [5] revealed that in university settings, anecdotal evidence of problems stemming from the excessive use of

new technologies has been reported on various campuses. The question then is: what constitutes excessive use? An insight has been given by [6] who revealed that in Nigeria, irrespective of age, most university undergraduates now start the day by checking their Facebook accounts. This frenzy is gradually tending towards addiction as some students cannot do without accessing their accounts more than once daily. This addictive behaviour has been shown to be exhibited in a recent survey held at University of Ibadan where it was revealed that there is a high level of social media addiction. [7] described social media network addiction as an explanation for uncontrollable and damaging use of these technologies. [8] reported that 50% of students interviewed after dismissal for academic failure listed excessive use of social media networks as a reason for their failures.

Besides the aforementioned problems stemming from excessive use and addiction, there are also concerns that they can have an impact on their self-perception. This new method of communication can have serious implications on the behavioural and psychological tendencies of students when they are addicted to it. There is no gainsaying that educational institutions have focused on the use of social media as a tool that has aided the blurring of the lines between personal and private information, yet an understudied area is on how social media can affect the self-perception of students in Nigeria. Self-perception describes the feelings that an individual has about his/her adequacy in meeting the demands of the society he/she has found himself/herself. Interestingly, research varies greatly and do appear that social media have different effects on different generations as well as gender with some decidedly negative consequences.

By implication, social media network conditions people to project only their best and often times unrealistic selves on their profiles. Regardless of

whether people realise it or not, a great deal of time and effort is expended on the creation of a societal acceptable digital identity. One factor for the high rates of depression seen in social media-friendly people is the inconsistency they observe between their ideal cyber self and their self-image.

The research that exists about the impact of social media on self-perception is all quite contrary [3,9,10]. While some studies suggested social media has a positive effect on self-perception, others proved that social media has a negative effect. For example, [9] revealed that people who use social media networks such as Facebook frequently have a higher self-esteem and a positive perception about themselves than those who use Facebook less regularly, and that the addictive nature of Facebook increases dopamine levels in the brain that raise our levels of happiness, confidence and self-perception. [11] in her study also found that young adults who spend more time on Facebook are more likely to have positive perception about their ability to be more acceptable than others. [12] reported that social media use and addiction can have a positive influence on college students' self perception, though this may be as a result of users being able to shape their image and social interactions on the platform that tend to reflect that image.

On the contrary, [6] believed that social media networks' use is not only an addictive behaviour but also forms a collection of recognition and behaviour factors that leave people prone to addiction leading to a negative effect on the individual's life. Taking this knowledge into account, [13] concluded that the positive effects of social media in boosting an individual's self-perception are merely superficial. He further explained that social media use can be likened to drug use that induces a temporary relief. Moderate use of social media can be a positive and helpful social outlet but that it is always possible to have too much of a good thing [10]. [10] reiterated that developing an addiction and dependency to a social media site can make a person feel more confident, more popular and happier at the present time but also that the negative effects social media has on self-perception are more pertinent and long-term than the positive effects. [3] emphasised that addiction to social media use has the tendency to kill the mind of young adults and thereby develop a negative self-perception in them.

Also, [14] suggested that there is a tipping point for healthy social media engagement, not in regards to amount of time spent, but the amount of contacts a person has. According to them, the more contacts students make on social media the more they are likely to be exposed to achievements and life updates of people that make them feel inadequate. It is on the basis of the foregoing that this study investigated the relationship between social media utilisation, addiction and self-perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

1.1 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to investigate the influence of social media networks utilisation and addiction on undergraduate students' self-perception at University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in the study:

1. How do undergraduate students at University of Ibadan perceive themselves?
2. What relationship exists between social media networks use, addiction to social media networks and self perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan?
3. What is the relative contribution of social media networks use and addiction to self-perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study derives its relevance from the growing literature on the use of new technologies among students and young adults in Nigerian educational institutions. The increasing awareness of the usefulness and relevance of social media among students puts study like this on the research agenda of countries, including Nigeria. This study will thus provide a better understanding of how social media networks usage and addiction can impact on the self-perception of undergraduates in Nigerian Universities. Furthermore, this study will also provide a basis for decision making recommendations that will help to improve healthy use of social media networks use among undergraduates in Nigerian Universities.

This study will also contribute significantly to informed decision making and the basis for recommending effective strategies for social media networks utilisation for educational purposes in universities in Nigeria.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the ex-post-facto type of survey method. The population of the study comprised all the undergraduate students at University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The respondents were distributed across the thirteen faculties offering undergraduate courses at University of Ibadan viz: Faculties of Education, Science, Social Sciences, Technology, Agriculture and Forestry, Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Public Health, Clinical sciences, Basic Medical Sciences, Arts, and Law that offered undergraduate courses at University of Ibadan (See Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of undergraduates across faculties

Faculties	Undergraduate enrolment
Agriculture and Forestry	1136
Arts	1816
Basic Medical Sciences	510
Clinical Sciences	1191
Dentistry	217
Education	1710
Law	578
Pharmacy	330
Public health	124
Science	2334
The Social Sciences	1464
Technology	1328
Veterinary Medicine	445
Total	13408

Source: University of Ibadan annual report, 2012

2.1 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample for the study. At the first stage of sampling, the simple random sampling method using balloting system was adopted in selecting seven (7) faculties representing (50%) of the total number of faculties at University of Ibadan, Nigeria viz: Faculties of Science, Arts, Clinical sciences, Law, Social sciences, Pharmacy, Agriculture and Forestry.

The last stage of the sampling procedure adopted the simple random sampling technique

to select ten percent (10%) of the total undergraduate enrollment in each of the Faculties selected for the study. Thus, a total number of nine hundred and seven (907) undergraduates formed the sample size for the study (See Table 2).

Table 2. Sample size for the study

Faculties	Undergraduate enrollment	Sample size (10% of undergraduate enrollment)
Agriculture and Forestry	1361	136
Arts	1816	182
Clinical Sciences	1191	119
Law	578	58
Pharmacy	330	33
Science	2334	233
The Social Sciences	1464	146
Total	9074	907

Source: Preliminary survey, 2012

2.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument adopted for this study was the questionnaire. The questionnaire designed for this study titled "Social Media Utilisation, Addiction and Self-Perception Questionnaire" comprised three major sections aimed at measuring the variables in the study (i.e. social media utilisation, social media addiction and self-perception). Section A of the questionnaire was aimed at gathering data on demographics of the respondents which includes Age, Gender, Level of Study, Faculty and Department.

Section B of the questionnaire solicited information on social media utilisation while Section C of the questionnaire was designed to elicit information on the level of addiction to social media networks and self-perception. The level of addiction was measured on a modified four (4)-point Likert scale of "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree".

2.3 Validation and Reliability of the Research Instrument

The questionnaire after incorporating suggestions given by experts was pre-tested on twenty (20) students in the Faculty of Education which was not part of the faculties selected for

the study. The data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient with the results yielding 0.77. This is considered suitable and appropriate for the study.

2.4 Method of Data Analysis

The descriptive method of analysis such as frequency and percentage was used and inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Regression analysis was used in analysing the data collected for the study. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for the analysis. Research question 1 was analysed using descriptive statistics, research question 2 was analysed using Pearson Moment Correlation and Multiple regression was used to analyse research question 3 at a significance level of 0.05

3. INTERPRETATION OF ANALYSED DATA

A total of nine hundred and seven (907) copies of the questionnaire designed for the study were administered on the undergraduate students out of which only eight hundred and thirty three were returned with useful responses. This gave a response rate of 91.8% which was considered adequate for the study.

3.1 Socio-demographic Information of the Respondents

The background information distribution of the respondents revealed that there were more male respondents (71.7%) than female respondents (28.3%) just as there are more students within the age range of 16 to 20 years (56.4%). Also, information on social media experience of the respondents revealed that the majority of them 85.4% claimed that they have been using social media for three years and above. It can therefore be inferred that the undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan are experienced in the use of social media.

3.2 Research Questions

3.2.1 Research question 1: How do undergraduate students at University of Ibadan perceive themselves?

It can be inferred from the information supplied in Table 3 below that the undergraduates at University of Ibadan have a positive self-

perception. This can be established through the agreement of majority of the students with statements that portrays positive self-perception such as "I think I am smart" and "I feel I am academically good" with response rates of 81.2% and 53.6% respectively. On the other hand, majority of the students disagreed with statements on negative self-perception such as "I feel inadequate because of my exposure to achievement of others through social media network". Even at that, about four out of every ten students surveyed agreed that indeed they feel inadequate because they are exposed to achievements of others on social media networks.

3.2.2 Research question 2: What relationship exists between social media networks utilisation, addiction to social media and self-perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan?

Table 4 presents information on the relationship between social media utilisation and social media addiction, and undergraduates' self-perception. It revealed that there is a positive relationship between social media utilisation and undergraduates' self perception ($r = .181$, $p < 0.01$) and between social media addiction and undergraduates' self-perception ($r = .195$, $p < 0.01$). It can therefore be inferred that the more the undergraduates utilised social media, the more they are able to perceive themselves either positively or negatively. Also, increased level addiction to social media would enable the undergraduates to be able to perceive themselves positively or negatively.

3.2.3 Research question 3: What are the relative contributions of social media networks use and addiction to self perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan undergraduates?

Table 5 presents information on the relative contributions of social media utilisation and social media addiction level to undergraduates' self perception. It revealed addiction to social media as contributing more to self-perception of undergraduate students ($\beta = 0.140$, $t = 3.569$, $p < 0.05$) than social media utilisation ($\beta = 0.111$, $t = 2.852$, $p < 0.05$). Both social media utilisation and social media addiction make significant contributions to self-perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan. Social media

Table 3. Undergraduate students' self-perception

Statement on self perception	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I think I am smart	339 (40.7%)	337 (40.5%)	69(8.3%)	88 (10.6%)
I feel I am academically good	270 (32.4%)	402 (48.3%)	48 (5.8%)	113 (13.6%)
At times, I think I am not good at all	173 (20.8%)	273 (32.8%)	297 (35.7%)	90 (10.8%)
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	348 (41.8%)	305 (36.6%)	124(14.9%)	56 (16.7%)
I am able to do things as well as most other people	279 (33.5%)	392 (47.1%)	64 (10.1%)	78 (9.4%)
I feel inadequate because of my exposure to achievement of others through social media network	138 (16.6%)	214 (25.7%)	339 (40.7%)	142 (17.0%)
I feel I do not have much to be proud of	110 (13.2%)	313 (37.6%)	230 (27.6%)	180 (21.6%)
I certainly feel useless at times	139 (16.7%)	203 (24.4%)	286 (34.3%)	205 (24.6%)
I feel that I am a person of worth at least on an equal plane with other	162 (19.4%)	358 (43.0%)	231 (27.7%)	82 (9.8%)
I wish I could have more respect for myself	318 (38.1%)	273(32.8%)	156 (18.7%)	86 (10.3%)
I have a positive attitude toward myself	317 (38.1%)	359 (43.1%)	51 (6.1%)	106 (12.7%)
I am inclined to feel I am a failure	81 (10.9%)	96 (11.5%)	311(37.3%)	335 (40.2%)
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	270 (32.4%)	281 (33.7%)	136 (16.3%)	146 (17.5%)

Table 4. Correlation matrix showing relationships among social media utilisation, addiction to social media and undergraduates' self-perception

Variables	N	\bar{X}	1	2	3
Self-perception	833	29.38			
Social media	833	59.07	.181		
Social media addiction	833	59.74	.195	.499	1

Table 5. Multiple regression analysis showing the relative contributions of the independent variables to the dependent variable

Variable	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig
Use of Social Media Networks	6.321	0.028	.111	2.852	0.000
Addiction to social media networks	7.868	0.022	.140	3.569	0.004

addiction and social media utilisation contributed 14.0% and 11.0% respectively to self-perception among undergraduate students at University of Ibadan.

3.3 Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the influence of social media utilisation and addiction of self-perception

of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan. Findings from this study showed that undergraduate students at University of Ibadan have a positive self-perception. This corroborates the study of [15] based on a random web survey in Texas where a positive relationship between intensity of Facebook use and students' life satisfaction, social trust, civic participation and political engagement was reported and [9]

findings which reported that people who use social media networks have a higher self-esteem and positive perception about themselves. It also agrees [16] who demonstrated that exposure to information presented on one's Facebook profile enhances self esteem. This however deviates from the results of a survey of Facebook use in Sweden where a significant but negative relationship ($B = -.074, p < .05$) between Facebook usage and self esteem was reported. In other words, the results indicated that users who spend more time on Facebook have lower self esteem. They went further to explain that there was a significant negative relationship between social comparison and self esteem. Invariably, those who compare themselves with others on social media have a lower self esteem [17].

Similarly, [18] based on a study carried out in two universities in South-Western, Nigeria, revealed a significant positive influence of exposure to Facebook and self esteem. This means that the more people use Facebook as a means of social interaction, the greater the frequency of their interaction with friends will be, which in turn will have a positive impact on their self esteem and satisfaction with life. This may explain why university students are addicted to social media. Also, the study of [19] among secondary school students in Kenya showed that social networking influence their self esteem and psychological well-being even though the study did not explain if the influence was either positive or negative.

Findings on the level of addiction to social media networks among the undergraduates in University of Ibadan revealed a high level of addiction to social media among the undergraduate students. This conforms with the findings from [6] study which revealed a high level of social media addiction among students in tertiary institutions in Oyo state.

On the relationships existing among self-perception, social media utilisation and addiction to social media, findings from the study showed positive relationships among self-perception, social media utilisation and social media addiction among the undergraduate students. This corroborates [10] findings which revealed positive relationships among self-perception, social media utilisation and addiction. Findings on the relative contributions of social media utilisation and social media addiction to undergraduates' self-perception revealed social

addiction as contributing more to undergraduates' self-perception than social media.

In this research, social media use and addiction is considered to play a major role in the formation of self-perception which depends not only on the student's progress but also on his progress compared to other students. Furthermore, peer groups have being shown to be of great help in the development of positive self-perception by providing a supportive framework to the person or on the contrary establish a negative self-image to the person, because of condemnation and rejection.

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of social media utilisation and addiction on self-perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan. The study concluded that undergraduate students at University of Ibadan have a positive perception of themselves. It was also revealed that there are positive relationships between social media utilisation, addiction and undergraduate students' self-perception. Social media addiction contributed more to undergraduate students' self perception than social media utilisation.

Conclusively, the study found out that both social media utilisation and addiction, have relative influence on self-perception of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan, Nigeria just as social media addiction was found to have greater influence on the undergraduate students' self-perception than social media utilisation.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the use of social media should be monitored by the school authority to guide against abuse. One way this use can be monitored is to engage the services of a social media consultant who through the demographics of students' population who are active users of social media can to a large extent monitor what they do with it.

Also, undergraduate students should be given guidance and counselling on how to positively utilise social media networks especially as a tool

for collaborative learning. The management as well as parents should sensitise their children who are actively utilising social media networks that apart from the gains, there could be behavioural and psychological maladies associated with its use and addiction.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research, similar to other empirical studies, was not without limitations. The result of this study was conducted in one geographical area within the context of higher education institution that is, only at University of Ibadan. It is possible that findings could differ in other geographical regions due to a number of reasons. Furthermore, the study did not also take cognisance of how social media utilisation and social media addiction can influence the academic performance of undergraduate students at University of Ibadan.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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