Social Media Utilization and Academic Performance of Students Studying Geography in Public Secondary Schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This project was an investigation on the utilization of social media and academic performance of students in Geography in Nsit Atai Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Four schools out of six public secondary schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area were selected for the study. The population size was 1108 students, while the sample size was 100 students. The correlational research design was adopted for the study. The instruments for data collection were Social Media Utilization Questionnaire (SMUQ) and Geography Achievement Test (GAT). The instruments were validated by the supervisor and tested for reliability; a reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained using the test-retest method reliability test. Two research questions and null hypotheses, respectively were stated to guide the study. Data obtained from the students using the SMUQ and GAT were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC).The hypotheses were tested at .05 alpha level of significance. Concerning the findings of this study, it was deduced that there was a fragile positive relationship between students' utilization of Whastapp, as well as Facebook social media and their academic performance in Geography. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that social media utilization should be encouraged among students as this will help them develop excellent communication skills, build interactions, share ideas and enhance collaboration between students, teachers, and parents alike.

INTRODUCTION

The improvement in communication technology has, in diverse ways, broadened the scope of communication, interactions, and information dissemination through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). It is now possible for people to make interpersonal and mass communication to get desired information as quickly as possible from other areas of the world with the use of internet

technology without leaving their immediate environment.

In the view of Paul (2010: 301), the internet is a massive 'network of networks, a networking infrastructure that connects millions of computers globally, forming a network in which any computer can communicate with each other as long as they are both connected.' According to Andrew (2005: 284), information travels over the internet through a variety of language known as 'protocols.' The term 'internet' is a short term for inter-networks, which implies that the internet is a network of computer networks.

Social media has transformed and impacted communication, learning, research, and education in general. Among the wide variety of online tools that are available for communication, social networking sites (SNS) have become the most modern and attractive tools for connecting people throughout the world (Aghazamani, 2010).

Davis, Canche, Deil-Amen, and Rios-Aguilar (2012), refer to Social Media Technology (SMT) as "web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create and engage as well as share new user-generated content, in digital environments through the multi-

way communication." Through this platform, individuals and organizations create profiles, share, and exchange information on various activities and interests. An exciting aspect of social media is that it is not limited to desktop or laptop computers but could easily be accessed through mobile applications and smartphones. Examples of these social media platforms, both on web and mobile applications include Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Whatsapp, Instagram, Blogs, 2go, Skype. These sites are used to interact with friends, peers, and others found in groups on these sites. The sharing of information ranges from news, debates, gossips, feelings, opinions, and research.

The academic performance, which is measured by the assessment results, is one of the primary goals of an educational institution. To date, schools and institutions are competing in techniques and strategies for improving their teaching methods to meet the growing demands of their students, their sponsors, and society in general. Academic performance is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, a teacher or an educational institution has achieved their educational goals. It is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessments,

but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important; procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts.

Tuckman (1975) defined performance as the apparent demonstration of understanding, concepts, skills, ideas, and knowledge of a person. Hence, the academic performance of students must be managed efficiently, keeping in view all the factors that can positively or negatively influence their educational performance. Social media platforms that students utilize and which may influence their academic performance include 2go, Whatsapp, Facebook, Blackberry messenger, Snapchat, Palmchat, and Badoo.

Whatsapp messenger is a proprietary cross-platform instant messaging subscription service for smartphones and selected feature phones that use the internet for communication. In addition to text messaging, users can send other images, video, and audio media messages as well as their location using integrated mapping features. It has gradually gained entry into the social media's large family and enjoys great popularity due to its distinct features and upgraded social networking attributes. Most young people spend quality time on Whatsapp engaging in chatting, exchanging video clips and audio messages, activities which override their study time and real interpersonal interactions.

Facebook allows anyone who claims to be at least 13 years old to become a registered user of the website. Users must register before using the site, after which they may create a personal profile, add other users as friends, exchange messages, and receive automatic notifications when they update their profile (Roblyer, 2010). Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups, organized by workplace, school or college, or other characteristics, and categorize their friends into lists such as "People from Work" or "Close Friends" (Rapacki, 2007). Where students use and overuse Facebook, this may influence their academic performance in geography either positively or negatively.

The use of technology, such as the internet, facilitates social media participation by students and is one of the most outstanding factors that can influence the educational performance of students positively or adversely.

Statement of the Problem

The emergence of social media as a result of advancement in technology and expansion in internet software has raised eyebrows among academics on its (social media) impacts studies. Students at all levels of learning now have divided attention to studies, as a result of available opportunities to be harnessed from social media. Choney, (2010), MehMood & Taswir, (2013), Kist (2008), Jacobsen & Forste, (2011), believe that the use of technology such as the internet is one of the most critical factors that can influence the educational performance of students positively or adversely.

It is on record that at least 4,000,714 Nigerians are on Facebook, with a good number of them being young people (Facebook Statistics, 2002). There have been many debates on various platforms and media as to the relationship that social media has on society and specifically, its effect on education. Some of these studies found a drop in students' grades and academic performance, and lack of time for studies as consequences of social media network participation (Banquil, 2009; Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010; Ndaku, 2013).

With so many social networking sites on the internet, students are often than necessary tempted to abandon academic engagements in preference for online communication with friends. Many students are now addicted to the new internet trend, which includes chatting, through various social networking platforms like Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, and the likes.

Preliminary investigation and interviews with some teachers and students revealed several challenges concerning student's participation on social media networks. These included a high addiction rate among students, which affects the time of the study, the wrong usage of grammar and spelling in social media discourse as well as distracting students from their studies. As stated by Ndaku (2013), students spend much time on social networking sites than in their academic activities, and this affects their academic performance.

Since these studies have been conducted in primary schools and tertiary levels, the researcher finds it necessary to conduct this study on the relationship that exists between social media utilization and academic performance of students studying Geography in Public Secondary Schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The

researcher believes this will add a new dimension and also fill the research gap between primary and tertiary institutions in terms of the effect of social media on students' academic performance. Thus, the problem of this study is to investigate the relationship between social media utilization and academic performance of students in Nsit Atai L.G.A. of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between social media utilization and academic performance of Geography students in public secondary schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The following objectives were outlined explicitly for this study:

1) To assess the relationship between Whatsapp and academic performance of Geography students in public schools in Nsit Atai L.G.A. of Akwa Ibom state.

2) To find out the relationship between Facebook and academic performance of Geography students in public schools in Nsit Atai L.G.A. of Akwa Ibom state.

Research Questions

1) How does public secondary school students' performance in Geography relate to their utilization of Whatsapp social media network site?

2) How does students' utilization of Facebook relate to their academic performance in Geography in public secondary schools in Nsit Atai L.G.A. of Akwa Ibom State?

Research Hypotheses

For this study, the following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study:

1) There is no significant relationship between students' utilization of Whatsapp and their academic performance in Geography in public secondary schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area.

2) There is no significant relationship between students' utilization of Facebook and their academic performance in Geography in public secondary schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area.

Significance of the Study

This study would be significant to the educational sector, teachers, parents and students, educational agencies, and media

technologists. The findings of this research will create awareness among educationists on the use of social media sites by students and how it affects their academic performance. It will help teachers and tutors to understand the influence that social media has on their students to assist them in enlightening and creating awareness to students on the possible outcomes or ills of its uncontrolled and excessive utilization.

The study will assist parents in knowing the effects of social media usage on their wards and the prescribe ways through which they can curtail the utilization by their wards. It will make them see the need to wake up to their roles of monitoring their children and wards, ensuring that their children pay more attention to their studies.

It will be relevant in assisting students in understanding the diversity of social media sites, thereby helping them make the best use of it to the benefit of their academics. It would also help them learn to explore the social media's potential benefits as it will boost their creativity and technical skills but not at the expense of their primary responsibility, which is studying.

The study will also provide insights into educational agencies, which will enable them to incorporate new strategies and methods into the educational system to make learning more digitized, student-friendly, and relevant. It will assist media technologists as well as software developers in creating social media sites that facilitate learning and encourage interest in academics through e-learning and collaborative online learning. Finally, this study will provide relevant material for students and researchers undertaking similar research in future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT) and Katz's Use and Gratification theory. The two theories answered two aspects of the study, that is, academic performance (learning outcomes) and competition (social media and academic work).

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1997)

According to the Social Learning Theory, three elements, including

individual learners, peers, and situations, potentially affect individuals' learning outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Ainin, Naqshbandi, Moghavvemi, and Jaafar (2015), states that the Social Learning theory "basically explains how the environmental and cognitive components collaborate to affect an individual learning and behavior pattern." "Social Learning Theory views learning as a social process that individuals will self-initiate, regulate learning and actively construct knowledge by acquiring, generating, and structuring information" (Yu, Tian, Vogel, and Kwok, 2010). Concerning the Social Learning Theory, as stated by Bandura (1997), the use of the social networks (by the individual or student) with friends (peers) on various social network platforms (situations) affects his or her academic performance (learning outcomes) positively or negatively. This is supported by Ainin (2015), who "emphasized that individuals' cognition and behavior are influenced through observation and interacting with peers and the situations (e.g., learning the environmental norms, cultures, policies). It is the individuals' interaction with the environment that causes their behavioral consequences". Therefore, when students interact with

peers on social media platforms through observations, interactions, and other activities, these may result in behavioral outcomes that might have a direct relationship with their academic performance positively or negatively.

Katz's Use and Gratification Theory (1974)

The Gratification Theory, which answered the second part of this study, holds that people are responsible for choosing a particular media to meet their needs. The theory is an audience-centered theory that seeks to understand why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs. The theory assumes that individuals who utilize social media are not entirely passive consumers; instead, they have power over their media consumption and assume an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives. The theory also posits that social media audiences are responsible for choosing specific media channels and sites to meet their desires and needs to achieve gratification. These media, in turn, compete with other information sources for viewers' gratification (Katz *et al*., 1974). Therefore, the academic performance of students is as a result of the competition between social media network

participation and academic work. This implies that the amount of time invested participating in social media could positively or negatively affect students' learning outcomes as a result.

Conceptual Framework

Geography is a discipline that enables us to understand the Earth we are living in from a spatial perspective. It offers a systematic framework for inquiry into questions about the world that surrounds us. Geography provides a bridge between the social sciences and the physical sciences, through the provision of an understanding of the dynamics of cultures, societies, and economies on the one hand, and those of physical landscapes and environmental processes on the other.

Geography as a secondary school subject enables students to explore and understand the relationship between the Earth and its peoples through the study of space, place, and environment. These three elements (or macro-concepts) form the core of geography in secondary education. The study of Geography at the senior secondary level is built on the knowledge and skills students will have acquired in the junior secondary curriculum.

As an elective subject in the senior secondary curriculum, Geography aims to provide students with an understanding of the Earth and the modern world. By examining the interrelationship among people, place, and environment, it helps students to acquire an in-depth understanding of the changing contemporary world in terms of space and environment. On the other hand, the study of Geography will help students develop a sound knowledge of our nation. It helps students to face challenges posed by population explosion, environmental pollution, regional socio-economic inequality, resource depletion, etc., all of which are becoming ever more prominent in Nigeria, as well as in the world in general.

The study of Geography in senior secondary schools provides students who will study Geography in the universities with a solid conceptual foundation, while for those who will enter university to study other subjects (such as Arts or Social and Environmental Sciences), it provides exposure to higher-order thinking. For all students, it provides a spatial perspective towards socio-economic and environmental issues, a focus on citizenship and national and global identity,

and opportunities for developing generic skills such as the ability to analyze and synthesize, solve problems, communicate, and to use information technology. The subject also prepares students for a range of career choices in which a global perspective, environmental ethics and awareness, and a sound sense of space and region are specifically needed. More obvious examples of such careers include urban and transport planning, resources and environmental management, tourism and recreation, and at a broader level administration and business.

Social media is a phenomenon that has been developing at a rapid pace. Different scholars have described it differently, and as Jacka and Scott (2011: 5) say, "there is no single recognized definition of social media." Drury (2008: 1) defines social media as "online resources that people use to share content: video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humor, opinion, gossip, news." Safko and Brake (2008) further defined social media as "activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Conversational media are web-based applications that make possible for one to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios".

The standard definition of social media is 'the relationships that exist between networks of people' (Walter and Riveria, 2004 as sited in Ndaku, 2013). Social media has undoubtedly become a global platform where sharing data internationally has become an international trend. Social media mean that it employs mobile and web-based technology to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and community share, co-create, discuss, and modifies users' generated content (Kietzmannn, 2012).

Furthermore, Gupta (2014) stated that social media includes social networking sites like Facebook, 2Go, Whatsapp, Blackberry Messenger, internet forums, chat rooms and message boards where people meet and discuss topics of interest, video, and photo sharing sites like YouTube, flicker and video blogs, wikis, and social bookmarking. Social media, which include blogs (political Blog), networks (Facebook, Twitter), video sharing (YouTube) audio sharing (Podcast), mobile sites (2go), image or picture sharing (flicker), and the likes have the capacity of boosting participation because of its

openness, conversation nature, connectedness, and textual and audiovisual characteristic appeal (Abubakar, 2011). The common platforms in social networks have become hubs where people can express and share ideas and experiences with the world.

Students' utilization of Whatsapp social media and academic performance

WhatsApp, which started in the year 2009, with the tag line "Simple, Personal, Real-time messaging," is a mobile messaging app that allows users to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS. The WhatsApp messenger was purposely created by Brian Acton and Jan Koum in 2009 to make communication and the distribution of multimedia messaging more efficiently and faster. WhatsApp works with internet connectivity and helps its users to stay in touch with friends and relatives in the contact list (Whatsapp, 2010). Apart from making its users getting connected, it also helps them to create groups, send unlimited images, videos, and audio messages. The popularity of WhatsApp among youth has brought a considerable profit among service providers since it works on the internet data plan.

Whatsapp is one of the changes in technology that is commonly used on specific mobile phones and computers. Since smartphones became widespread, many messaging services were launched, but Whatsapp has become very popular among them. Some of the most prominent technological innovations are smartphones, laptops, and using the internet. They have greatly affected many aspects of our lives. Today the Internet continues to grow day by day at an incredible speed. About 32.7% of the world's population has access to Whatsapp social media (Howe, 2012). Whatsapp Messenger has been around for a while, but recent updates have improved the functionality of the application since its release date. The primary purpose behind this application is to replace SMS with a cross-platform mobile messenger that works on an internet data plan. It is currently available for iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, Nokia Symbian60, and S40 and Blackberry. It is popular because there is no cost to message friends and family other than the internet data plan that users already have on their phones. It is easy to get started. Enter the telephone number of the device into the app. It then sorts through the contacts (with your

permission) on the phone to figure out who else also has the app already installed. Users can then invite more contacts or go ahead and start sending messages to the ones that the app discovered. The Whatsapp messenger was purposely created by Brian Acton and Jan Koum in 2009 to make communication and the distribution of multimedia messaging more efficiently and faster. In as much as the application brings us so many benefits, it has also got its flaws that are currently causing more harm than good among the students today (Yeboah and Ewur,2014). With the social media network like Whatsapp, an individual can initiate and build strong business partnerships in any part of the world without meeting that individual in person. With Whatsapp messenger, communication through mobile phones has become more comfortable, faster, and cheaper and provides an outlet for teens to express themselves in their unique ways (Boyd, 2007). It is less expensive as compared to regular phone messaging. An individual can chat with friends and family overseas through Whatsapp without having to incur global SMS charges.

The provision and access to learning material anywhere, anytime, and in various formats have the potential to enhance deep student learning capabilities. It also serves as a source of information to students, and it costs less for students to use social media sites to reach their schoolmates and friends (Bonds-Racke (2008). Whatsapp has primarily been used for the enhancement of discussions and sharing information among students and their teachers. According to Ito, Baumer, Bittanti, Boyd, Cody, and Herr-Stephenson, (2009), teenagers also use this media for several activities, which include delving more in-depth into interest-driven communities and participating in various activities. Whatsapp social media utilization among students is in varied capacities, and they incorporate new information and communication tools such as mobile connectivity, photo and video sharing, instant messaging, sharing of posts, ideas, events, interests, and activities. Mostly, Whatsapp groups are created with members of the same interests, class, activity, status, and level to aid and ease information dissemination, discussions, criticisms, and dialogue.

Notably, some researchers have also observed that there is a decline in the reading habits of students as a result of technological innovations such as social

networking. According to Khan U (2009), social media users often experience poor performance academically. Similarly, Englander, Terregrossa & Wang (2010) posit that the utilization of Whatsapp social media is negatively associated with academic performance of the student and is a lot more momentous than its advantages

Shabi and Udofia (2009, as cited in Agwu & Kalu, 2011) reported that in this age where Internet browsing and playing with funky handsets seem to be the trend among Nigerian youths, reading a good book in a quiet corner of the school library or the home has become an archaic idea. Gonzalez (2011) noted that these days nearly everyone belongs to social media sites, with Whatsapp having a relatively high number of school students and they spend a whole lot of time ranging from one to several hours per day, posting updates and chatting away on Whatsapp and any other number of social media sites into personal daily lives. While the Whatsapp social media has become a staple of social interaction, therein lies a great deal of potential dangers. Marsh (2012) noted that Whatsapp social media, like every good thing, has a flip side as well. Sites such as Whatsapp can also have a negative effect.

Marsh (2012) relented that Whatsapp social media networking is time-consuming as students are gradually becoming addicted to chatting, instant messaging as well as whiling away valuable time idling away online. The hours and time spent on these sites are enough to be used to acquire knowledge; instead, such study and valuable time are spent on social networking. This is the reason Bature, (2010) as cited in Mbachu, (2011), pointed out that Nigeria is not a reading nation, that statistics of illiteracy ratio (those who cannot read) and those who refused to read continue to increase daily. He also stated further that "a white man once said if you want to hide anything from a Blackman, hide it in a book." In other words, social media is taking a more significant part of students' studying hours, and the adverse effects abound. Students skip the time to engage in meaningful activities such as reading and utilizing the school library and engage in social activities such as chatting, posting pictures and videos, and so on, as pointed out by Mbachu (2011) that since the advent of Internet, libraries have witnessed low patronage. Researchers and students prefer the use of Internet for their research works. He noted that the library is now

being perceived by those who prefer Internet as the fastest means of research, thereby throwing up the current challenge of dwindling reading habits in Nigeria. Despite the numerous benefits derived from the use of school libraries that will enable students develop the habit of reading, they prefer their social networking habits, which has become a detriment to them. Such effect includes their poor academic performance in schools.

Students' utilization of Facebook social media and academic performance

Since the inception of social media sites, Facebook has been at the forefront of the social media craze, with over 500 million active users on its website every month.

Facebook was created in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes as a site for Harvard students only. Shortly after, it expanded to any college student with a .edu e-mail account. Between 2005 and 2006, Facebook expanded to high school networks. First, work networks, later, and, eventually, to Internet users in general. According to ComScore Inc."s rankings of top websites, in 2008 Facebook.com was ranked as the 16th most visited website on the Internet in the U.S. (comScore, 2008a), with 34 million unique visitors by January 2008, and as the 13th most popular website worldwide (comScore, 2008b), with 98 million unique visitors by December 2007. As of March 2008, Facebook reported having 67 million active users (those who have returned to the site in the last 30 days), with more than half of them returning daily and spending an average of 20 minutes per day on the site (Facebook, 2008). Like most social network sites, Facebook provides a formatted web page into which each user can enter personal information, including gender, birthday, hometown, political and religious views, e-mail and physical addresses, relationship status, activities, interests, favorite music and movies, educational background and a main personal picture. After completing their profile, users are prompted to identify others with whom they have a relationship, either by searching for registered users of Facebook or by requesting their contacts to join Facebook (usually by e-mail). Once someone is accepted as a "friend," not only the two users" personal profiles but also their entire social networks are disclosed to each other. This allows each user to traverse networks by clicking through

'friends' profiles so that one's social network snowballs rapidly across people and institutions (Walther *et al*., 2008). This capability is the backbone of Facebook and other SNS, and what attracts millions of users around the globe. Facebook profiles also include two types of messaging services. A private system, which is very similar to a webmail service, and a public system called "The Wall," where "friends" leave comments to the owner of the profile that can be viewed by other users. Usually, "The Wall" contains short messages that reflect sentiments, everyday activities between "friends," or call attention to external websites or events.

Facebook also keeps users updated about their social circles, with two features: "News Feed," which appears on the homepage of each user, and "MiniFeed," which appears in each individual's profile. "News Feed" updates a personalized list of news stories throughout the day generated by the activity of "friends." Thus, each time users log in, they get the latest headlines in their social networks. "MiniFeed" is similar, except that it centers around one individual. Each person's "Mini-Feed" shows what has changed recently in their profile and what content or modules

("applications") they have added. Because individuals can delete from their own "Mini-Feed" stories they do not like, users retain control of who gets to read or see what about them.   Among the most popular modules, users can incorporate to their profiles is "Facebook Groups," which allows users to create and join groups based around shared interests and activities. The "Groups" application displays each individual's groups as well as groups their "friends" have joined recently. Thus, an essential share of the civic and political impact of Facebook should occur within groups developed by users and organizations. Facebook was ranked as the most used social network worldwide in 2009. Paxson (2010) and Abubakar (2011) opined that Facebook is used to keep users connected with those around them and what is happening in the world at any given time. Facebook has been described as one of the essential social media networks and websites. It is one of the new media networks which provides users with a mix of interpersonal and mass communication capabilities that have not existed before, and which place emphasis on interactivity and mobility (Paxson, 2010).

David (2014) discussed the advantages of Facebook from three distinct

standpoints, namely: friends, groups, and entertainment.

1) Friends: Facebook functions primarily to connect and network with friends and family. Using search and connection tools, you find it easy to find current or long lost friends and to share content with friends and view content offered by them as well. Content includes anything from a post on your page (known as your wall) to photos, videos, and a personal bio. A user has the option to share little or as much with friends as he/she desires. These interactions offer users the opportunity to stay in touch with people, often, some of whom the users would not be otherwise connected with regularly (David, 2014).

2) Groups: Users of Facebook can create groups and event pages for special gatherings or topics. The primary purpose of these groups usually is to create (or bring) awareness to causes, such as in the aftermath of natural disasters, to provide information on how to donate money to help victims. A group may also be made up of a circle of friends or as a means to promote an upcoming event or gathering. A user can make his/her created pages private or public to allow the information to be seen by only those he/she prefer or anyone that has access. (David, 2014)

3) Entertainment: Facebook offers many types of games that can be played with friends and other users. These interactive games may offer a user the opportunity to pretend to run everything from a farm to his mafia. This can be an interaction to share with current friends, meet new ones, or pass the time. Many other applications also exist for entertainment purposes that offer everything from surveys to one's biggest fan (David, 2014).

4) Promotion: Social media, including Facebook, are being used to promote scholarship by youths in institutions of higher learning across the globe.

Over the years, many studies have been conducted, and utilization of the Facebook social media has depicted both positive as well as negative relationships on the academic performance of the students. Though many arguments can be made about the possible risks of students' use of this social media site, it is essential to point out the benefits of it as well. Many

schools have started to use the Facebook site to promote education, keep students up to date with assignments, and offer help to those in need (Boyd, 2007). In general, the Internet and social media sites can be a positive influence on students. Besides, they serve both as a meeting place for teens to interact with other like-minded people and as showplaces for a teen's artistic, musical abilities, and reading skills (Boyd, 2007). Secondary school students use Facebook sites as a tool to obtain information and resources for future planning. For example, students applying for admission in higher institutions visit profiles of that institution and their students to view pictures and read updates of past students to determine whether the institution would be a good fit (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Gonzalez (2011) pointed out that Facebook social media is a new method of social interaction in this age of information, and to ignore it would only isolate one from social communication and plenty of useful or enjoyable aspects of social networking. Brooks Young (2011) purported that Facebook social media can dissolve classroom walls and provide excellent learning experiences for students through collaborative learning, peer-to-

peer and student-teacher interactions. Although, it is said that active learning from reading books is better than passive learning, such as watching television (Shabi & Udofia, 2009), as cited in Agwu & Kalu (2011), it has been observed that most active learning processes are as a result of utilization of social media by young people. School and peer groups are created, and these enable students to take part in discussions at a time convenient to them, articulate their ideas in more carefully thought-out and structured ways as well as take online courses that could sharpen their professional skills, broaden their horizons and build their intellectual capacities. Apart from these, News sites on Facebook social media provide an opportunity for young adults to keep stay touch with recent social, environmental, religious and academic events and occurrences around their immediate and outside environment. Facebook social media site is an excellent platform for advert placement, vacancies, and enlistment, recruitment, scholarship enrollment, and publicity.

In support of Tiene's (2000) findings, Deng and Tavares (2013) also concluded that "Web-based discussions can contribute to the development of students'

reflective ability and critical thinking skills. Also, compared to face-to-face (F2F) interaction, students are more willing to voice their views or even disagreement and are more attuned to others' opinions in online discussions".

Geography educators can use the Facebook social media in a variety of ways to improve their teaching and learning processes and avail multiple benefits for collaborative professional development (McCulloch, Mclntosh & Barrett, 2011; Menon, 2013). Some of the key benefits include peer networking, reflection, and sharing of classroom practices, knowledge sharing, locating learning resources, post-conference, workshop, and training discussions (Menon, 2013). Facebook media allows teachers adequate time to learn about and share effective practices. Facebook also allows teachers to connect with their peers operating all around the globe in order to share plans and approaches and for support and motivation. Facebook helps teachers connect with their students about assignments, upcoming events, useful links, and samples of work outside the classroom. Students can also use it to contact classmates about questions regarding class assignments or

examinations as well as collaborate on assignments and group projects.

Paxson (2010) and Abubakar (2011) opined that Facebook is used to keep users connected with those around them and what is happening in the world at any given time.

Some writers have posited that the utilization of social media is a form of distraction, and the act of multitasking has led to poor academic performance of students. Karpinski (2009) reported that the majority of students who use Facebook every day are underachieving by as much as an entire grade compared with those who shun the site, Facebook users may feel socially successful in cyberspace, but they are more likely to perform poorly in exams. Rouis, Limayem, and Salehi-Sangari (2011) noted that students and other active users engage in lengthy discussions about daily issues, checking their Facebook profiles from home and their cell phones. Students also check their updates while preparing their homework, which interferes with their homework preparation. These students are distracted from their primary occupation. Students' working memory load allocated to these tasks makes it difficult for them to be focused and prepare their homework adequately. This

leads to poor reading habits and instable results and likely decreases in their global achievements due to their participation with social media sites. Ultimately, the split attention paid to multiple tasks causes an individual to become distracted from their reading, the time that should be spent studying is spent on social networking (Rouis *et al*., 2011). The act of procrastination and cramming rather than studying as a result of this media utilization among students are on the rise. Banquil *et al.* (2009) stated that students also show the act of procrastination and cramming because of these social media sites that exist in the present day. As a result, it was proved that everyday habit of procrastination and regular cramming of homework and studying of lesson had been the tremendous factor of acquiring low scores, the cause of which is the excessive usage of social media sites. Banquil *et al.* (2009) suggested that one should learn to balance one's time and to know one's priorities first before engaging one to other activities, and therefore as a student, it is essential to remember that the number one priority should be studies rather than entertainment.

Subrahmanyam and Greenfield (2008) reiterated that Facebook media might be depersonalizing the process of interpersonal communication. Instead of viewing the media as another means to boost communication between close peers and schoolmates, it may be negatively affecting face-to-face communication because of the overwhelmingly impersonal attributes. Subrahmanyam and Greenfield (2008) further explained that there are specific ways a student can engage themselves during spare times other than wasting time all flopped for hours in front of the television or front of mindless and meaningless web pages or blogs. These hours could be converted into moments of value and ensure that they are adding a little something to themselves at all times. These are times to catch up on studies and address issues that one may have with a particular subject (Ogbonna, 2011). Students should make their time valuable and develop the fundamental disciplines that allow one to mine something out of nothing (Ogbonna, 2011).

Depression is another negative influence of Facebook networking on students, and a depressed mind finds it difficult to read and understand. Depression causes a student to find it challenging to concentrate and study. Marsh (2012) indicated that researchers

proved that there appears to be a positive correlation between hyper networking, which is more than three hours of Internet time and adverse health behavior such as depression, drug abuse, and isolation among teenagers. Adeyemo (2012) affirmed that studies found out that Facebook can trigger feelings of depression and anxiety. According to Medline Plus (as cited in Cloe, 2007), depression is thought to be caused by abnormal levels of neurotransmitters, which disrupts the balance of activity in the brain. When there is an imbalance in the brain, how well can a student read, understand and assimilate?

Internet is today becoming the most accessible point of access to pornography and other obscenities by students. Recently, Facebook launched a new feature known as 'Facebook Live Video.' This feature allows users to record videos that are watched live by millions of users on the platform. The app feature has been abused mainly by youngsters who record and broadcast explicit content and offensive videos. A unique case was reported in January 2017 where a group of three teenagers in the United States of America secluded and tortured a Black-American youngster recording, and broadcasting live videos of the act on Facebook. This issue raised much dust in the global environment and was condemned as racial discrimination. Moreover, latest pornographic diagrams are summarized in text messages, instant messaging (IM) or multimedia messages, and broadcasted by deviant people.

Kuss and Griffiths (2011) reported in an online survey of some Internet users showed that people who use Facebook social media site more in terms of time spent on it were perceived to be less involved with real-life connections to peers, and hence a negative social identity tend to use social networking more in order to compensate for this. However, it could also be the case with students who invest a lot of their time into social networking. Kuss and Griffiths (2011) related further that adolescents who received predominantly negative feedback had low self-esteem, which in turn led to low well-being.

Banquil et al. (2009) lamented that social media is the cause of damage to students' chances of being well-off in the future. The utilization of internet has also been associated with physical and mental health as well as can have adverse impact on family life. According to Akhtar (2013)

excessive utilization of the internet can become an addiction especially among students, and it can cause academic problems. The author suggested that internet addiction can cause a fall in time spent on studies, a significant drop in grades, low interest in extracurricular activities and lack of interest in classes. However, adverse effects of Facebook social media have outweighed the positive aspects. First, excessive utilization of social media has shown a negative relationship on student's physical, psychological and family health. Moreover, excessive utilization has also been associated with sleep deprivation, insomnia and chronic illnesses (O'Keeffe and Pearson, 2011).

RESEARCH METHODS

Area of the Study

The research was conducted in Nsit Atai Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State in Nigeria. The area is located on latitudes 4^0 51'0"N, 8^0 0'0"E and longitude 4.85000°N, 8.01667°S, and is approximately 50 kilometers from the state's capital city. It is bounded on the north by Uruan, in the east by Okobo, in the west by Ibesikpo Asutan Local Government Areas. It has a land area of about 17,000km². According to the 2006

Nigeria population census (NPC, 2006), Nsit Atai can conveniently boast of a population of 101,915 people. Nsit Atai people who are predominantly farmers are mainly of the Ibibio tribe with the Ibibio language as the spoken language. The study area has decent levels of educational institutions. They include pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools. There are 13 pre-primary schools, 25 primary schools, 9 secondary schools (out of which 6 are public secondary schools), and some adult education centers.

Research Design

The correlational research design was used in carrying out this study. This design sought to determine the relationship between social media utilization and students' academic performance. The design was suitable as it is a specific type of non-experimental design used to describe the relationship between or among variables.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was a fact-finding Likert typed questionnaire called Social Media Utilization Questionnaire (SMUQ), which had 20 items developed by the researcher.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections A and B and had a five-option scale using the Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) And Strongly Disagree (SD) options. Section (A) sought demographic information about the respondents, while section (B) contained twenty items that were intended to assess the utilization of social media sites.

Also, a Geography Achievement Test (GAT) was structured on a four-option scale, A-D, to assess the academic performance of students in Geography. The Geography Achievement Test (GAT) consisted of twelve items and two sections. The first section contained the students' demographic details such as gender, class, and school name, while the second section consisted of the four options Geography Achievement Test (GAT).

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was determined using the test-retest method reliability test. The instrument was administered to 30 Senior Secondary one (SS1) students who were not part of the sample size selected for the study. The reliability of the instrument was calculated from data obtained using the independent t-test analysis, and the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.78.

Administration of the Instrument

The questionnaires and the Geography Achievement Test (GAT) were administered personally by the researcher. The instruments were distributed to the students in their classrooms, and they completed them and returned the same to the researcher on the spot. All the copies of the instruments were collected at a 100 percent rate.

Method of Data Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

ANALYSIS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Data Analysis and Results

Data collected in the study were subjected to the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The research questions and null hypotheses were tested at a significance level of .05. The results of the study are shown in the Tables.

Research Question 1

How does public secondary school students' performance in Geography relate to their utilization of Whatsapp social media network site?

Table 1. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of students' utilization of Whatsapp social media and their academic performance in Geography.

Variable	N	ΣX ΣY	ΣX^2 ΣY^2	ΣXY	r-cal	Remarks
Whatsapp vs Academic Performance	100	1211	1546	98843	0.124	very weak positive relationship
		724	5698			

Table 1 shows that Whatsapp's social media utilization has a fragile positive relationship with students' academic performance in Geography.

Research Question 2

How does students' utilization of Facebook relate to their academic performance in Geography in public secondary schools in Nsit Atai L.G.A. of Akwa Ibom State?

Table 2. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of students' utilization of Facebook social media and their academic performance in Geography.

Variable	N	ΣX ΣY	ΣX^2 ΣY^2	ΣXY	r-cal	Remarks
Whatsapp vs Academic Performance	100	1216	1688	9074	0.276	very weak positive relationship
		724	5698			

Table 2 shows that Facebook social media utilization has a fragile positive relationship with students' academic performance in Geography.

Hypotheses Testing and Results

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between students' utilization of Whatsapp and their academic performance in Geography in public secondary schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area (see table 3).

In testing hypothesis 1, Table 3 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.124 is less than the critical r-value of 0.199 at 98 degrees of freedom and 0.05 alpha level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between students' utilization of Whatsapp social media and their academic performance in Geography.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between students' utilization of Facebook social media and their academic performance in Geography in public secondary schools in Nsit Atai Local Government Area (see table 4).

Table 3. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of students' utilization of Whatsapp social media and their academic performance in Geography.

Variable	N	ΣX ΣY	ΣX² ΣY²	ΣXY	r-cal	r-crit	Df	Decision at .05 alpha level
Whatsapp vs Academic Performance	100	1211	15469	8843	0.124	0.199	98	*not significant
		724	5698					

In testing hypothesis 2, Table 4 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.276 is higher than the critical r-value of 0.199 at 98 degrees of freedom and 0.05 alpha level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant positive relationship between students' utilization of Facebook social media and students' academic performance in Geography.

Discussion of Findings

Students' Utilization of Whatsapp Social Media and Academic Performance

In the PPMC analysis of hypothesis 1 as shown in Table 3, the calculated r-value of 0.124 was less than the critical r-value of 0.199 at 98 degree of freedom and .05 alpha level of significance indicating that there is a fragile significant positive relationship between students' utilization of Whatsapp social media and their academic performance in Geography. This finding is asserted by Marsh (2012) who opined that Whatsapp social media

networking is time-consuming as students are gradually becoming addicted to chatting, instant messaging as well as whiling away valuable time idling away online. Khan (2009) further buttressed this assertion by adding that social media users often experience poor performance academically. Similarly, Englander, Terregrossa & Wang (2010) also posit that the utilization of Whatsapp social media is negatively associated with academic performance of student and is a lot more momentous than its advantages. Supporting this, Agwu and Kalu (2011), the abuse of new technologies contributes to students' poor reading, further opining that in this era of information and communication technology, the general orientation of young people has unconsciously exchanged from reading and the love of books to these new technologies. Agwu and Kalu (2011) further emphasized that people now live in the generation of iPad, laptops, iPhone, Whatsapp, and other social networking

Table 4. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis of students' utilization of Facebook social media and their academic performance in Geography.

Variable	N	∑X ∑Y	∑X² ∑Y²	∑XY	r-cal	r-crit	Df	Decision at .05 alpha level
Whatsapp vs Academic Performance	100	1216 724	16880 5698	9074	0.276	0.199	98	*significant

sites, thereby reading has been literarily sacrificed on the altar of modern technologies. Shabi and Udofia (2009), as cited in Agwu & Kalu, (2011) also agreed that in this age where Internet browsing and playing with funky handsets seem to be the trend among Nigerian youths, reading a good book in a quiet corner of the school library or in the home has become an archaic idea and consequently, academics and studies have primarily been left to suffer.

Students' Utilization of Facebook Social Media and Academic Performance

From the analysis of hypothesis 2, as seen in Table 4, it was deduced that there is a significant direct positive relationship between students' utilization of Facebook social media and students' academic performance in Geography. This deduction toes the line of Brooks, Y. (2011) Who purported that Facebook social media can dissolve classroom walls and provide excellent learning experiences for students through collaborative learning, peer-to-peer and student-teacher interaction. Menon (2013) supported this deduction when he asserted that some of the key benefits of Facebook social media to students include peer networking, reflection, and sharing of classroom practices, knowledge sharing, locating learning resources, post-conference, workshop, and training discussion.

Furthermore, David (2014) supported that social media, including Facebook, are being used to promote scholarship by youths in institutions of learning across the globe. Supporting this deduction, Paxson, (2010) opined that Facebook is one of the new media networks which provides users with the mix of interpersonal and mass communication capabilities that have not existed before, and which place emphasis on interactivity and mobility of ideas which in turn improves academic performance of students.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that social media is a tool for knowledge build-up among students in a technologically-driven society like ours. Findings from this study have indicated that social media has improved students' access to academic materials, which were hitherto difficult. The study also showed that social media not only helps students to acquire knowledge but also establishing enduring relationships with real people, connecting with fellow students, teachers and family alike. This has proven useful because such interpersonal interactions are vital to creating and sustaining a sense of belonging. Apart from these, the findings from this study have also proved that social media sites can help students develop various skills that are necessary in today's dynamic world as well as encouraging students to engage knowledgeably with each other and to express and share their creativity. Therefore, social media participation and utilization should be encouraged among students to facilitate collaboration, peer-to-peer learning, and creativity.

Recommendations and Implications of the Study

Based on the findings of the study; it is recommended that:

1) Whatsapp social media utilization by secondary schools students should be discouraged and proper measures put in place to curtail and checkmate the utilization of this media by students. This would go a long way in reawakening students' interest in related academic pursuits and their studies, thereby enhancing their academic performance.

2) Secondary school students should be encouraged to utilize Facebook social media to increase their access to information, academic resources, tutors, and teachers as well as promoting and enhancing their academic abilities through interactions with peers, colleagues, family, and professionals.

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