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EFFECT OF LANGUAGE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN IMO STATE

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ABSTRACT
This work emanated as a result of the facts that Nigerian students are addicted to social media. social media refers to the means of interaction among people in which they create, share, exchange and comment among themselves in different networks. Students visit the social networking sites for different purposes. Such site include: twitter, yahoo messenger, facebook messenger, blackberry messenger (BBM), whatsApp messenger, 2go messenger, skyp, Google talk, Google messenger, iphone and androids. The research was guided by two research questions. In order to find out the effects of social media on students' academic achievement, the researcher made use of oral interview questions and the junior secondary school students' (Js III), English language, Igbo language and social studies examination results. It was discovered that the social media have both positive and negative effects on the academic achievements of students. The researcher is of the view that teachers should create group chart on social media and monitor it judiciously for academic purposes. It is one among some valuable suggestions that would guide both the teachers and students to relegate the negative effects of social media to the background.

Keywords: Language, Social media, Academic achievement

Introduction
In this 21st century, the use of social media is common owing to the fact that the world has become a global village. Students interact more with their peers via the social media like whatsApp, 2go, skype, facebook, and so on than the traditional letter writing. The writing of letters used in social media is different from the traditional one but students unconsciously bring in the language they use in social media why? Because, they are familiar with social media.

Language has many definitions, but for the sake of this write up, few of them shall be looked at. It is a symbol of communication that differenciates man from another lower animals to relate with his fellow human beings. Language is a system of conventional spoken, written, symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social groups and participants in its culture, communicate (the new encyclopedia Britanica).

Languages are the principle systems of communication used by particular groups of human beings within the particular society

(linguistic community) of which they are members-lyons. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbol by means of which a social group cooperates. Block and tag quoted in syal and jindal (5). Language is a system of conventional sports manual (signed) or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of social groups and participants in its culture express themselves (Wasuma Daga, 29th Oct, 2020). Two things are clear from the above definitions. Language is a system of communication, in such communications, human beings are involved. Language is needed by human beings for communication in different ways. It could be used positively to teach, explain, inform, argue, direct , praise, pray, preserve, plan, please, crack jokes etc. it could also be used negatively to antagonize, cheat, lie, deceive, instead, misinform, misdirect, blackmail and the like. These communications take place between individuals. It can also take place between animals but language is specific to human beings. It is therefore pertinent to assert that language is a fundamental medium for the expression of ideas, thoughts, feelings, beliefs and attitudes, language is a prerequisite for human existence because it is an instrument of thought or concept. According to Owoeye, "it is through language that one is able to give vivid and clear expression to thoughts". Language undoubtedly makes it possible for individual to live and interact well in a society. It is therefore, at the center of activities that go on in the society. Without language, human existence in the environment would be shrouded in obscurity. From the above discussions on language, it is clear that all activities in the society's media are carried out by humans using language.

Concept of social media

The word 'social' refers to interacting with other people by sharing information with them. The term 'media' refers to instruments of communication while television, radio and news papers are examples of more traditional forms of media social media are web based communication tools that enable people to interact with each other by sharing and consuming information. They refer to the types of user driven electronic online communication which allows for limitless connectivity through sites/platforms and tools, (Wikipedia, 2011). Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a concept that has been globally appreciated. One will be in his office or residence and monitor the events that happen all over the world, as a result of discovery of the internet, e-mail, E-systems, digital and metro-digital machines and a host of other information technologies available for the use of mankind (Ughammadu 2015) and (Ikegbusi, 2016). The use and application of ICT, particularly the computer and their modern and ultra-modern invention in the field of science, engineering, agriculture, education, business, printing and publish, architecture, medicine, etc cannot be possible or even appreciated if one is not computer literate (Aribisala, 2016).

Nigeria is currently attaining the status of other advanced countries in achieving advancement in communication technology. As a result of this, the scope of

communication through information and Communication Technology (ICT) has broadened. There are a lot of modern technologies which no doubt, have affected the lives and academic performance of students either positively or negatively. Such social media include: facebook, whatsApp, twitter, yahoo messenger, skype, Google messenger, IMO, etc to mention but a few. According to Obi, Bulu, Adamu and Sola'at (2012), the use of these sites affects students' use of English and grammar and in particular the academic achievement of students. Social media has grown tremendously in the last few years. From 2006 onwards, the growth rate is unexpectedly very high.

Specifically, facebook and Twitter have grown much faster and engrossed millions of users in just a few years. Nevertheless more people are going to grasp its benefits. It has brought a lot of advantages to the society and students in particular. It has enhanced the performance of students in doing assignments.

ICT's according to Ogbuatu (2011), provide greater opportunities for students and teachers to adjust learning and teaching to individual needs, society is forcing schools (primary, secondary and tertiary) to give appropriate response to this technical development. In the areas of connectivity social media has linked so many people, regardless of location and religion. Students can connect with one another to learn and share ideas. In the area of information and updates, through social media, one can update oneself on the latest happenings around the country. Some parents who allow their children to be exposed to social media believe that it helps their children to be more alert, smart and also excel in school. Schools and institutions are experiencing many technological advancements and changes in techniques in improving their teaching methods to meet the growing demands of their students. Most schools take advantage of the use of social media as teaching aids. Daniel (2017) posits that the adoption of ICT by the teachers of English language will enhance effective teaching, such issues like grammar, communication skills, phonetics and phonology, essay and comprehension and any other aspect of English language that can be enhanced by the use of ICT based technology.

However, in this paper, yahoo, facebook, twitter, etc. are used to portray the social media with regard to how it affects the academic achievement of students in secondary schools in Imo state. Social media is very broad but for the purposes of this study, the researcher shall be looking at the use of language aspect of it.

Features of the Social Media

The following constitute the features of social media.

a. User Account: if a site allows visitors to enter, it creates an avenue for social interaction. You cannot share information or interact with others online without having a user account.
b. Profile page: social media is all about communication. Its profile page is often necessary to represent an

individual. It often includes information about the individual user.

c. Others are friends, follower groups, new feeds, etc.

Statement of the Problem

The use of social media has become very common in the society that some students have become addicted to it. Addiction to social media could affect students' academic performance if not checked. In the course of studies, students might consciously or unconsciously borrow from social media abbreviation of slangy expression especially in writing. Students are not allowed to use such abbreviations in schools especially in languages. Since such media expressions are not accommodated in schools, the result is poor students' performance. This could help to curb the problems associated with the students' use of social media.

Research Questions

The researcher generated the following research questions, guided the study

1. To what extent does the use of social media affect the academic achievement of secondary schools students in Imo State?
2. What roles should the teachers play to curb the problems associated with the use of social media?

Research Method

The questionnaire served as the instrument used to gather the data needed for the study. A self-made instrument called language of the social media (LSM) was used to determine whether a particular gender that used social media performed better in academic work than their counterparts. Secondly, whether it affected their ability to cope with school work. Also whether teachers, had roles to play as regards the students' use of the social media. The questions were not intended to ensure other factors that affect the academic achievement of the students. The number of females and males for the junior secondary school (JSII) English language, Igbo language and social studies. Mock examination results were taken from social respondents' record from their schools. The JSIII students were used in this study because they were still via the school doing their JSIII examination while this research was in progress.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One: To what extent does the use of social media affect the academic achievement of secondary schools students in Imo State?

Table 1: Frequency percentage distribution of how the language of the social media has affected the academic achievement of students

S/NO	Items statements	Agree	%	Disagree	%
1	Unconsciously use abbreviation in my official writings due to the influence of social media	75	65.5	15	32.5
2	Sometimes I make use of slangy expressions in my class work	75	66.2	23	30.2
3	I consult social media most often for my assignments	96	90.9	04	09.1
4	Our teachers direct us to different sites for assignments	94	90.5	06	12.1
5	Using the social media has greatly improved my knowledge	96	94.3	04	08.3
6	Students who use abbreviations and slangy expression do not perform well in examinations	90	95.5	10	05.5
7	Female students are addicted to social media than their male counterparts	15	14.2	75	73.5
	Mean				

In Table 1, the results show that the students make use of the social media for their assignments and it has both positive and negative effects on their performances.

Research Question Two: What roles should the teachers play to curb the problems associated with the use of social media?

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution on the role teachers should play to promote the use of the social media and also curb its negative effects.

S/ NO	Items statements	Agrees	%	Disagree	%
8	Teachers call the attention of the students when every they use abbreviation of slangy expression	80	80.0	20	2.5
9	Teachers consult the social media for new innovation in language teaching	85	80.5	15	16.5
10	Most teachers do not have adequate knowledge of the social media	20	2.5	80	85.5
11	Teachers have their class group charts which they use to monitor the activities of the students on social media	10	10.5	90	90.5
	Mean	84.1			15.9

From the results in Table 2, it shows that the greater percentage of the respondents agree that teachers call the attention of the students whenever they notice the negative effects of social media in their writing.

Discussion of Results

The results of the findings in table 1 indicated the frequency and percentage distribution of how the language of social media has affected the academic achievement of students 75% and 77% agree that they use abbreviations and slangy expression in their official writings while 15% and 23% do not. 96% agree that they consult the social media for their assignments. 96% average that the use of social media has greatly improved their knowledge. 90% of the respondents agree that students who employ abbreviation and slangy expressions do not perform creditability in English language examinations. From the above results, the researchers reached a conclusion that the use of social media greatly improves the knowledge of the students generally. It is also noted that students who use abbreviations and slangy expressions do not do well in English language examinations. This is in line with the marks which could be deducted from the student's essay for instance, the students would end up scoring zero under mechanical accuracy. Again the result of the findings shows that 73.3% agree that male students are more addicted to the social media, hence the negative effects fall heavily on them. The findings in table two further revealed that 80% of the teachers call the attention of the students whenever they use abbreviation or slangy expressions in their writings. 85% believe that teachers consult the social media for innovation in language teaching. 20% agree that teachers do not have adequate knowledge of the social media while 80% maintained that they do. 10% of the respondents agree that the teachers have group charts, which they use to monitor the activities of the students on social media. These findings show that teachers really put in their best to ensure that students do not get carried away by the effects of the social media. The finding also shows that teachers do not have group chats for the classes so as

to enable them to monitor the activities of the students.

Conclusion

The world is presently in an age of information and communication technology (ICT). Social network has come to stay, however, students need to strike a balance between the use of social networking, sites and their studies. From the results of these findings, it is pertinent to affirm that the students consult social media for different purposes and that it greatly affect their performances both positively and negatively. Teachers play their part in encouraging the students to use the social media. It is also noteworthy that student browse and chat in class even when studies are on-going and when they ought to be doing other more profitable things, they are so griped online in their chat. Social networking, however, can be beneficial to students if properly and appropriately managed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendation are made:

1. The students should be encouraged to consult the social media for meaningful activities
2. The school authorities should provide the tablets and mobile data for teachers in order to utilize the social media effectively
3. Teachers should create group chats on social media with which to teach and also monitor the activities of the students. To get all the students fully involved, teachers should attach certain marks for participation in the group chats.
4. The school management should insist on the positive use of social networking sites such as collaborative learning to enable them to join other student groups online.
5. Counselors should intimate to parents about their children's conducts and use of internet; and where and when necessary organize meeting with parents on account of their children's behavior in order to checkmate it.
6. Using the social media should be encouraged in schools
7. Parents should be encouraged to ensure that the use of social network do not interfere with their children's assignments.

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