



## APPLICATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSE BY STUDENTS OF AUCHI POLYTECHNIC EDO STATE

OSAHENI, O.<sup>1</sup>, ODIGHI, M.O.<sup>2\*</sup> AND SADIQ, F.I.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Auchi Polytechnic Library, Auchi, Edo State, Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Computer Science, Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State, Nigeria.

<sup>3</sup>ICT Directorate, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.

### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the application of social media tools for academic purposes by students of Auchu polytechnic. Three research objectives and research questions were raised to guide this study. The study employed a descriptive survey method and a questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The population of the study consisted of four thousand two hundred and seventeen (4217) students that have registered with the polytechnic library during the period of the study for the 2019/2020 academic session. The population of this study is large and a representative sample of hundred and fifteen (115) students were found in the library within the period of the study using availability sampling techniques. It was revealed from the study that a majority of the students used WhatsApp and Facebook very frequently. The study reported that lack of complete automation, lack of functioning e-library, epileptic power supply, poor bandwidth/internet connectivity and lack of basic IT facilities are the challenges facing the use of social media by the students of Auchu Polytechnic. The study recommended that the Auchu Polytechnic management and the library administration should do the needful by ensuring that the e-library section is functioning optimally with internet connectivity and improved and regular subscription to facilitate the smooth application of social media tools for academic purposes by the students.

**Keywords:** Academic, Facebook, Library, Polytechnic, Social media, WhatsApp.

**\*Correspondence:** odighimatthew@gmail.com, 07033355054

### INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of the internet and its usage in higher education has revamped the world over. Presently, the advancements in its capabilities have opened up new avenues of interactions for sharing of knowledge and experiences. The innovative usage has generated new opportunities for sharing academic experiences, and research practices of eminent scholars. The internet has promoted virtual interactions for sharing research findings, such internet enhanced interactions for communication are termed social media. The innovative usage has generated new opportunities for sharing academic experiences and research practices of eminent scholars of the world [1]. According to Bakar *et al.* [2], the internet appears to be reshaping the instruction and instructional interactions and has promoted virtual interactions for sharing research findings. Social media is used for enhancing communication by using media tools and internet sites termed social networking sites. Posting on the social media platforms allow students to collaborate and exchange of ideas about their homework outside the class [3]. Today, users can access information through a wide range of channels and Sources. Research shows that some social media platforms, such as Wikipedia and YouTube, have emerged as important information sources. However, so many works have been done on social media tools by scholars both locally and internationally but much have not been done on the application of social media tools for academic purpose by students of Auchu polytechnic. This study will fill this gap.

### Statement of the problem

The advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) offers students in institutions of higher learning tremendous opportunities to learn beyond the boundaries of lecture halls or hostels. Higher institutions of learning have been affected by Technological advancement in many ways. Academic institutions in Nigeria are trying to adopt modern technologies in their academic activities. Social media tools are part of this technological advancement that students can harness for academic purposes as well as for their everyday-life information-seeking purposes. The information available through social media is created and shared by interested students. Students have developed an interest in some social media platforms, such as Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube as significant information sources. Social networking sites provide a unique platform for speedy provision and dissemination of information for learning and research when effectively and appropriately harnessed. It is against this backdrop that this study attempts to investigate the application of social media tools for academic purposes by students of Auchu polytechnic.

### Objectives

- To determine the frequency of use of social media tools by students.
- To examine the academic purpose for using social media tools by students.
- To discover the challenges militating against student use of social media tools for academic purpose

### Research questions

- a. How frequently do you use social media tools?
- b. What is the academic purpose for using social media tools?
- c. What are the challenges militating against the students use of social media for academic purpose?

### Literature review

The term “Social Networking” refers to a range of web-enabled software programs that allow users to interact and work collaboratively with other users. It includes browsing, searching, inviting friends to connect and interact, sharing reviews, commenting, blogging, etc. A social network allows individuals to join and create a personal profile, then formally connect with other users of the systems as social friends. They can be referred to as social connecting sites among the social users in the web 2.0 domain. Social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system [3].

According to Vie [10], Social media are defined as “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)”. While there are different ways to categorise social media, its typology is often based on the main function and purpose of use, such as for blogging, microblogging (such as Twitter), social networking (such as Facebook), collaborative knowledge production and sharing (such as Wikipedia), multimedia sharing (such as YouTube). The advent of social media has brought about significant impacts on daily life, not only changing the ways in which people stay connected but also presenting considerable opportunities and challenges for librarians and educators. It is already known that social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook are widely used. There are currently about 66 percent of online adults that use SNS [4, 7]. In addition to affecting communication, marketing, and instruction, social media seem to have changed students’ information-seeking behaviours [2].

According to Bakar *et al.* [2], “e-learning or web-based learning environment is an evolution in education and English language learning”. Social media can help language acquisition by offering an opportunity to learn through observation before having an understanding. Armstrong & Tranklin [1] claimed that this leads to learners winning confidence and becoming recognised members of the community, which then allows them to stimulate spiritually and allow learning within the community, by being teachers themselves. [8] in their study stated that the interactive abilities of computer-mediated communication tools have encouraged the study of language learning in text-based

chat, massively multiple online gaming and mobile devices. Students who use Facebook or any e-learning webpage have better reading and writing skills [6]. Students and faculty are using these emerging technologies and platforms in all facets of their daily lives, specifically social media; yet, a low percentage of users are engaging in such for academic practice [5]. Social media is being used increasingly by university students. It is promoting virtual Communities and virtual learning environments (VLEs) for expanding distributed learning among users. The students interact in their virtual communities freely with members of the community. They can share information and study experiences, research projects and job opportunities with each other. Various factors contribute towards the use of social media for educational purposes [5]. Report in [1] indicated that the students used social media in different manners to enhancing and strengthening their learning, through reflection and collaborative activities in virtual environments. However, the students depended upon infrastructure and the skill of using social media. The following are the challenges of ICT skills in Nigerian tertiary institutions, as observed by [4].

**a) poor information infrastructure.** Most of the computers and other ICT facilities in our tertiary institutions are outdated and cannot withstand the current information needs of the institution. So, students find it very difficult to make adequate use of these materials.

**b) inadequate power supply.** There is epileptic power supply in most of our tertiary institutions, and this small measure affects the general ICT, related activities in tertiary institutions. Most of the ICT facilities function with the aid of electricity, and without constant power supply, little or no work can be achieved.

**c) addiction and time-wasting.** Technology has grown significantly and the use of the internet and social media is part of their daily lives. A study carried out by Harvard University [7], showed disclosing personal information and activates the part of the brain which signifies pleasure because other activities which activate this part of the brain include receiving money and enjoying good food. Consequently, this leads to social media being addicting and time-wasting.

**d) security and privacy.** The use of social media involves displaying personal details via user profiles. Posting personal information on a user profile which has tight security setting does not guarantee privacy.

**e) lack of funds and insufficient ICT facilities.** Oni *et al.* [6] carryout a study on the challenges students faces in acquiring ICT skills and the study revealed that lack of fund with 212(96%), Management reluctance towards ICT with 202(92%) and Insufficient ICT facilities with 198(90%). Others are epileptic power supply with 189(86%) and Limited skilled ICT trainers with 176(89%). It is very much visible from the study that lack of funds, Management reluctance towards ICT, Insufficient ICT facilities, Epileptic power supply and

Limited skilled ICT trainers are the major challenges students face in acquiring ICT skills in University of Jos.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a descriptive design to investigate the application of social media tools for academic purpose by students of Auchi polytechnic. This is because a descriptive design gives room for studying very small and large population, enables the researchers to gather data from members of the selected participants with the aid of a questionnaire. The population of the

study consisted of four thousand two hundred and seventeen (4217) students that have registered with the polytechnic library during the period of the study for 2019/2020 academic session. The population of this study is large and a representative sample of hundred and fifteen (115) students were found in the library within the period of the study using availability sampling techniques. The questionnaire was constructed by the researchers. The questionnaire entitled “Application of Social Media Tools for Academic Purpose by Students of Auchi Polytechnic Questionnaire (ASMTAPSQ) was used in this study.

**Table 1:** Shows the details about the measurement of the study variables

Variables	Operationalization	Measurement	Appears in the data gathering instrument as question numbers
Levels of Students	ND1, ND11, HND1, HND11	4point interval scale	ITEM 1
Sex	Male Female	2point interval scale	ITEM 2
Dependent Variable	Frequency of Use of social media for Academic Purpose by Students of Auch Polytechnic	4point Likert scale	Q1-Q6
Independent Variable	Using social media by students of Auch Polytechnic	3-point Likert scale	Q7-Q11
Independent Variable	Challenges Militating against the Use of Social Media Students of Auch Polytechnic	3-point Likert scale	Q12-Q17

**RESULT OF FINDINGS**

One hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were given out and One hundred and fifteen (115) questionnaires were returned completed and were subsequently used in this study.

**Table 2:** Presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents

Respondents’ Demographic Characteristics (n =115)	N	Percentage (%)
Male	47	41
Female	68	59
ND1	22	19
ND11	31	27
HND1	18	16
HND11	44	38

Source: (Fieldwork, 2021)

Table 2 reveals the gender distribution of the respondents with female 68 (59%) and male 47 table (42%). This study clearly indicates that female student used the library more than the male counterpart using the period of the study. Table 2 shows the level of the respondents. HND 11 44 (38%), ND 11 31 (27%), ND1 22(19%), while HND1 18(16%). It is obvious from the theory that final year students (HND 11 & ND11) used the library more than others levels (HND 1 & ND11).

**Table 3:** Frequency of use of social media tools by students of Auchu Polytechnic

	Very Often		Often		Occasionally		Undecided		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>Facebook</b>	77	67	26	23	12	10	-	-	115	100
<b>Twitter</b>	11	10	13	11	26	23	65	57	115	100
<b>Whatsapp</b>	82	71	11	10	22	19	-	-	115	100
<b>Podcast</b>	-	-	-	-	13	11	102	89	115	100
<b>Instagram</b>	-	-	10	9	19	17	86	75	115	100
<b>Youtube</b>	22	19	24	21	31	27	38	33	115	100

Table 3 reveals the frequency of use of social media tools for academic purpose by students. The students used WhatsApp and Facebook very often 82(71%) and 77 (67%) respectively.

**Table 4:** Reasons for using social media by students of Auchu Polytechnic

	Agree		Disagree		Undecided		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>For better reading and writing skills</b>	38	33	65	57	12	10	115	100
<b>To exchange ideas and news</b>	82	71	15	13	18	16	115	100
<b>For assignment</b>	28	24	77	67	10	7	115	100
<b>Entertainment</b>	94	82	10	10	11	10	115	100
<b>For Research</b>	32	28	65	57	18	16	115	100

**Table 5:** Challenges militating against the use of social media by students of Auchu Polytechnic

	Agree		Disagree		Undecided		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>Lack of Functioning e-library</b>	85	73	19	17	11	10	115	100
<b>Lack of complete Automation</b>	88	77	21	18	6	5	115	100
<b>Poor bandwidth / internet Connection</b>	77	67	26	23	12	10	115	100
<b>Epileptic power supply</b>	82	71	18	16	15	12	115	100
<b>Lack of ICT skills</b>	34	30	72	63	9	8	115	100
<b>Lack of basic IT facilities</b>	58	50	41	36	16	14	115	100

Table 5 reveals the challenges militating against the use of social media by students of Auchu polytechnic. It is obvious that lack of complete automation 88(77%), lack of functioning e-library 85(73%), epileptic power supply 82(71%) and lack of basic IT facilities are the major challenges facing the use of social media by students of Auchu polytechnic.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study revealed that entertainment, exchange of ideas and news are the reasons majority of the students use social media and not for academic purpose like assignment, better reading and writing skills and from research finding, Majority of the students used WhatsApp and Facebook very frequently for academic purpose. This finding agrees with [2] who stated that social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook are widely used; in fact, about 66 percent of online adults use SNS. In addition to affecting communication, marketing, and instruction, social media seem to have changed students' information-seeking behaviours. The potential of social networking to be relevant to information seeking and sharing from the more specialize web 2.0 sites. This finding corroborates the study of Armstrong & Tranklin [1] which revealed that students and faculty are using these emerging technologies and platforms in all facets of their daily lives, specifically social media; yet, a low percentage of users are engaging in such for academic practice. Armstrong & Tranklin [1] compiled a comprehensive report 2008 and indicated that the students used social media in different manners to enhancing and strengthening their learning, through reflection and collaborative activities in virtual environments.

The study reported that lack of complete automation, lack of functioning e-library; epileptic power supply, poor bandwidth/internet connectivity and lack of basic IT facilities are the challenges facing the use of social media by the students of Auchi Polytechnic. This is congruence with the study of [6] that carry out a study on the challenge's students face in acquiring ICT skills and the study revealed that lack of fund with 212(96%), Management reluctance towards ICT with 202(92%) and Insufficient ICT facilities with 198(90%). Others are epileptic power supply with 189(86%) and Limited skilled ICT trainers with 176(89%). It is very much visible from the study that lack of funds, Management reluctance towards ICT, Insufficient ICT facilities, Epileptic power supply and Limited skilled ICT trainers are the major challenges students face in acquiring ICT skills.

## CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that out of the numerous social media tools available, Auchi Polytechnic students only use WhatsApp and Facebook very frequently for academic activities. The reason for using this social media tools by students are for entertainment, exchange of ideas and information, assignment and research. However, students face hiccups in their attempt to use social media tools. Some of the hiccups range from lack of automation, lack of functioning e-library, epileptic power supply and poor bandwidth/internet connectivity. These challenges need to be address for students of Auchi Polytechnic to make

judicious use of these numerous social media tools for their academic pursuit.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Auchi Polytechnic management should embark on total/complete automation of the Polytechnic Library to enable students make effective use of social media tools for academic purpose.
2. The Auchi Polytechnic management and the library administration should do the needful by ensuring that the e-library section is functional optimally with internet connectivity and improved and regular subscription to facilitate smooth application of social media tools for academic purpose by the students
3. The Polytechnic management should ensure that there is regular and constant supply of diesel to power the standby power plant/generator in the library due to epileptic power supply situation of the country.

## REFERENCES

1. ARMSTRONG, J. & TRANKLIN, T. (2018). A review of current and developing international practice the use of social networking (web 2.0) in higher education. *Journal of Information, Communication and Society*, **12**: 644-664.
2. BAKAR, N.A., LATIF, H. & YA 'ACHOB, A. (2010). Students feedback on the use of blogs for language learning, Linguistics and literature. *The South East Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, **16**(1): 120-141.
3. BOYD, D.M. & ELLISON N.B. (2007) special network sites. Definition History and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer mediated Communication*, **13**(1): 35-41.
4. EGBERT, J. (2015). Flow as a model for (ALZ research. In I.J. (Eds.), *Call Research Perspectives* Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.
5. HUSSAIN, I. (2005). A study of emerging technology and their impact on teaching learning process. PHD Dissertation, Allamaqbal Open University Islamabad.
6. ONI, O., OLA, O.S. & DIRMUN, D. (2017). Information and Communication Technology Skills of Undergraduate Students of the University of Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. *International. Journal of Academic. Library and Information Science*. **5**(4): 136-143.
7. KEEFFE, G.S. & CLARKE-PEARSE, K. (2017). The Impact of social media on Children, Adolescents, and families. *Paediatrics*, **28**: 127.
8. SYKES, J., OSKOZ, A. & THORNE, S.L. (2018). Web 2.0 synthetic immersive environments, and mobile resources for language education, *CALICO Journal*, **25**(3): 528-546.

9. TUFUKE, Z. (2008). Grooming gossips Facebook and Myspace. *Information, Communication and Society*, **11**: 544-564.
10. VIE, S. (2007). Engaging others in online social networking sites: Historical Practices in Myspace and Facebook: doctoral dissertation, University Arizona, Tucson, AZ.