

**EFFECTS OF SOCIAL NETWORK SITES ON EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL
SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OF TERTIARY INSTITUTION'S STUDENTS IN
SOKOTO METROPOLIS: IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELING**

BY

**DR. HALIMA S. ABUBAKAR
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
USMANU DANFODIYO UNIVERSITY, SOKOTO
Email: halimasabubakar@gmail.com**

AND

**ABUBAKAR BOYI
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
SHEHU SHAGARI COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, SOKOTO**

**BEING A PAPER PRESENTED AT THE 39TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE WITH A THEME COUNSELING FOR YOUTH EMPORWEMENT
ORGANIZED BY COUNSELING ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (CASSON) HELD
AT UNIVERSITY OF BENIN AUDITORIUM EDO STATE, BETWEEN 18TH –
22ND AUGUST, 2014.**

Abstract

The paper discusses the Effect of Social Network Sites on Education and Persona- social Behaviors of Students of Tertiary Institution in Sokoto Metropolis: Implication for Counseling. The study involved four tertiary institutions with a population of 26,319 students of which 319 students are used as sample by the use of a Research Adviser (2006). Four research questions were raised and a research instrument was also constructed by the researcher which constituted 20 items. The instrument was pilot tested using test re-test method which yielded an index of 0.75 by the use of Person Product Moment Correlation coefficient. The results indicated that 83.9% of the respondents paid more attention to social network sites than their studies, 67.2% agreed that the sites affect their academic performance negatively. On persona social 67.5% agreed that sites teach them undesirable behavior, 68.8% showed that the sites do not expose them to learn moral and religious instruction toward social values, culture and moral ethics. Among the recommendations are the institution's guidance and counseling unit should be assisted to come up with programs that could enhance education and persona social relationships positively.

Introduction

Since the introduction of Social Network Sites (SNS) in 1997 such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Badoo, Myspace, Twitter, etcetera, these sites have attracted millions of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices students inclusive. People have indulged in this practice to the extent that it becomes next to their wives in terms of attention and time giving. Despite the fact that, it contributes negatively towards promoting social vices such as recruitment of terrorist organizations, inciting marital conflicts between the couples and enhancing financial embezzlements. It is well noted that, students, especially tertiary institution's students, it becomes a passion and competitive affair among them to own an Android/Smart phone installed with these applications and sites.

However, it is believed that, most of the users of these sites are youth and they mostly receive pornographic. It is estimated that about eighty nine percent (89%) of youth in chat rooms receive sexual solicitations and most of the images were of nudity, thirty two percent (32%) showed sexual acts (Bako & Oare, 2013). It is more over noted that, the use of SNS have

psychological effects on individuals. Bako and Oare (2013) noted that, repeated and long term exposure to pornographic materials (SNSs is the market place) is severely traumatic and damaging to one faith and leads to all sorts of psychological and behavioral problems. Receiving and watching these images and videos may result in producing individuals who are corrupt, sexually perverted, promiscuous, immoral and psychologically inept.

The proliferation of these Social Network Sites (SNSs) is perhaps one of the reasons why students in tertiary institutions have academic and other physiological problems in schools such as poor academic performance, cases of rape, lesbianism, homosexuality, cultism, nudity, sex, thefts, violence etc. This is in no small measure affect the personality development of an individual. The number of users of these sites runs into ten and hundreds of millions and the number is constantly increasing. In July 2010, Facebook boasted of having no less than 500 million users while Twitter and Myspace had 192 million and 66 million users respectively (Boyd & Ellison, 2014).

Millions of people spend their resources and productive time searching for and chatting with friends mostly of the opposite sex. These friends are usually selected based on their profile posted on their sites, and in most cases these profiles are some people deliberately give false information of themselves in order to exaggerate personality, while others actually post information describing who they think are or who they intend to be, but not really who they are. This is by implication they are learning how to lie or tell lies. Moreover, this serves as a means of establishing sinful relationships between men and women which cause destruction of a stable family. It has helped to revive illicit relationship between lovers and has led to betrayal of marital commitments and divorce. For example a study conducted in Egypt confirmed that, one in every five cases of divorce in Egypt came about when one partner discovered that the other

was having a relationship through the social network sites especially Facebook (Bako & Oare, 2013).

It is in view of this therefore, the writers feel it pertinent to look into the effects of such social networks sites (SNS) on educational and personal social behavior of tertiary institution's students in Sokoto metropolis and see what counseling as helping process can do to promote positive use of Social Network Sites among those students.

Concept of Social Network Sites

Social Network Sites (SNSs) may be defined as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile with which they share a connection and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site (Wikipedia, 2014).

Concept And Objectives of Counseling

Counseling has been used to denote a wide range of procedure including advice giving, support in times of trouble or need, encouragement, information giving and test interpretation (Oladele, 2007). Milton and Malcolin (1995) define counseling as a process which takes place in a one-to-one relationship between an individual faced by problems which he cannot cope with alone, and a professional worker whose training and experience qualify him to help others to arrive at solutions to various types of personal difficulties.

However, in an attempt to pass through the process both the counselor and counselee have in mind what they expected to achieve after the process. Yerroju and Atluri (2010) have identified educational and personal social objectives of counseling:

1. To help student in obtaining information on matters important to his success.

2. To help student know himself better, his mental ability, his scholastic aptitude, his interest, his personality traits.
3. To help the counselee feel better.
4. To help the individual develop an attitude to recognize ones limitation and act accordingly
5. To help individual attain harmonious social adjustment.
6. To help the individual develop an ability to help himself not only in coping with the problem at present but also in the future.

Research Questions

In an attempt to find out the effects of social networks sites on students' behavior, the following questions were formulated by the researchers to find out to what extent:

1. Social network sites attract the attention of most of the students?
2. Social network sites affect students' academic activities?
3. Social network sites affect students' individual personality?
4. Social network sites affect students' social relationship?

Methodology

The design of the study is descriptive research that sort to obtain answers to research questions through administration of questionnaires. It has a total population of 26, 319 tertiary institution students from Sokoto State University, Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, Sokoto State Polytechnic, and College of Nursing and Midwifery in Sokoto metropolis. The sample of 378 students was drawn across the four institutions through the use of Research Adviser (2006) and proportionate sampling technique as well to determine the proportion of each

institution. However, in selecting the respondents from a given institution, direct delivery method was used to distribute the questionnaires.

A 20 item self-designed questionnaire on effects of social network sites on students' educational and personal social behavior was developed by the researchers for the study. The validity was established by a panel of qualified experts in Test and Measurement and Guidance and Counseling of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto and they have unanimously agreed that, the instrument has content validity. The instrument was also subjected to pilot test to establish its reliability index. A test re-test method was used and index of 0.75 was obtained through Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and it is considered high enough as reliability index. However, descriptive statistics (frequency counts and simple percentages) was used to analyze the data collected.

Results and Discussions

This examined the effects of Social Networks on students' educational and personal-social behavior of tertiary institutions in Sokoto Metropolis. Therefore, the data was collected and presented in the following tables for analyses and interpretations:

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Institutions

Institution	No. of Resp.	Percentage
Sokoto State University	12	3.2%
College of Education, Sokoto	215	56.9%
Sokoto State Polytechnic	143	37.8%
College of Nursing and Mid	08	2.1%
Total	378	100%

Source: Field work, 2014

Table 1 presents the number of respondents and their percentages from each tertiary institution in Sokoto metropolis. The percentage of each institution was determined by its students' population. Therefore, College of Education has the highest participants (56.9%) in the

study followed by State Polytechnic with 37.8%, State University with 3.2% and College of Nursing and Midwifery with 2.1%.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Status	No. of Resp.	Percentage
Married	150	39.7%
Single	228	60.3%
Total	378	100%

Source: Field work, 2014

Table 2 shows that, among the total number of respondents across the four tertiary institutions, respondents who are single with 60.3% participated and engaged in one or the other type of Social Network. In other words, single students engaged more in using Social Networks than married who are only 39.7% of the total respondents.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18 – 24	141	37.3%
25 – 30	156	41.3%
31 – 36	81	21.4%
32 – 42	-	-
Total	378	100%

Source: Field work, 2014

In table 3, it can clearly be seen that, students that engaged most in using Social Network are students aged between 18 – 30 years with 78.6% while the remaining percentage (2.4%) goes to students aged 31 – 36 years.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Type of Social Networks sites.

Type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
WhatsApp	270	71.4
2go	40	10.6
Twitter	01	0.3
Facebook	52	13.8

Youtube	05	1.3
Wechat	-	-
Badoo	10	2.6
Istagram	-	-
Others	-	-
None of the above	-	-
Total	378	100%

Source: Field work, 2014

Table 4 shows the extent to which students participated or use social network sites. This indicates that, students engaged mostly using WhatsApp which carries 71.4% of the total respondents. Thus, social networks undoubtedly attract the attention of students, because none have been reported not have been using any of the listed forms or types of Social Networks.

Table 5: Students' Responses on the Effect of Social Networks on Educational Behavior of Students

SN	Item Statement	Yes	%	No	%	Total Resp.	Total %
1	Many students give more attention to social network sites than school programmes.	317	83.9	61	16.1	378	100
2	Frequent engagement/use of social network sites brings about academic failure.	254	67.2	124	32.7	378	100
3	Social network sites do not improve students' academic performance	192	50.8	186	50.8	378	100
4	Social network sites lead to procrastination in school	252	66.7	126	33.3	378	100
5	Social network sites use leads to absenteeism in school/ class/lectures	249	65.9	129	34.1	378	100
6	Use of social network sites among students promote exams malpractice	249	65.9	129	34.1	378	100
7	Use of social network sites discourages students from going to library by making them reliant to	286	75.7	92	24.3	378	100

	them.						
8	Social network sites do not drill students on effective study habit	251	66.4	127	33.6	378	100
9	Social network SMS texts affect one's vocabulary development	249	66.9	129	34.1	378	100
10	Use of social network sites by youth today is time wasting	249	66.9	129	34.1	378	100

Source: Field work, 2014

In table 5, it is evident that, all the items identified as effects of Social Networks on educational behavior of tertiary institutions' students were found to be not less than 65% opinions. This indicates that, all the items contribute negatively towards educational backwardness of tertiary institution's students which are direct factors that could affect students' academic performance.

Table 6: Students' Responses on the Effects of Social Network on Persona-Social Behavior of Students

SN	Item Statement	Yes	%	No	%	Total Resp.	Total %
1	Social Networks discourage students to develop good interpersonal relationship among themselves	130	34.4	248	65.6	378	100
2	Social Networks teach students to learn undesirable acts	255	67.5	123	32.5	378	100
3	They do not expose students to learn moral and religious instructions towards social values, cultures, moral ethic	260	68.8	118	31.2	378	100
4	The need to own Android phones that display/comprise these applications(Networks) drive students to economic crimes	283	75.4	93	24.6	378	100
5	Engaging into one of the social networks, is one of the ways that a student is mostly accepted	286	75.7	92	24.3	378	100

6	Social networks sites influence students to keep bad friends	251	66.4	127	33.6	378	100
7	Use of social network sites discourage students from going to library by making them reliant to them	285	75.4	93	24.6	378	100
8	Social network sites do not drill students on effective study habit	254	67.2	124	32.8	378	100
9	Social network SMSs text affect one's vocabulary development	256	67.7	122	32.3	378	100
10	Use of social network sites by youth today is time wasting	291	77	87	23	378	100

Source: Field work, 2014

Table 6, shows the extent at which social networks affect individuals personality and as well as the social relationships among people. Thus, social networks help in demoralizing individual's personality by exposing the users to undesirable acts such as nudities, phonographs and other social vices. It also fuels the marital conflicts between couples as well as causing intra and interpersonal relationships among students.

Research Discussions

By Implication, social networks have an adverse effect on educational and persona-social behavior of students. This is evident when one refers to table 5 above and discovers the extent at which students affiliate and involve in such networks. And the worse part of it majority of the users are adolescents and unmarried who are believed to be at dangerous stage of human growth and development. A stage characterized with life challenges mentally, emotionally, socially and physically which if care is not taken an individual may be overwhelmed by a number of negative behaviors leading to psycho-social behaviors in the society.

Social networks have been identified to have contributed immensely towards educational backwardness of the students. This is evident when we look at the opinions expressed by the users (not less than 65% of them) believed that, social networks carry away their attention while at school, it makes them lazy to fully and effectively participate in academic activities of the school. For instance, it discourages them from going to library; they mostly rely on Internet to do their assignments, read there, study there and that is all. And you expect this type of student to perform wonderfully! But it is not surprising to find such a student in one form or the other of examination malpractice.

However, the study revealed that, majority if not all of the students belong to two or more social network sites. In other words, none of the students claimed not have been engaged in less than two social network sites and they have agreed that such sites contain and expose one to pornography, immoralities and other social vices. This confirms the findings of Bako and Oare (2013), that above eighty nine (89%) of youth in chat rooms receive sexual solicitations.

This could be maintained when one looks at the opinions of the users not less than 65% of them agreed that social networks promote negative interpersonal relationship among them. It exposes them to undesirable acts, learning or copying some social vices such as raping style, homosexual, lesbianism and other financial crimes. This finding agrees with what Bako and Oare (2013) described as severe traumatic in an individual leading to all sorts of psychological behavioral problems.

Implications for Counselling

Considering the findings of this research work, it cause for the intervention of tertiary institutions guidance and counselling unit to intensify efforts of sensitizing the students on the

ills of the social networks sites usage as well as how they can use the sites effectively to improve their studies and academic pursuits. Through introduction of social activities in the school programs such as drama, debate, quiz and games, the students could be tilted towards this activities which could enhance their interpersonal relationship positively. These, the guidance unit could lease with departments concerns to come up with programs that could occupy the students thus reducing the much reliance on those sites that could invariably corrupt them

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study therefore, the following were put forward as recommendations:

1. Parents should monitor and control the type of phones that their wards use and place their computer systems in an open place where activities of the user can easily be monitored by the parents for those that have Internet facilities in their homes while at school environment, such facilities may be purposely used and banned students from accessing such sites through pasting posters and instructions prohibiting the access in the school Café.

2. Tertiary institutions should seriously encourage their Guidance and Counseling units by providing necessary facilities and support to the unit for the smooth and effective running of its responsibilities and ensure time-to-time guidance programme which should majorly encompass educational and persona-social aspects.

3. Community and religious leaders should intensify their efforts and consider it as a matter of self-development, to discourage youth through daily preaching in mosques,

churches, at schools, at homes and public places from using such sites that teach negative and ill manners.

4. Government or any organization or individual can organize and sponsor media programmes that could teach our youth the consequences of using such social networks negatively. For instance, a T.V drama, Radio programme all aim at discouraging the students in engaging and using social networks negatively.

References

Bako, H. and Oare A.A. (2013) *Challenges of the contemporary Muslims: An exposition on their nature, effects and solutions*. Kaduna: Sahaba publications.

Boyd, D.M. and Ellison, N.B. (2014) *Social network sites: Definition, History and Scholarship*

Wikipedia (2014) Social network. Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Retrieved on 10th July 2014 from [http//en. Wikipedia org/wiki/social network](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/social_network).

Oladele, J.O. (2007) *Guidance and Counseling: A functional Approach* 4th Edition. Lagos: John-Lad.

Milton, E.H. and Malcolin, S.M. (1995), *Counseling psychology*. NewYork: Mchraw-Hill Book Co.Inc,

Yerroju and Atluri (2010) *Guidance and Counseling in Shaping, the destiny*. New Delhi: S.B. Nangia.

Research Adviser (2006). Table for determining the sample size of a given population.