

# Social Media Technologies Advent and Prospects of Reading Culture in Universities

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## Abstract

This study investigated the influence of social media technology exposure on the academic learning culture of students in typical public and private universities of Nigeria. The study had four objectives: to find out the types of social media technology sites commonly used by students; to examine the frequency of using social media technology; to investigate the most common benefit from social media technology to students; to find out the influence of social media technology on the academic learning culture of students in Universities. The social cognitive and the uses and gratifications theories were used to explain the study while the survey method was used to execute the study. It adopted the population of 11,634 students and a sample size of 368 out of which 258 respondents, representing 71% accepted the option that students' exposure to social media technology has a high positive impact prospects on reading and learning ability. The implication is that the use of social media by students is not for triviality and leisure entirely but for the research of vital academic assignments. Through social media technology platforms, students have updated information on several topics that give an edge in academics. Data gathered discovered that social media technology preference does not completely cause negative influences on the academic learning and reading culture of students in universities rather it promotes the reading culture.

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## Introduction

Human existence has experienced different forms of social transformations and economic changes. It has equally been affected by the technological adaptation of institutions. Indubitably, one of the many changing social activities of man has been due to innovations, acceptance, application and the involvement of technology in the communication of educational skills. The application of technology for communication and purposes of education enhances the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values and attitudes through professional tuition, vocational training and practical experience. Ordinarily, education involves the development of intellectual, social, emotional, and physical abilities that enable individuals to navigate and contribute to the society.

Mandela (2003) defines education as the most powerful weapon which can be used to change the world. He emphasized the importance of education as a means to empower individuals and to bring about positive change in the world. He believed that education could help people to gain knowledge and skills that would enable them to make informed decisions, think critically and contribute to the betterment of society.

Melnic and Botez (2014) mention that there are many forms and types of education that individuals can pursue throughout life. These are the formal, the informal and the non-formal education. The most common types are: formal education, which takes place in schools, colleges, and universities. It is structured and systematic with defined curriculum, timetables and assessments which usually lead to attainment of academic degrees and qualifications.

Educational culture is not limited to formal settings but can occur throughout life experiences, interactions and self-direct learning. The ultimate goal is to foster personal growth and societal progress by equipping individuals with the tools needed to think critically, solve problems and participate in communities. It is a complex and multifaceted process that involves various stakeholders of students, teachers, parents, policymakers and the community at large.

Education functions as an instrument which facilitate integration of youthful generations especially students into the fabric of the larger social groups and bring about conformity to practices. Education can also mean the process by which men and women deal critically and creatively with realities on how to add value to the transformation of the World.

Aside from the formal setting, education can emerge as a natural process by listening and being naturally curious to learn and focus on needs and interests. Either way, in the formal education, there exist the role of communication using technology to facilitate learning, create a supportive and stimulating environment that encourages exploration and discovery.

There are also the informal as well as the non - formal education which can take place physically, virtually and recently through online. These are the different forms of computer generated education outside the classrooms that add to physical learning, apprenticeships and experiential education. The virtual and online education is fast replacing the classroom setting and has come to occupy attention and interest in the 21st century. This is due to the technological transformations occurring through the internet and the introduction of social media networking of education.

Social media and the networking of the Internet is one of the most recently developed online applications for education (Penpeck, 2009). Social media is the fastest growing web application of the 21st century, with impacts on the population. There are ample substantiations that millions of people around the world use social media regularly for a variety of reasons (Daluba & Maxwell, 2013). Social media is a versatile platform using web-based technologies that incorporate text, voice, video, and images to make communication more interactive, respectful and enjoyable (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It is a means of interaction between people creating, sharing, exchanging and commenting on contents in virtual communities and networks. It brings about substantial and profound changes in how organizations, communities and individuals communicate (Kietzmann, 2011).

Social media technologies take many forms such as Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogs, wikis,

social networks, podcasts, photographs and images, videos, ratings and bookmarks. The social media text component is brilliantly spelled out online to convey information by reading for social, trivial matters and academics. Ezeah, Asogwa & Edgor, 2013; Yahya, Olalekan, Afolabi, & Ayelaagbe (2013) say that social media provide better access, create a sense of belonging among users and break down barriers to group interaction and communication beyond distance, social/economic status, and increased literacy levels by frequent users.

In universities, it not uncommon that several teachers and students daily activities of academics are associated with internet social networks though with a number of assumed negative impacts in grammatical and spelling errors. Ndaku (2013) points out that students spend more time on trivial social networking sites such as Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, than on academic activities, which affects their grades. Asur & Huberman (2010) point out that due to the ease of use, speed and reach associated with social media, it is rapidly changing public discourse in society and setting trends in the agenda of topics ranging from the environment, politics, technology, the entertainment industry as well as in education. Nigerian university students are not exempted, since there appear to have been a significant increase in the number of Nigerian youth and university students registered on social media platforms of Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Instagram, snapchat, webchat.

There is no argument that social media engagement help in communication, entertainment, socialization and reunion. These various platforms have assisted university students on academic researches, confirmation of spellings, updated information on several disciplines and opportunities socially and otherwise. Most students tend to rely on the Internet as an Encyclopedia of information. There are daily increases in the statistics of Internet users with proportionate internet growth. This shows that there are many benefits of the internet to users including students in private universities in Nigeria.

Incidentally, education entail the reading of books, magazines leaflets either offline or online especially as instruments of mass communication and enlightenment. This is against what the electronic media of radio and television can offer. The social media networking for instant messaging surpass radio and television and have really affected the rise and fall of students in many ways. A school of thought has it that some students use social media sites to get important information for educational activities or to share opinions on a particular topic taught in class, share decisions and solutions. Students also solve difficult problems with each other using social media.

Another side of the school of thought has it that students no longer want to spend time studying and cultivating knowledge but to watch online movies, play online games, chat and make new friends on social media rather than reading books. This school of thought adds that students find reading for academics to be one of the most boring activities on a daily basis and social media the most convenient activity. As such, social media has influenced students negatively. This is why Palani (2012) says that reading ability has lost importance as both young and old are glued to television and the internet. This tendency surprisingly sidelines reading to some extent, making it seem like a daunting task and a punishment for most students while seats in libraries of

universities remain virtually unoccupied and membership of book clubs and societies keep depleting from time to time.

Social media technology use has gradually permeated changes in learning, culture, communication and interactions. Social media technology is commonly used by students of universities in Nigeria. It is therefore not unnoticed that most universities have in addition to the building of libraries created separate buildings for electronic libraries where services of internet are available to facilitate access to social media sites.

But it appears that the swift to the patronage of social media technology sites by students, has been at the expense of reading hard copies of academic books from the libraries. Incidentally, this observable negative trend of using online social media sites has caused many universities to approve the enforcement of compulsory reading hours in libraries. The authorities of universities regard reading as a major part of academic for socialization and heritage preservation, mind empowerment and liberation from ignorance by the interpretation of the printed written words.

Generally, learning by reading of books is the process of understanding written language on hard copies. Reading is a process that begins with the recognition of written expressions and ends with specific interpretation of ideas and meanings about a given the message intended by the writer. Reading is therefore a combination of perceptual and cognitive processes. It is the ability to communicate between readers and writers to obtain knowledge and information.

Ordinarily, reading processes the interaction between what is on the mind and what is on the pages of books and novels in context and concepts that leads to an understanding. Reading develops individual's mind and personality. It also improves a person's intellectual ability. Reading is developed over time by as an individual experiences pleasure in reading articles, publications, or materials that are related to education and general interest. Reading require students comprehension of an entire text consisting of sentences, statements and phrases to develop the interrelationships skills of effective speaking and writing in answering questions especially during examinations.

But with the evolution of social media, the dimensions of reading hard copies of text books in open libraries of universities tend to have undergone a down ward curve to observable increase in reading online soft copies using smartphones. Some online soft reading seem to center on pictorials, descriptive short stories, narrations, news briefs and emoji symbols rather than features, discourse, speeches and analysis on different subjects mostly needed for academics.

In the universities, learning and associated academic performance of students seem to be facing endless problems partly due to the lack of reading culture. In this regard, students tend to graduate from tertiary institutions with poor reading habits and end up creating social problems of misfits in all sectors. Perhaps, the foundations of poor reading culture may not be entirely due to the ill equipped libraries but also unconnected with the emerging trend in which social media applications seem to have become part of the daily lives of

students. It is also axiomatically noted that social media have an assumed potential of taking the minds of young people from reading textbooks and novels. The statement of the problem, is whether the assumed reluctance culture to learn by reading hard copies of books has something to do with the preference, frequency in the use of social media technology channels of communication; or whether there are specific gains of social media technology soft copies for reading and with what influence do social media technology have on students of Nigerian Universities. In the light of the above circumstances, the task of this study was to evaluate the influence of exposure to social media technology on the academic learning culture of undergraduate students in Universities in Nigeria. The out come of this study has the potential to provide answers on the impact of social media technology on academic learning culture among students of universities in Nigeria. The results of this study are also important to raise awareness among students about the need to improve reading cultures. It will also educate students on how to use social media platforms appropriately to improve academic performances. It is also relevant to the academic community as it contributes to the existing literature on social media and academic reading culture.

This research aimed at helping students and society to work towards shaping thinking about social media technology and also restore the sanity of students in the excessive use of social media except for the right kind of education. This research has the envisaged benefit for government agencies to know, plan and implement educational programmes through appropriate use of social media networks. Educational institutions are also to benefit in turning out academically and socially knowledgeable students on needs, goals and objectives of an effective society.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The overall purpose of this study was to ascertain the influence of social media technology advent on the learning culture of undergraduates of Nigerian Universities. In particular, this research was undertaken under the following specific objectives to:

1. Find out the types of social media technology sites commonly used by students of public and private universities in Nigeria.
2. Examine the frequency of using social media technology of communication by students of private and public universities in Nigeria,
3. Investigate the most common benefit derived from social media technology by students of private and public universities in Nigeria.
4. Find out the influence of social media technology on the reading culture of students in public and private universities in Nigeria

In scope, this study was specifically designed to examine the impact of exposure to social media technology on reading culture of students in select universities in Nigeria. The two universities purposively taken for this research are: the Wellspring University, Benin City and Akwa Ibom State University, Ikot Akpaden, Nigeria. The research was limited to regular undergraduate students, part-time students, and post-graduate students in all

the departments of the two universities. This work was not spread to cover students undergoing remedial admission programmes through joint universities preliminary examination board (JUPEB) and the top up conversion programmes from Diploma to Degrees. The social media sites taken are online platforms where individuals interact and get information such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter excluding others.

## **Conceptual Clarifications**

### **The Concept of Social Media**

Technologically, social media refer to online platforms that allow users to create, share and exchange information, ideas and content with others. Designed to facilitate social interaction and communication between individuals, groups and organizations, these platforms have become an integral part of modern communication and socialization.

Social media platforms are typically web-based applications that can be accessed from computers, smartphones, and other digital devices. It allow users to create profiles, share and consume content, and connect with others based on common interests, goals, or affiliations (Walsh, 2022). Some of the most popular social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and TikTok. These platforms differ in functionality, target audience, and purpose. For example, Facebook is a general-purpose platform that allows users to connect with friends and family, while LinkedIn is a specialized networking platform focused on career-related interactions. Social media has become a powerful tool for communication, socializing and disseminating information. It has transformed the way people interact and communicate, creating new opportunities to share knowledge, build relationships and advance social causes. But social media has also been criticized for its potential to spread misinformation, fuel hate speech, and undermine privacy and security.

Social media can have both positive and negative effects on reading culture. Some studies found that using social media improve reading and critical thinking, while others found that social media is a distraction and can negatively affect reading habits. The relationship between social media use and literacy is complex especially among undergraduates.

Chang and Kannan (2016) say that social media use was associated with less time spent on reading academic materials and can lead to poor academic performance. Additionally, social media use may be associated with declines in cognitive skills of comprehension, control, attention and working memory. There are several factors which social media adversely affect students reading culture. One of the most important things is distraction. Social media platforms are designed to be highly engaging which can make it difficult for students to focus on academic reading.

However, it is worth noting that not all the negatives can come out of social media use and reading. Carriere and Bouchard (2018) found that social media use was positively correlated with undergraduate reading motivation. This suggests that social media can serve as a tool to promote academic engagements and motivations in reading among young people by creating interest to dig deep on topics as well as getting real time updates on new

discoveries.

### **The Concept of Reading Culture**

Educational culture is part of literacy ability to understand written text and use it for various purposes of learning, problem solving and general communication. Literacy is a complex skill involving multiple cognitive processes of understanding visuals, phonological semantics and syntactic connotation of words. (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014).

Educational culture by reading is influenced by many factors including genetics, social and environmental factors of pressure and language. Effective reading need clarity in phonetics and vocabulary comprehension, word recognition, decoding and fluency. As Dadzie (2008) puts it, reading is the art of understanding words in text and using the knowledge for personal growth and development. This suggest making sense out of the printed or written statements for fun, leisure, relaxation, information and knowledge. Reading is the ability to identify symbols and appropriate semantics to understand the meaning of words in isolation and in context. Palani (2012) sees reading as a process of thinking with words, evaluating, judging, imagining and debating during intra and inter communications. Reading is therefore an essential tool for imparting knowledge that improve skills.

### **Social Media Use among Tertiary Students**

Social media platforms and sites have been used regularly by millions of people around the world for a variety of reasons. The use of social media has become global. From social media, students are exposed to all kinds of technology devices through readings on theoretical frameworks on many aspects of disciplines. This includes desktop computers, laptops, e-readers, tablets, mobile phones, for active participation in social networking. The majority of social media users are students. For this reason, McLoughlin & Lee (2007) state that the use of social media platforms has impacted positively on individuals through creating diversification between different categories of people. Given the acceptance of social media, many universities have come to approve the use of it for communication even between lecturers and students in a virtual classrooms. Boateng & Amankwaa (2016) asserted that social media has influenced instructors, students, and other academic stakeholders to unite with each other to promote knowledge construction in teaching and learning. Most university lecturers use social media to participate in productive discussions and engage with students individually and collectively on academic issues. For the students, it is common that they use social media to interact with each other during and outside class hours.

In reality, social media communication technologies support teaching and learning. The value of interactive social media technologies in higher education institutions has gained recognition in teaching and learning strategies globally. Therefore, social media platforms allow students to interact with one another, their teachers and communities that share in their education and related activities (Pardo 2013). Bearing this in mind, many universities now maintain profiles and groups on social networking sites such as Facebook, where students and



faculty can interact, share resources and express ideas. However, the time spent on social media can be negatively correlated with low grade point in academics reading. It means that there exist a negative correlation between social media use and reading ability of students. The may come to be a dangerous trend of social media obsession if left unchecked, which can disrupt the already crumbling education system. Social media obsession is the extreme use of the internet and the failure to control this usage can seriously harm a person's psyche. O'Keeffe and Kathleen (2011) highlight the negative impacts of social media to include accessing inappropriate contents, distractions, internet addiction, online harassment, and cyber bullying. These in realities are worries that there seems to be on an alarming rate of social media obsession among students, a trend that might affect academic and other social lives negatively.

Social media use among tertiary students in Nigeria has become prevalent in recent years. Students in Nigeria use social media, with Facebook and WhatsApp and other popular and the unpopular platforms. Ogedengbe and Quadri (2020) say that undergraduates are aware of the social media tools as majority from educational institutions frequently use Facebook, WhatsApp, on daily basis and Blog, YouTube, Flickr were used on weekly basis. The trend social media use has associated changes in students' reading habits with many reporting that they read fewer physical books and more online materials. It is debatable that social media use can have a negative impact on reading ability due to anxiety, depression, distractions, mental stress and information overload. On one side, social media platforms can provide opportunities for collaboration, information sharing and digital literacy development.

It is important for students to be aware of the potential negative effects of social media and work to mitigate these risks by self-encouragements on physical book reading. This can ensure that social media use does not impact on academic performance or well-being negatively.

### **Empirical Review**

In an empirical study, Al-Rahmi, Wahab, Alismaiel and Crawford (2022) said that the adoption and use of social media as an educational technology in higher education was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. The application of the unified theory of usage and acceptance of technology theory serve as interpreters of behavioral goals to the use of social media. This, as posited by the model, affect the social media usage. This study took a quantitative survey with 312 undergraduate university students in Malaysia and identified that usage and acceptance of technology theory result in an improved performance. That is to say that when students partake in the use of a particular technology and understand needs, there are bound to be positive changes.

Murtaza (2023) notes that the effect of social media on students' aptitude focus on their studies is a source of controversies. Notwithstanding that social media may be a source of disturbance it permits opportunities for education, togetherness, and collaborations. Students may find a common unit of interaction through the use of social media technology and their academic performance can be greatly improved against claims of cyberbullying Students need to be aware of the ways in which they can use the internet and work to make social media an asset to their study rather than a distraction.



Shittu and Taiwo (2023) in a related study on Acceptance of WhatsApp social media platform for learning in Nigeria, tested the unified theory of acceptance and explained the rationale for the acceptance of WhatsApp social media platform for learning among students of public and private universities in Nigeria. In the cross-sectional survey research method deployed for data collection from undergraduate students from two different universities, the study established that there are statistically variables with direct influence on acceptance process of WhatsApp media for learning with exception of effort expectancy that showed a negative effect on student behavioral intention towards use of WhatsApp for learning. The findings of the study have implication for students, teachers and administrators of higher institution of learning.

Considering the overall effectiveness of social media technology in learning subjects, it is evident that there is a global imperative for educational institutions, especially the universities to develop specific yardsticks of generalized shift to the use of social media technology in building the research competence of students for 21<sup>st</sup> century demands.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The position of this argument is based on the theoretical frameworks adopted in this study which are the social cognition theory and the uses and gratifications theory. In an explanation, the social cognitive theory, developed by Albert Bandura in 1986, as a theoretical framework that emphasize the importance of observational learning, socialization and cognition in the development of human behaviour. According to this theory, individuals learn by observing others, and their behaviour is shaped by social and cognitive processes that influence perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes.

This theory postulates that cognition and social environmental factors interact to influence human behaviour. Various individuals are not passive recipients of social environmental factors but they actively interpret and construct their realities based to form experiences and perceptions (LaMorte, 2022). Social cognitive theory also emphasizes the role of a person's ability to perform a particular action. Bandura's theory of social cognition has impact on many fields, including education. This theory is important to this work since it suggest that exposure to social media technology can shape influence, behaviour and abilities depending on perpetual usage and interests. Students' behaviour can be a product of discussing books and sharing related educational contents on social media.

Similarly, the Uses and Gratifications theory was developed by Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz in 1970 as a communication theory that focuses on reasons and in what manner people use media and what they gain from it. This theory suggests that individuals actively select and use media to meet needs and desires rather than being passive recipients of media messages and materials (Vinney, 2019). According to this theory, people majorly use media for information, personal identity, social interaction and entertainment with assumption that media consumption is voluntary and active process based on individual needs and motivations. The theory is important by seeking to investigate what people do with communication contents and material, instead of what the communication content does to them. Folarin (1998) notes that the theory perceives the recipient as actively

influencing the effect process, since they selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain the message on the basis of needs. The significance of this theory to this work is that it provides an analytical framework why people consume certain types of media and with what gain. In relation to social media and educational culture, students can use social media to meet needs of information, identity, entertainment, or social connection, shaping media consumption, and select educational contents that meets their needs and satisfaction.

## **Methodology**

The research design adopted was the online survey method. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) mentioned that surveys are the most commonly used method to collect information from a sample of people. This was adopted by the researchers because research concerns human perception. Akpan (2021) adds that in survey method, information or data can be drawn from a relatively large number of respondents at a particular time. The population of this study was 11,634 drawn from the male and female students of Wellspring University, Benin at 2,341 by the University Administrative Handbook (2023) and 9,293 from State University, Ikot Akpaden, Akwa Ibom from different colleges and faculties.

Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size infinite number table, the number of respondents in this study to achieve a predetermined level of precision was put at 368 persons proportionally divided across the two universities so that wellspring University had 74 copies and State University, Ikot Akpaden had 294 copies.

The primary data collection tool used in this research study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire covered all relevant areas and included a variety of questions to create the kinds of questions respondents can provide answers. The questionnaire was divided into two parts, A and B. Section A contain demographic variables of the respondents and Section B contained 15 close-ended questions by giving preferred options. To ascertain the validity of the questionnaires the researcher conducted a pilot survey using 10% of sample size of 368 at 36 students to ensure the respondents understood the questions effectively before the final questionnaires were shared to respondents.

## **Data Presentation and Analysis**

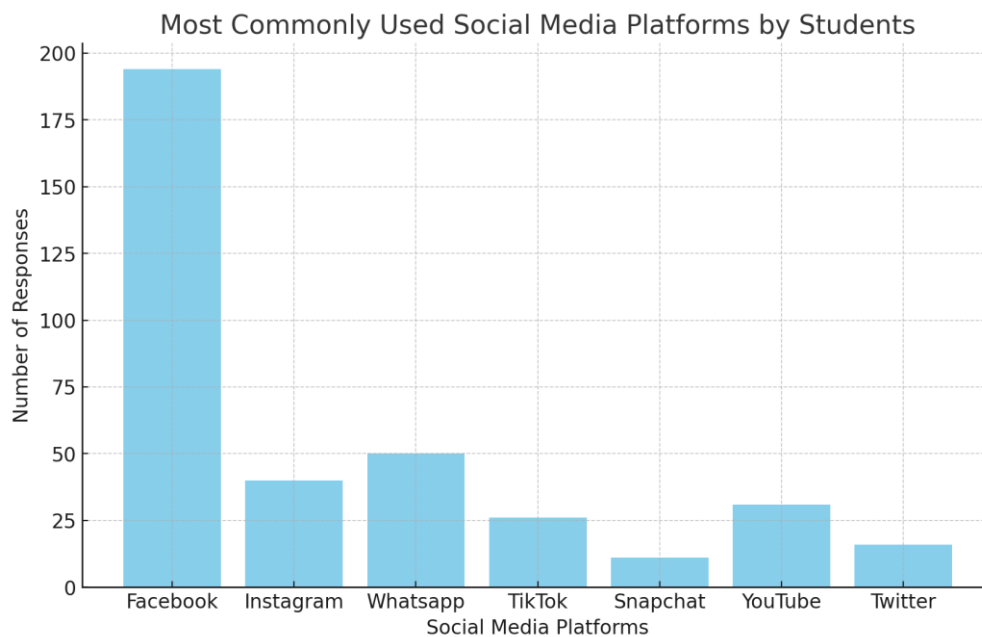
The data collected was presented and analyzed in a tabulated form with focus on the major research questions to enable the researcher determine results. This was supported with analysis in a bar chart. Data collected were examined by the use of quantitative analysis.in frequency tables and bar charts. The tables and the bar charts below show the findings of the research and present analysis to the findings.

Table 1 and Bar Chart 1 above shows that 194 respondents representing 53 percent use Facebook frequently, 40 respondents representing 11% of students use Instagram most frequently, 50 respondents representing 14% use WhatsApp, 26 respondents representing 5% use TikTok, 11 respondents representing 3% make use of Snapchat frequently, 31 respondents representing 8% use YouTube, while 16 respondents representing 4% use Twitter most commonly. Thus, majority of the respondents use Facebook most commonly.

Table 1. Social Media Technology Platform Students Use Most Commonly

Category	Responses	Percentage
Facebook	194	53
Instagram	40	11
WhatsApp	50	14
TikTok	26	7
Snapchat	11	3
YouTube	31	8
Twitter	16	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey (2024)



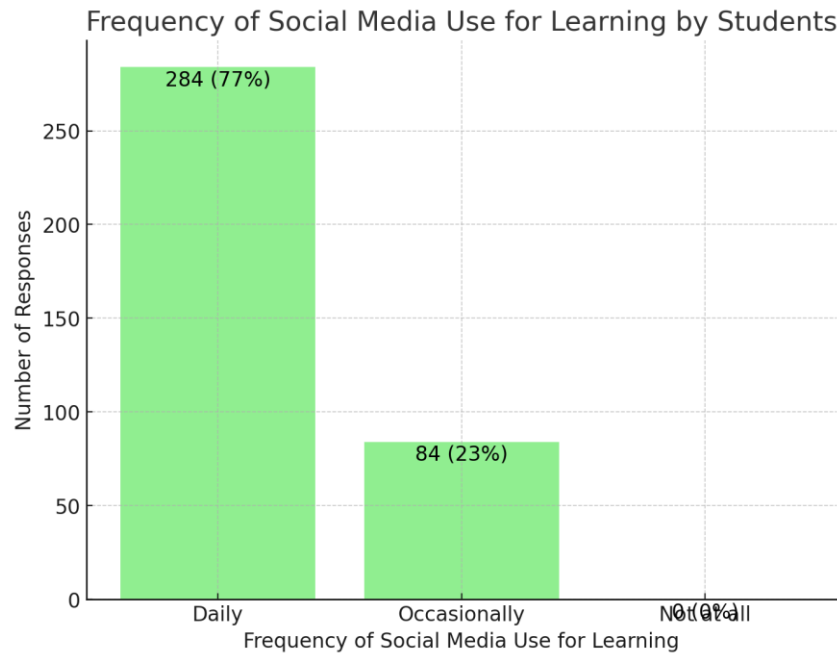
Bar Chart 1. Most Common-used Social Media Platforms (Source: Field Survey 2024)

From Table 2 and Bar Chart 2 above 284 respondents representing 77% use social media daily, while 84 respondents representing 23% use social media occasionally. Thus, majority of the respondents use social media.

Table 2. Frequency Students Use Social Media Technology for Learning

Category	Responses	Percentage
Daily	284	77
Occasionally	84	23
Not at all	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey (2024)

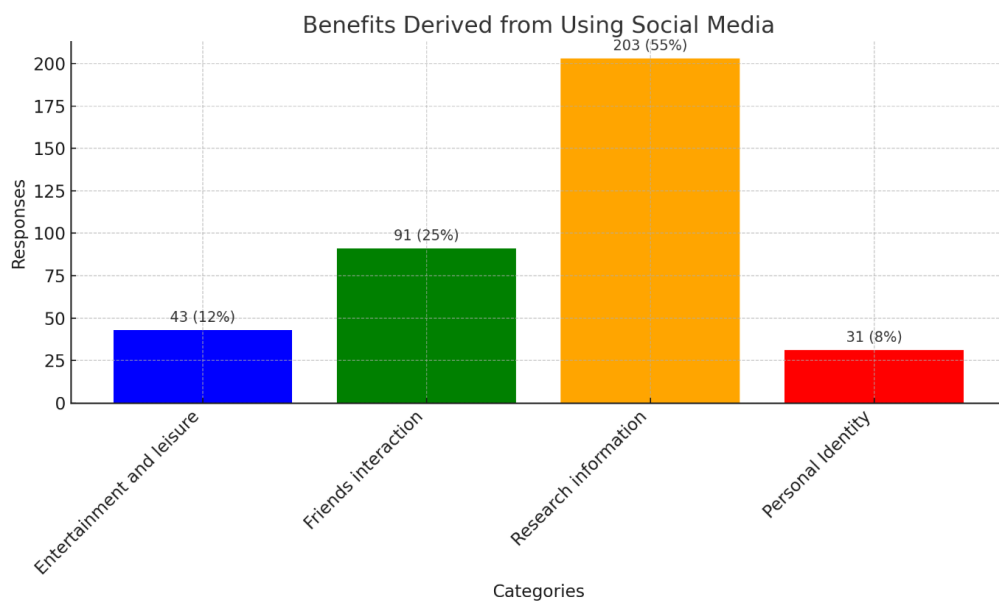


Bar Chart 2. Frequency of social Media Use for Learning

Table 3. Benefits Derive from Using Social Media

Category	Responses	Percentage
Entertainment and leisure	43	12
Friends interaction	91	25
Research information	203	55
Personal Identity	31	8
Total	368	100

Source: Field survey (2024)



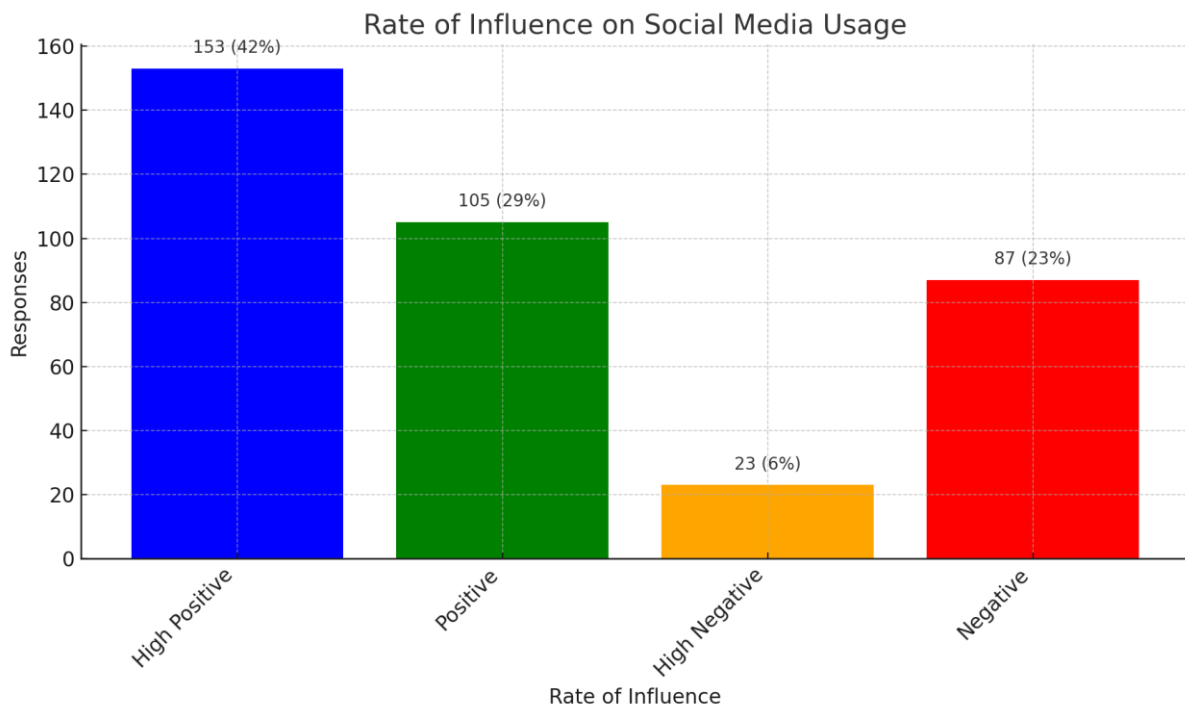
Bar Chart 3. Benefits of Social Media Use

Table 3 and Bar Chart 3 shows that 43 respondents representing 12% derive entertainment and leisure from using social media, 91 respondents representing 25% use social media to stay connected with friends and family, 203 respondents representing 55% share and discover new information from using social media for research while 31 respondents representing 8% derive personal identity from using social media. Thus, the majority of respondents derive educational information of research from using social media.

Table 4. Rate the Influence of Social Media on your Overall Educational Culture

Rate of Influence	Responses	Percentage
High Positive	153	42
Positive	105	29
High Negative	23	6
Negative	87	23
Total	368	100

Source: Field survey (2024)



Bar Chart 4. Influence on Social Media Use

From Table 4 and Bar Chart 4 above, 153 respondents representing 42% are of the option that social media has high positive benefit on educational culture, 105 respondents representing 29% are of the option that social media has positive benefit, 23 respondents representing 6% are of the option social media has high negative impact on reading ability while 87 respondents representing 23% are of the option that social media has negative impact on academic culture. Thus, a combination of responses on high positive and positive influence has the majority 258 or 71 percent of respondents on the option that social media has significant impact against the overall of 368 or 70 percent on high negative and negative options

## **Discussion**

### **The Type of Social Media Technology Sites Commonly used by Students of Universities in Nigeria**

The interpretations on Table 1 and Bar Chart 1 it shows that 70 respondents representing 29.7% use WhatsApp frequently, 26 respondents representing 11% of students use Instagram most frequently, 8 respondents representing 3.4% use Facebook, 53 respondents representing 22.5% use TikTok, 21 respondents representing 8.9% make use of Snapchat commonly, 27 respondents representing 11.4% use YouTube, while 31 respondents representing 13.1% use Twitter most commonly. Thus, majority of the respondents use WhatsApp most commonly. This agree with Gilbert (2021) position that in Nigeria, the most people who also include students used social media technology platform of WhatsApp with 93% of Internet users particularly among the age group of 16 to 64, followed by the next most popular social media technology of Facebook, YouTube and Instagram.

### **The Frequency of Using Social Media Technology in the Educational Learning Culture of Students in Universities of Nigeria**

From Table 2 and Bar Chart 2 which says “how often or frequency do you use social media”, 284 respondents representing 77 use social media technology daily, while 84 respondents representing 23% use social media occasionally. Thus, majority of the respondents use social media technology most frequently. Thus, majority of the respondents use WhatsApp most frequently. According to Andujar (2016) WhatsApp constitutes a powerful educational tool to encourage interaction among group participants and its tremendous potential to activate students' involvement remains the least exploited functionality of mobile phones. WhatsApp can also boost students' dynamic participation and inspire learners to get involved in purposeful activities with a special emphasis on effective learning outcomes

### **The Benefit from Social Media Technology in the Educational Reading Culture of Students in Universities of Nigeria**

Table labelled 3 and Bar Chart 3 shows that, 43 respondents representing 12% derive entertainment and leisure from using social media, 91 respondents representing 25% use social media to stay connected with friends and family, 203 respondents representing 55% share, research and discover new information from using social media while 31 respondents representing 8% derive find personal identity from using social media. Thus, the majority of respondents derive research information from using social media. This confirms a similar position of Gola (2020) that through social media students can work together intellectually and socially to achieve a common goal.

Students can use social media to gather and share information from both internal and external resources as well as generate own learning contents too. Social media technology aids to enhance students' academic performance and increase knowledge through data and information gathering. Whenever students are given assignments they go through various online platforms to collect information to make do assignments.

## **Influence of Social Media Technology on the Educational Reading Culture of Students in Universities of Nigeria**

From Table 4 and Bar Chart 4, 110 respondents representing 23 % are of the option that social media has a negative influence on reading ability, 258 respondents representing 71% are of the option that social media has a high positive impact on reading ability. The implication is that the use of social media by students was not for trivial and leisure entirely but for the research of vital academic assignments. Through social media technology platforms, students have the opportunities of having updated information on several topics that can give an edge in academics. This work is in tandem with what Bharwani (2023) says that Students are among the main people who prefer these channels to stay tuned to the latest updates and to establish connections with people. Thus, the majority of the respondents are of the option that social media has a high positive significant influence on their study. When social media is used for social uplifting, literacy and tutoring, it can produce several positive outcomes for students. This result also agree with Akpan and Udo (2024) that in the nearly paperless century, the social media has come to be the latest of the ways which political leaders (students) apply in reaching the attainments (electorate). This is because, there seem to be no arm of the government, communities or cities that has not started deriving gains of social media platforms due to the availability of the internet systems. Likewise, a greater percentage of persons are also connected to the internet system of communication even in Nigeria. Although the social media had been previously seen to be for trivial matters, it has been adopted by individuals and groups to cover transactions of many economic and social activities.

## **Conclusion**

The research work investigated social media technology influence on the educational learning culture of students in Wellspring University, Benin City, Edo State and Akwa Ibom University, Ikot Akpaden. This was achieved with specific of objectives which also formed the research questions. The objectives included to find out the types of social media technology sites commonly used by students, to examine the frequency of using social media by students, to investigate the most common benefit derived from social media technology by students, to find out the influence of social media on the academic culture of students. In the review of literature it has adduced that educational culture is part of literary learning to understand written text and use it for various purposes of learning, problem solving and general communication. It is a complex activity that involve multiple cognitive processes of understanding visuals, phonological semantics and syntactic connotation of words.

Educational learning culture by reading is influenced by many factors including genetics, social and environmental factors of pressure and language. Effective reading to attain purposeful academic culture need sequential knowledge of alphabets and phonetics, vocabulary comprehension, words recognition, decoding and fluency. In addition, the culture of reading for education is the art of understanding words in text and using the knowledge for personal growth and development. This suggest the making up of sense from the printed or written statements for fun, leisure, relaxation, information and knowledge. Reading is the ability to identify symbols and appropriate semantics to understand the meaning of words in isolation and in context. Equally, reading is a process of thinking with words, evaluating, judging, imagining and debating during intra and inter



communications. Educational material reading is therefore an essential tool for imparting knowledge that improve skills. In the survey method which was used to carry out the study with a sample of 368, it was discovered that social media does not really affect most of the students educational culture rather it helps a greater percentage in academic pursuits while others depend on it for trivial general social matters of entertainments, friends interaction and personal identity.

The study also concluded that rather than having a negative influence on the students, social media technology for communication platforms usage have positive influences by giving students the chance to build effective learning in the educational reading culture.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations

1. The institution should provide strategies and tips on how undergraduate students can manage social media technology usage to minimize negative effects on educational learning culture and abilities.
2. That students should be enlightened to set limits, establish a balance between social media technology and educational study time as well as for effective social time management.
3. The students can be encouraged to integrate educational learning advantages of social media technology into the learning processes of effective reading skills above entertainment, music and viewing of indecent celebrity sites.
4. That educational institutions can design social media interactive reading group activities and online discussions related to course materials and educational contents using social media platforms to improve academics.

A limitation of this study is that data was collected through questionnaire which reflected respondents' self-reports. The students were not monitored in the actual use of the social media technology. The use of self-report measures is often prone to social bias, due to time constraints to answer the questions. Therefore, future research should also include group observations to determine how students actually use social media platforms. The current study was also limited to students within a particular zone in Nigeria. Therefore, a larger scale study involving other zones and states can be undertaken to broadly establish more facts.

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