



Influence of Social Media on the Academic Performance of Undergraduate in Faculty of Education in Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba, Kogi State

Adebiyi Hannah Adebunmi, James J. Toluwalase, Olorunnishola A. Olufikayo, Sunday Yomi
Confluence University of Science and Technology Osara

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of social media on the academic performance of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and data were collected from 120 students across different academic levels (100–400 level) using a structured questionnaire. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure fair representation, while the reliability of the instrument was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.83. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, and tables. The findings revealed that social media usage was widespread among the students, with WhatsApp (100%), YouTube (91.7%), and Facebook (79.2%) emerging as the most frequently accessed platforms. Students reported using these platforms for communication, entertainment, and academic purposes such as group discussions, sharing lecture notes, and accessing tutorial videos. The study also identified challenges that hindered effective use of social media for academic purposes. This included time mismanagement (83.3%), distractions from academic goals (79.2%), high cost of internet data (70.8%), and poor network connectivity (66.7%). Suggested strategies to mitigate these challenges included enforcing time management routines, introducing digital/media literacy programs, providing affordable internet services, and encouraging the academic use of social media. It was recommended that institutions integrate digital literacy training into their programs, encourage academic use of social media platforms, and provide counselling services to students struggling with excessive use. Furthermore, the study suggested that future research could explore longitudinal impacts of social media usage, comparative studies across institutions, and its correlation with students' mental health and academic outcomes.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: March, 2026

Received in revised form: June, 2026

Accepted: August, 2026

Published online: September, 2026

KEYWORDS

Media, Academic, Performance,
Undergraduate

INTRODUCTION

Education is a multifaceted process through which individuals acquire knowledge, skills, values, and critical thinking abilities that enable them to function effectively in society. It extends beyond mere formal instruction in subjects like mathematics, science, or language arts, encompassing personal growth, socialization, and emotional intelligence

(UNESCO, 2020). The importance of education lies in its ability to shape individuals' worldview, enhance their decision-making capacities, and prepare them to contribute to the development of their communities.

Over the years, education systems around the world have continually evolved, driven by both technological advancements and changing societal needs. Today, education is

Corresponding author: Sunday Yomi

sundayy@custech.edu.ng

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understood as a lifelong process that includes not only formal schooling but also informal and non-formal learning experiences. With the rise of digital technologies, the traditional classroom model has shifted, allowing for more personalized, accessible, and flexible learning pathways (OECD, 2021). These innovations have sparked a global dialogue on the future of education, emphasizing the need for inclusivity, equity, and adaptability in the learning process (Achimugu, Njoku & Sunday, 2023).

Social media has become an increasingly significant tool in the educational landscape, facilitating greater collaboration, engagement, and access to learning resources. Platforms like YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter have created opportunities for both students and educators to interact, share knowledge, and engage in global discussions. According to a study by the Pew Research Center (2021), 73% of educators report using social media for educational purposes, ranging from sharing materials to creating virtual classrooms. Social media has also given rise to new forms of informal learning, allowing individuals to access a wealth of educational content at their fingertips, whether through online tutorials, webinars, or instructional videos (Greenhow, Lewin, & Letourneau, 2016). Additionally, social media platforms provide a space for students to connect with peers, mentors, and experts worldwide, enabling a more collaborative learning environment (Akanmu, Sunday & Ayinla, 2016).

John (2019) defines social network sites as public web-based services that allow users to develop a personal profile, identify other users with whom they have a connection, read and react to postings made by other users on the site, and send and receive messages either privately or publicly. These web-based services allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system. Among the most popular are Facebook and WhatsApp. Social media are therefore associated with an increased tendency for young people to multitask, to rely on a digital juggling of daily activities and commitments. A student's academic performance is often used as an indicator of their ability to

understand and apply the knowledge acquired during their course of study. Positive academic performance is generally associated with consistent effort, engagement in class activities, and effective study strategies, while poor academic performance may result from distractions, lack of focus, or inadequate preparation for exams and assignments. In the context of social media, its impact on academic performance is multifaceted.

On one hand, social media can serve as a valuable tool for learning, providing students with access to educational content, academic discussions, and collaboration opportunities. For instance, students can join online study groups, participate in academic forums, or watch educational videos that supplement their learning (Sunday, Etal, 2023). Ultimately, the relationship between social media and academic performance depends on how students manage their time and balance online activities with their academic responsibilities. Students who are able to set boundaries and use social media in a purposeful and educational manner may experience enhanced learning opportunities and academic success.

Conversely, those who struggle to regulate their social media use may find it harder to concentrate on their studies, which can negatively impact their academic performance. It is essential for students to develop time management skills and discipline in order to maintain a balance between social media engagement and academic commitments, thus ensuring that their educational achievements are not compromised by online distractions (Ayemowa, 2019).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The surge in the use of social media among university undergraduate students for both academic and non-academic purposes cannot be underestimated based on the accessibility of different social media sites via the internet coupled with nearly unrestricted access to disseminate and retrieve information at virtually zero cost. Undergraduate students have been found of placing premium on the use of social media in their



daily activities which could impact negatively on their academic performance thereby making it a point of concern to government, parents, teachers and other stake holders both within and outside the education system due to decline in students' performance.

Scholars in the field of education have tried to investigate the influence of social media on academic performance but their findings continue to be inconsistent. While some have attributed students' poor academic performance to excessive commitment to the use of social media for non-academic activities, some have found positive influence of the use on academic performance while others did not find significant correlation in undergraduate students' use of social media and their academic performance. This divergence in the findings could be attributed to the difference in the locations where the studies are carried out and the variables involved in the study of different scholars (Samuel & Sunday, 2024).

This inconsistency in the findings requires further studies on the topical issue. So also, due consideration has not been given to investigating the views of education students whose knowledge of the influence could help in shaping the up-coming generation that they are to mentor as teachers. This study therefore will investigate the influence of social media on the academic performance of students in Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine influence of social media on the academic Performance of students in Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba. Specifically, the study intends to;

1. Find out the various social networking sites students of Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba have access to.
2. Examine how social media usage impact student's time management and study habits
3. Determine how the time spent on social media daily influence their academic performance at Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba.

Research Questions

The following research questions was raised to guide the study

1. What social networking sites do the students of faculty of education, Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba have access to?
2. What is the impact of social media on the academic performance of education students in Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba?
3. What are the challenges facing the students in the use of social media in Prince Abubakar Audu university Anyigba?
4. What strategies can be put in place to improve the usage of social media in Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design was suitable because it enabled the collection of data from a large group of respondents to describe their attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions regarding the influence of social media on their academic performance. The population of the study comprised all undergraduate students of Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba. According to the university's academic records, the total number of registered undergraduate students was approximately 43,000. These students were enrolled across various faculties, including Education, Science, Social Sciences, Arts, among others.

Since the study aimed to examine the relationship between social media use and academic performance, the population included students from all these faculties to ensure a diverse sample and better representation of the overall student body. A stratified random sampling technique was employed by dividing seven faculties from the university into two groups. Three faculties were randomly selected, and from each of the three, one department was chosen to ensure representation across different academic disciplines. A proportional number of students was then randomly drawn from these departments to form the study sample. Based on the total



population of 43,000 students, a sample size of 430 students was selected.

The primary instrument for data collection in the study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on two key aspects: the frequency and nature of students' social media usage and their self-reported academic performance. The first section of the questionnaire gathered demographic information such as age, gender, and faculty of study. The second section consisted of questions related to the types of social media platforms used, the frequency of use, time spent on social media, and the perceived impact of social media on academic performance. The responses were based on a Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The reliability of the instrument was assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha method. A pilot test was conducted on a sample of 10 students from a different university, or a different set of students within the same university but outside the study sample. The internal consistency was calculated and a reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. This showed that the instrument was reliable and consistent in measuring the intended variables (Thomas, et al 2026).

Data were collected through the administration of the structured questionnaire (Influence of social media on the Academic Performance of Students in Prince Abubakar Audu University). The questionnaire was distributed in person with the help of an assistant researcher trained for the purpose of distribution and collection. The researcher provided instructions on how to fill out the questionnaire and ensured confidentiality and anonymity to encourage honest and accurate responses. Students were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaires, and the researcher was available to clarify any questions or issues that arose during the completion process. After the questionnaires were completed, they were collected for data analysis. The instrument was administered through face-to-face interaction with the respondents. The researcher approached students in lecture halls, libraries, and common

areas within the university to distribute the questionnaires.

Furthermore, students were informed about the purpose of the study, and their consent was obtained before participation. To ensure a higher response rate, a follow-up was conducted by the researcher to remind participants to return their completed questionnaires. Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and to describe the patterns of social media usage among the students. Inferential statistics, particularly correlation analysis, were used to examine the relationship between social media usage and academic performance.

RESULTS

Research Question One:

What social networking sites do the students of Faculty of Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba have access to?

Table 1: Social Networking Sites Accessed

Social Media Platform	Frequency	Percentage (%)
WhatsApp	120	100
YouTube	110	91.7
Facebook	95	79.2
Instagram	85	70.8
TikTok	70	58.3
Twitter (X)	65	54.2
Snapchat	40	33.3
LinkedIn	35	29.2

WhatsApp emerged as the most accessible and widely used platform, with 100% of respondents reporting access. This suggests that WhatsApp plays a central role in both communication and possibly academic interaction, such as group chats for class updates or assignments. YouTube (91.7%) follows closely, signifying a strong reliance on video-based



content, likely for academic tutorials or lectures. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram, although primarily entertainment-focused, are also highly accessed, which may indicate their dual role in both learning and leisure. The relatively lower usage of LinkedIn (29.2%) implies limited professional networking among students, which

may reflect their academic stage or lack of exposure to career-building platforms.

Research Question Two:

What is the impact of social media on the academic performance of education students in Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba?

Table 2: Impact of Social Media on Academic Performance

S/N	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Social media is not helpful for academic learning.	10	15	20	40	35
2	Social media does not help with academic updates.	15	20	25	35	25
3	I get distracted from academic work by social media.	5	10	15	40	50
4	My academic performance would improve with less time on social media.	5	10	10	45	50
5	Social media does not allow collaboration with others.	20	25	15	35	25
6	I have gained academic knowledge from social media.	5	10	15	50	40

An analysis of Table 2 shows that students hold mixed views about the impact of social media on their academic performance. Most respondents disagreed with the statement that social media is not helpful for academic learning, suggesting that many find it useful for accessing educational content. At the same time, a large number (90 students) admitted that social media distracts them from academic work, and 95 believed they would perform better academically if they reduced their screen time. Despite these concerns, a similarly high number of respondents (90) acknowledged gaining academic knowledge through social media. These responses highlight the dual role of social media both as a learning aid and a source of distraction—indicating that its academic impact largely depends on how it is used.

Research Question Three:

What are the challenges facing students in the use of social media in Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba?

Table 3: Challenges in Using Social Media

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Time mismanagement	100	83.3
Distractions from academic goals	95	79.2
High cost of data subscription	85	70.8
Poor network/internet access	80	66.7
Lack of access to academic content	30	25



The most significant challenge is time mismanagement, affecting over 83% of respondents. This points to a lack of digital discipline and prioritization among students. Distractions (79.2%) further compound this issue, indicating that entertainment or social interaction often takes precedence over academic engagement. The high cost of data and poor internet infrastructure (over 65% affected) reveal structural challenges that could limit the educational benefits of social media. A minority (25%) reported a lack of academic content, which suggests that content is available but possibly underutilized or undiscovered due to limited digital literacy or guidance.

Research Question Four:

What strategies can be put in place to improve the usage of social media in Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba?

Table 4: Suggested Strategies for Improvement

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Enforce time management routines	100	83.3
Conduct digital/media literacy workshops	95	79.2
Provide cheaper data/internet bundles	90	75
Encourage academic use of platforms	85	70.8
Monitor and regulate excessive usage	80	66.7

Time management emerges again as the key area for intervention, with 83.3% of students proposing structured use of time. Digital literacy training was also highly recommended, indicating students' awareness of the need to better navigate social media tools for academic

benefit. Cheaper internet access was another common recommendation, reflecting the financial burden students face when accessing online content. Encouraging academic use and monitoring excessive use also indicate that students are open to institutional guidance in regulating their social media behavior for improved learning outcomes.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of social media on the academic performance of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba. The findings revealed that all respondents had access to WhatsApp, while a large percentage also accessed platforms such as YouTube (91.7%), Facebook (79.2%), and Instagram (70.8%). This suggests that social media usage is ubiquitous among students, with WhatsApp dominating as the most frequently used platform. These findings align with Hutchison and Reinking (2019), who emphasized that mobile-based platforms like WhatsApp are popular among students due to their accessibility, user-friendliness, and utility for both academic and non-academic communication.

In the context of education, the wide access to YouTube also highlights students' growing dependence on visual learning resources a shift from traditional text-based learning. It aligns with Greenhow et al. (2016), who argued that YouTube and similar platforms provide students with access to rich academic content, including tutorials, lectures, and presentations that support autonomous learning. A significant number of respondents agreed that they had gained academic knowledge through social media platforms (75%), and many acknowledged that social media helped them stay updated on academic events.

This supports the work of Akhooly (2020) and Pew Research Center (2021), both of which confirmed that students increasingly use social media for academic collaboration, accessing scholarly resources, and networking with peers and mentors. Despite these benefits, the majority of students (75%) also admitted that



social media causes distraction from their academic work, and more than 79% believed their academic performance could improve if they reduced the time spent on these platforms. This is in agreement with Junco (2017), who found that excessive use of social media especially during study hours has a negative correlation with students' GPA, assignment completion, and exam preparation. The contradiction in these findings reflects the multifaceted role of social media: it is simultaneously a valuable learning resource and a powerful source of distraction. This supports the position of Ayemowa (2019), who emphasized that the academic impact of social media is largely dependent on the user's self-discipline, time management, and digital literacy.

From the analysis, it became evident that time mismanagement and distraction are the most pressing issues confronting students. Over 80% of the students admitted that social media caused procrastination, poor concentration, and inconsistency in their study habits. These findings are consistent with the observations of Aminu (2018), who identified that unrestricted access to social media leads students to prioritize online entertainment over academic responsibilities. In addition to behavioral challenges, students also reported structural challenges, such as the high cost of internet data (70.8%) and poor network connectivity (66.7%).

These findings reflect broader infrastructural issues in Nigeria and much of sub-Saharan Africa. According to the OECD (2021), one of the barriers to maximizing the educational benefits of digital tools in developing countries is limited internet penetration and affordability, which restricts student access to educational content. Furthermore, a small but significant portion of students (25%) reported difficulty in accessing relevant academic materials through social media. This may be due to lack of awareness about credible educational pages or platforms, again pointing to a need for digital literacy training.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight the significant role that social media plays in the academic and social lives of undergraduate

students. It has become more than just a tool for entertainment and communication it is now a critical part of how students access information, collaborate with peers, and engage with academic materials. However, its influence is complex, as it can serve both as a resource for academic development and as a source of distraction.

The study has shown that while many students actively use platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube for learning-related purposes such as participating in study groups, sharing class materials, and watching tutorial videos a sizable portion also reported experiencing negative outcomes. This presents a clear need for institutional support in the form of digital literacy education, guided platform use, and academic integration of social tools. In conclusion, social media is a powerful digital force that, when properly harnessed, can support and enrich the educational experience of undergraduate students. However, it also poses real threats to academic success if used irresponsibly. The findings call for a balanced approach one that empowers students to take control of their online behaviors while leveraging the strengths of social media for academic advancement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and implications, the following recommendations are made:

1. Digital Literacy Training: Institutions should introduce regular digital literacy programs to help students develop healthy social media habits, including strategies for managing screen time and reducing distractions.
2. Academic Use Encouragement: Lecturers should be encouraged to incorporate social media in course delivery where appropriate. For instance, WhatsApp and Telegram groups can be used for assignments, announcements, and discussion forums.

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Corresponding author: Sunday Yomi

sundayy@custech.edu.ng

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Corresponding author: Sunday Yomi

sundayy@custech.edu.ng

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