

**Social Media Addiction and Undergraduate Students' Self-Perception in University of Ibadan, Nigeria**

**Tolulope ADEPOJU**  
**The Polytechnic Library**  
**The Polytechnic Ibadan**

**Olukayode M. JOSEPH**  
**The Polytechnic Library**  
**The Polytechnic Ibadan**

**And**

**Olukunle OSUNRINADE**  
**The Polytechnic Library**  
**The Polytechnic Ibadan**

**Abstract**

*Social media networks have become popular among the students because of the great potential they have in facilitation, collaboration, communication and sharing among the students. Students' self-perception has been attributable to their exposure to social media networks. Previous studies have concentrated more on social media usage and social media addiction without considering their influence on self-perception. This study, therefore, examined the influence of social media utilisation and addiction on self-perception of undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Nigeria.*

*The study adopted the survey method of ex-post-facto design. Multistage sampling procedure was adopted to select 907 undergraduate students from 7 Faculties in University of Ibadan. A questionnaire named "Social Media Utilisation, Addiction and Self-Perception Questionnaire" ( $r=0.77$ ) was used for data collection. Seven research questions were answered in the study.*

*Facebook (751 or 90.2%) and Twitter (646 or 77.6%) were the most commonly accessible social media networks while meeting with friends (651 or 78.2%), getting news (566 or 67.9%), communication (554 or 66.5%) and online learning (450 or 54.0%) were major purposes for social media usage among the undergraduate students. Low level of social media addiction and positive self-perception were also established among the undergraduate students. Self perception is significantly positively related with social media utilisation ( $r = .181, p<0.01$ ) and social media addiction ( $r = .195, p<0.01$ ). The relative contribution of social media utilisation and social media addiction to self perception were ( $\beta = .111, t = 2.852$ ) and ( $\beta = .140, t = 3.569$ ) respectively. Social media utilisation and addiction to social media relatively contributed significantly to University of Ibadan undergraduates' self-perception.*

*Keywords: Social media networks, Social media utilisation, Social media addiction, Self-perception, Undergraduate students,*

## **Introduction**

The dwindling educational development in most developing countries of the world calls for surgical measures with a bid to galvanising all processes that could bring meaningful, rapid and sustainable growth to the education sector (Olatubosun, 2010). One of these measures is the use of social media networks. Making use of social media networks in the process of education in schools has the potential of raising the standard of education. Learning is the development of new knowledge, skills or attitudes as an individual interacts with information and environment using conventional teaching methods poses problems and limitations to the learners (Heinrich, Russel & Smaldino, 2002). Considering its role in education, social media can facilitate collaborative and constructive teaching and learning in schools. In this, learners are, among other things, engaged in knowledge construction and creative activities (Olatubosun, 2010).

Social media networks provide useful tools to strengthen the human, institutional and organisational capacity at all levels. Social media networks are designed to foster collaboration among individuals, institutions and nations of the world with such collaboration aiming at bringing about meaningful development through the sharing of ideas and resources (Zavazana, 2012). Most importantly, students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria can collaborate with their colleagues in developed countries of the world to enable them live up to the intellectual, economic, and social demands of this 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, low level of social media awareness is a major risk factor in meeting the objectives of social media networks based projects destined for use by the students in developing countries. These factors often translate into low usage; and hence, lower chances for sustainability.

In recent years, social media has become a huge and integral component of how students spend their time online. Between wikis, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and many others, people are spending enormous amounts of time on websites used to share information and connect with people (Acar, 2008). Not surprisingly, students are easily connecting with others and sharing information more than ever before. Many students get news, gossip, and friendship updates via social network sites, sometimes even before breakfast from the convenience of their mobile phone or laptop (Boyd, 2008).

Today's students integrate social media networks into all aspects of their lives for multiple purposes, particularly socialising, entertaining and shopping (Asselin and Moayeri, 2008) as well as doing homework by using the Internet (Lenhart, Madden and Hitlin, 2005). In addition to helping establish and maintain interpersonal connections, studies have shown that social media sites have the ability to guide students entering an unfamiliar social environment. Selwyn (2007) argues that social media network like facebook has "become an important site for the informal, cultural learning of 'being' a student, with online interactions and experiences allowing roles to be learned, values understood and identities shaped. Social media networks have also been found to be able to offer a unique opportunity to promote socialisation to the institution's environment as it can help students learn about their peers and college which, in turn, can create satisfaction and affiliation with the University.

However, although use of the social media networks by students is on the rise, Spencil and Gitimu (2011) emphasized concerns that heavier use of social media networks, otherwise called social media addiction, by students might interfere with academic achievement, conventional

social interaction, and exposure to desirable and undesirable cultural experiences. Early support for the concept of “social media network addiction” comes from Young (1996), who posted a form-based survey on a website that allowed for self-selecting anonymous input from “avid social media networks users”. In university settings, anecdotal evidence of problems stemming from excessive use of new technologies has been reported on various campuses (Adamic and Alar, 2005; Cabral, 2010). For example, study by Boyd and Ellison (2007) reported that 50percent of students interviewed after dismissal for academic failure listed excessive usage of social media as a reason for their problems.

Rose (2012) in her study found that young adults that spend more time on Facebook are more likely to have high and positive perception about their ability to be more acceptable than others. Also, Williams (2012) reported that social media use and addiction can have a positive influence on college students’ self perception, though this may be because users can shape their image and social interactions on the platform tend to reflect that image. However, a University of Houston study (2008) found a correlation between those who frequently use social media and those who suffer from depression tended to compare themselves to others, which added to their negative self perception. It would therefore be a noble venture to investigate the extent to which social media usage and addiction would be able to determine the self-perception of undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Nigeria

On the purpose of social media use, Sawyer (2011) findings revealed that students use social media sites to communicate with their friends and families and to stay in touch with people whom they cannot talk to face to face. Staying connected to people is important for relationships building. In corroborating this, Balci and Golcu (2013) reported that university students in Turkey use facebook more for communicating with friends, getting information about people and events, entertainment and relaxing as well as messaging. Also, Charney and Greenberg (2001) reiterated that students use social media basically for the purposes of keeping informed, diversion and entertainment, peer identity, good feelings, communication, sights and sounds, career and coolness. Cheak, Goh and Chin (2012) also reported checking of messages, checking of comments/testimonies and playing games as topping the list of purposes for which university students in Malaysia visit social networking sites just as they reported regular use of friendster, tagged and MySpace among the students.

Social networking addiction is sometimes used to refer to someone spending too much time using Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media etc so much so that it interferes with other aspects of daily life. Olowu and Fasola (2012) findings on level of social media addiction among students revealed that majority of the students in tertiary institutions in Oyo State affirmed that they spend more time on social media and that they felt agitated when they are not able to access their social network at least twice daily. This established a high level of social media addiction among the students. Subathra, Nimisha and Hakeem (2013) also reported a high level of addiction to social media among college students in Coimbatore, India as majority of the students (98.0%) were found to be addicted to social network chatting. Benson, Filippaios and Morgan (2009) reported a significant difference in social media addiction between undergraduate and postgraduate students in UK and European universities. Findings from the study revealed that graduate students exhibit more addiction to social media than undergraduate students.

The research that exists about the effects of social media on self-perception and self-esteem is all quite contrary (LaRose and Eastin, 2004; Selwyn, 2007; Kaya, 2010; Walker, 2012). While some studies suggested social media has a negative effect on self-perception, others proved that social media has a positive effect on self-perception. On the other hand, studies have found contradictory data that suggested that addiction and high use of social media such as facebook can have detrimental effects to self-esteem and self-perception. However, literature review has revealed that more information exist that supports the positive aspect of social media when it comes to its effects on self-esteem and self-perception, but much of this research is related to social media addiction and dependency. Taking this knowledge into account, Allen (2012) concluded that the positive effects of social media in boosting an individual self-esteem and self-perception are merely superficial.

There have been studies on social media networks use among students such as Bradley (1990), Kaplan and Haentein (2010), Karaiskos, Trazvellas, and Papapriogopoulos (2010), Spencil and Gitimu (2011), and Stollak, Vandenberg, Burklund, and Weiss (2011). Such studies focused mainly on college students and only few focusing on university students. Also, the few studies that focused on university students were done outside the shore of Nigeria. On the other hand, studies such as Ivala and Gachago (2010), Kuss and Griffiths (2011), and Alabi (2013) that studied the use of social media by university students focused only on facebook and blogs while other social media were left out. Therefore, this study investigated the use of and level of addiction to social media networks as influencing factors in undergraduate self-perception in University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. investigate the pattern of use of social media networks by undergraduate students in university of Ibadan;
2. establish the level of addiction to social media networks among undergraduate students in university of Ibadan;
3. find out how undergraduate students in University of Ibadan perceive themselves;
4. ascertain the relative contribution of social media networks use and addiction to undergraduates' self perception in University of Ibadan.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions will be addressed in the study

1. For what purposes do the undergraduate students in University of Ibadan use social media networks?
2. What is the frequency of use of social media networks among undergraduate students in University of Ibadan, Nigeria?
3. What is the level of social media addiction among undergraduates' students in University of Ibadan?
4. How do undergraduate students in University of Ibadan perceive themselves?
5. What is the relative contribution of social media networks use and addiction to social media to undergraduate students' self-perception in University of Ibadan

## Research Methodology

This study adopted the ex-post-facto type of survey method. The population of the study comprises all the undergraduate students in university of Ibadan, Nigeria. The respondents are distributed across the thirteen faculties offering undergraduate courses in university of Ibadan viz: Faculties of Education, Science, Social science, Technology, Agriculture and Forestry, Veterinary medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Public Health, Clinical sciences, Basic medical sciences, Arts, and Law that offer undergraduate courses in university of Ibadan. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample population for the study. At the first stage of sampling, the simple random sampling method using balloting system was adopted in selecting seven faculties representing (50%) of the total number of faculties in University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The seven faculties selected are, Faculties of Science, Arts, Clinical sciences, Law, The social sciences, Pharmacy, and Agriculture, and Forestry. The last stage of the sampling procedure adopted the simple random sampling to select ten percent (10%) of the total undergraduate enrollment in each of the Faculties selected for the study. Thus, a total number of nine hundred and seven undergraduates form the sample size for the study (See Table 1).

Table 1: Sample size for the study

Faculties	Undergraduate enrollment	Sample size (10% of undergraduate enrollment)
Agriculture and Forestry	1361	136
Arts	1816	182
Clinical sciences	1191	119
Law	578	58
Pharmacy	330	33
Science	2334	233
The Social science	1464	146
Total	9074	907

Source: Preliminary Survey, 2012

The research instruments adopted for this study was questionnaire. In validating the questionnaire, the draft of the questionnaire was given to experts in the field of library and information studies for their inputs on the adequacy and appropriateness of the items included in the main instruments. The questionnaire was trial-tested on twenty undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education which is not part of the Faculties selected for the study. The data collected were subjected to Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient with the results yielding 0.77. This is considered suitable and appropriate for the study.

## Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

A total of nine hundred and seven (907) copies of the questionnaire designed for the study were administered on the undergraduate students, out of which only eight hundred and eighty three were returned with useful responses. This gives a response rate of 91.8percent which was considered adequate for the study.

**Research Question 1:** For what purpose do the undergraduate students in University of Ibadan use social media networks?

Table 2: Respondents Opinion on Purpose of Use of Social Media Networks

Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Finding communities of my interest	370	44.4
Finding social contacts	269	32.3
Finding Jobs online	79	79.5
Making friends	651	78.2
Sharing links	209	25.1
Online learning	450	54.0
Communication	554	66.5
Research work	412	49.5
News	566	67.9
Leisure/Fun/Entertainment	357	42.9
Advertisement	219	26.3
Passing away time	194	23.3
Video conferencing	60	7.2

From Table 2, it can be deduced that majority of the respondents to attested to making friends 651 (78.2%), getting news 566 (67.9%), communication 554 (66.5%) and online learning 450 (54.0%) as the major purposes for which they make use of social media networks. This implies that undergraduate students in University of Ibadan make use of social media network mainly for the purposes of making friends, getting news, communication and online learning. This is in support of Sharafah (2011) findings which reported social interaction, communication motives and companionship as major purposes for students' use of social media networks.

**Research Question 2:** What is the frequency of use of social media networks among undergraduate student in University of Ibadan, Nigeria?

Information on the frequency of use of social media networks among the respondents showed that majority of the respondents affirmed the use of only Facebook and Twitter on regular basis with response rates of 695 (65.2%) and 467 (56.1%) respectively. On the other, a larger proportion of the respondents does not make use of other social media networks listed such as Youtube, Picassa, Flickr, Mys[ace and Blogger among others. This implies a low level of social media networks' use among the undergraduate students in University of Ibadan as only Facebook and Twitter are being used by the undergraduate students in University of Ibadan. Boyd and Ellison (2011) findings that reported regular use of Facebook, Twitter and Myspace among University students.

**Research Question 3:** What is the level of social media addiction among undergraduate students in university of Ibadan?

Table 3: Social Media Addiction among Undergraduate Students

Statement on social media addiction	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std Dev
I find that I spend more than intended on social media	181 (27.7%)	250 (30.0%)	114 (13.7%)	89 (10.7%)	2.62	1.260
I often check my social media site	75	245	325	81	3.11	1.193

before every other things that I need to do	(9.0%)	(29.4%)	(39.0%)	(9.7%)		
I find my performance suffers because of social media	140 (16.8%)	140 (16.8%)	194 (23.3%)	110 (13.2%)	2.99	1.266
I tried to cut down the amount of time I spend online	104 (12.5%)	4.75 (57.0%)	66 (7.9%)	64 (7.7%)	2.11	1.055
I often find myself saying “Just a few minutes” when using social media	29 (3.5%)	163 (19.6%)	190 (22.8%)	34 (4.1%)	3.04	0.852
People comment negatively about my social media usage	58 (7.0%)	215 (25.8%)	413 (49.6%)	50 (6.0%)	3.22	1.107
I feel stressed out, disconnected and /or paranoid when I cannot access social media	83 (10.0%)	307 (36.9%)	238 (28.6%)	71 (8.5%)	2.89	1.176
I cannot imagine going without social media	157 (18.8%)	188 (22.6%)	127 (15.2%)	150 (18.0%)	3.01	1.398
I spend more time using social media than just about anything else.	81 (9.7%)	121 (14.5%)	344 (41.3%)	187 (22.4%)	3.52	1.255
I can risk any relationship because of social media	47 (5.6%)	121 (14.5%)	384 (46.1%)	153 (18.4%)	3.57	1.1150
I use social media as a way of escaping from problem or relieving mood	98 (11.8%)	388 (46.6%)	101 (12.1%)	63 (7.6%)	2.57	1.085
I stay online than originally intended	109 (3.1%)	209 (25.1%)	276 (33.1%)	25 (3.0%)	2.88	1.101
I am able to control my use of social media	146 (17.5%)	363 (43.6%)	100 (12.0%)	59 (7.1%)	2.48	1.125
I do not feel like losing anything without social media	106 (12.7%)	135 (16.2%)	152 (18.2%)	59 (7.1%)	2.91	1.063
I feel depressed when I cannot access my social media account	191 (22.9%)	221 (26.5%)	246 (29.5%)	38 (4.6%)	3.07	1.225
I think I am addicted to social media	136 (16.3%)	92 (11.0%)	283 (21.2%)	171 (21.2%)	3.33	1.359
Grand Mean					2.96	

From Table 3, the Grand Mean of the level of social media addiction is 2.96 which is lower than the criterion mean of 3.00 set for a higher level of social media addiction. It can, therefore, be inferred that there is a low level of addiction to social media among undergraduate students in University of Ibadan. This is further affirmed in the disagreement of majority of the respondents with statements that tends towards social media addiction such as “I think I am addicted to social media” and agreement with statements that are against social media addiction such as “I am able to control my use of social media”. This is variance with findings from Olowu and Fasola (2012) study which revealed a high level of social media addiction among students in tertiary institutions in Oyo state.

Information on the time spent on social media networks by the respondents revealed that majority of the respondents 665 (79.8%) spend less than 90 minutes on social media networks while only few respondents spend more than 90 minutes on social media networks. This implies that the undergraduate students spend less time on social media networks. This further affirms the low level of social media addiction among the undergraduate students in University of Ibadan.

**Research Question 4:** How do undergraduates in University of Ibadan perceive themselves?

It can be inferred from information supplied on undergraduates’ self-perception that the undergraduates in University of Ibadan have positive perception of themselves. This can be established through the agreement of majority of the students with statements that portrays positive self-perception such as “I think I am smart” and “I feel I am academically good” with response rates of 676 (81.2%) and 446 (53.6%) respectively. On the other hand, majority of the students disagreed with statements on negative self-perception such as “I feel inadequate because of my exposure to achievement of others through social media network”. Thus, it can be inferred that undergraduate students in University of Ibadan perceive themselves positively. This is in support of Kaya (2010) findings which reported that people who use social media networks have a higher self-esteem and positive perception about themselves.

**Research question 5:** What are the relative contributions of social media networks use and addiction to University of Ibadan undergraduates’ self-perception?

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Relative’s contributions of the Independent variables to the Dependent variable

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Model					
Constant(Self-perception )	21.006	1.329	-	15.806	0.000
Use of Social Media Networks	6.321	0.028	.111	2.852	0.000
Addiction to social media networks	7.868	0.022	.140	3.569	0.004

Table 7 presents information on the relative contributions of social media utilization and social media addiction level to undergraduates’ self perception. It revealed addiction to social media as contributing more to undergraduate students self perception ( $\beta = 0.140$ ,  $t = 3.569$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) than social media utilisation ( $\beta = 0.111$ ,  $t = 2.852$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Both social media utilisation and social media addiction do make significant contributions to undergraduate self-perception in University of Ibadan. Social media addiction and social media utilisation contributed 14.0percent and 11.0percent respectively to self-perception among undergraduate students in University of Ibadan

## Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- i. There should be adequate orientation on social media utilisation and addiction among the students. This will further encourage regular use of social media among the students and sustainable development in the education sector.
- ii. The management of the University should create awareness among the undergraduate students about other social media networks that can help students' learning.
- iii. The management of the University should ensure the adequate provision of social media networks for students' utilisation. However, the use of the available social media should be monitored by the school authority to guide against abuse.
- iv. The management of the University and Parents should be guided against excessive use of social media that can lead to addiction.
- v. The cost of accessing the Internet should be made affordable to the students to enable them to be able to utilise social media networks.
- vi. There is also the need for the provision of a good policy environment for the effective use of the social media networks by the students.
- vii. Students should be encouraged towards positive use of social media. The use of social media networks for collaborative learning among the students should be encouraged.

## Limitation of the Study

This study only considers what is obtainable among the undergraduate students in University of Ibadan. Also, Only seven faculties were considered out of the thirteen faculties and a College available within the University of Ibadan.

## References

- Acar, A. (2008). Antecedents and Consequences of Online Social Networking Behavior: The Case of Facebook. *Journal of Website Promotion*, 3(1/2), 62-83. doi:10.1080/15533610802052654
- Alabi, O.O. (2013). A Survey of facebook addiction level among selected Nigerian university undergraduates. *New Media and Mass Communication*, Vol 10, 70-80. Retrieved from [www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php](http://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php)
- Boyd, D.M., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13 (1): 12-23. Retrieved from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd/ellison.html> on 21st February, 2013.
- Cabral, J. (2010). Is generation Y addicted to social media. *The Elon Journal of Undergraduates Research in Communication*, 2 (1): 5-14
- Cheak, A.P.C., Goh, G.G.G., & Chin, T.S. (2012). Online social networking addiction: exploring its relationship with social networking dependency and mood modifications among undergraduates in Malaysia. Proceeding of the International Conference on Management, Economics, and Finance (ICMEF, 2012), Malaysia, 15-16 October, Retrieved from [www.globalresearch.com.my](http://www.globalresearch.com.my) on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2013.
- Heinich, R.M., Russel, J.D. & Smalden, S.E. (2002). Instructional media technologies for learning. In: Akpan, I.F. (Eds). *Information and communication technology and science teaching in Nigeria*. A Paper presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference of History of Education Society in Nigeria, Port Harcourt, 10-12 December.

- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53 (1), 59-68.
- Karaiskos, D. Tzavellas, E. Balta, G., & Paparrigopoulos, T. (2010) Social network addiction: a clinical Disorder? *European Psychiatry*, 25, 855
- Kaya, T. (2010). "CUNY social network mixes scholarship with Facebookstyle friendship." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. (Retrieved November 1, 2010 from) <http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/cuny-social-network-mixes-scholarship-with-facebook-style-friendship/27266>
- Kuss, D J & Griffiths, M.D. (2011) Addiction to social networks on the internet: A literature review of Empirical researches. *International Journal of mental health and addiction*, 5 (3), 45-65
- LaRose, R. (2010). The problem of media habits. *Communication Theory*, 20, 194–222.
- Lenhart, A., Purcell, K., Smith, A., & Zickuhr, K. (2010). *Social Media & Mobile Internet Use Among Teens and Young Adults*. Retrieved from Pew Internet & American Life Project website:[http://pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2010/PIP\\_Social\\_Media\\_and\\_Young\\_Adults\\_Report\\_Final\\_with\\_toplevels.pdf](http://pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2010/PIP_Social_Media_and_Young_Adults_Report_Final_with_toplevels.pdf)
- Olatubosun, S.M. (2010). Information and communication technology for sustainable educational development. In: *Atinmo, M.I. et al (Eds). Education for Sustainable Development*, Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan, 209-220
- Olowu, A.O. & Fasola, O.S. (2012). A Study of social network addiction among youths in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science and Policy Review*, Vol 4: 62-71. Retrieved from [www.cenresinpub.org/pub/septemberEdition](http://www.cenresinpub.org/pub/septemberEdition)
- Rose, J. (2012). How does social media affect self-perception. Retrieved from [www.flowtown.com](http://www.flowtown.com)
- Selwyn, N. (2007). Web 2.0 applications as alternative environments for informal learning — A critical review. OECD CERI- KERIS International expert meeting on ICT and educational performance. Cheju Island, South Korea: Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development.
- Spencil, M., and Gitimu, P. (2011). Use of social media by college students: relationships to communicate and selfconcept. *Journal of Technology Research*, 5 (2), 1-13
- Subrahmanyam, K., Reich, S.M., Waechter, N., & Espinoza, G. (2008). Online and offline social networks: use of social networking sites by emerging adults. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 29 (6), 420-433.
- Walker, L. (2012). What Is Social Networking Addiction? *About.com Guide*. Retrieved from <http://personalweb.about.com/od/socialmediaaddiction/a/Social-Networking-Addiction.htm>
- Williams, A. (2012). Digital immigrant teacher perceptions of social media as it influences the affective and cognitive development of students: a phenomenological study. A Ph.D. Dissertation submitted to Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA.
- Zakaria, M. H., Watson, J. & Edwards, S. L. (2010). Investigating the use of Web 2.0 technology by Malaysian students. *Multicultural Education and Technology Journal*, 4 (1), 17-29.