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Impact of social media on senior secondary school students' involvement in cybercrime and academic performance in Udi local government area of Enugu state

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of social media on senior secondary school students' involvement in cybercrime and academic performance in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria. Four research questions guided the study, and four null hypotheses were formulated for the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study employed ex-post facto research design. The respondents used for the study consisted of 173 SS 2 students (73 males and 100 females) from the four schools sampled for the study using simple random sampling technique (balloting). Data was collected using the Social Media, Cybercrime and Academic Performance Questionnaire (SMCAPQ) which was properly validated by experts. An estimate of the stability of the instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.85 using Cronbach's Alpha statistic. Mean and Standard Deviation were used as descriptive statistics to answer the research questions while independent samples t-test was adopted as inferential statistic. The findings indicated that: male students have higher level of addiction to social media than their female counterparts; male students are

more involved in cybercrime as a result of social media influence than their female counterparts; female students' academic performance is negatively influenced more by social media than that of their male counterparts; female students are more involved in cybercrime in secondary schools than their male counterparts; there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on the influence of social media on their involvement in cybercrime in secondary schools; and there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on the influence of social media on their academic performance in secondary schools.

Keywords: Social Media, Cybercrime, Academic Performance, Senior Secondary School Students

Introduction

Criminal activities in society date back to time immemorial, and no known society, at whatever level of development, is free from them. Societies of primitive, ancient, and mediaeval times, as well as those of modern industrial, scientific and digital eras, have their fair share of experiences of criminal activities perpetrated by their citizens or strangers, with their attendant consequences on individuals, families, communities, corporate bodies, and governments. Agara *et al.*[1] observed that the level of criminal activities that take place in society differs from place to place and is influenced or shaped by several factors, which include the extent of technological development, the degree of compliance and adherence to religious principles and doctrines, the level of poverty of individuals, the value systems of the place, the seriousness or otherwise of sanctions and sanctioning institutions/law enforcement agencies, etc.

In traditional societies, most crimes were planned and committed in crude and mechanical forms and involved the exertion of force by the criminals with the aid of certain physical or mechanical devices. In modern societies, crimes and the ways they are planned and executed have changed with the levels of technological advancement and sophistication, especially following the advent of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in general and social media in particular [2-4].

Cybercrime is not an old sort of crime to the world. Cybercrime, according to Das and Nayak [5], is a crime committed mostly by the individuals or organised groups in which

computers or computer networks are a tool, a target, or a place of criminal activity and include everything from electronic cracking to denial of service attacks. Demo [6] defined cybercrime as a horrible crime committed against a group of individuals or an individual by the help of new technology, such as chat rooms, e-mail, and the Internet, with the intention of producing emotional, physical and mental harm. Muraina and Muraina[7] refer to cybercrimes as offences that are committed against individuals or groups of individuals with a criminal motive to intentionally harm the reputation of the victim or cause physical or mental harm to the victim directly or indirectly, using modern telecommunication networks, such as the Internet (chat rooms, emails, etc.) and mobile phones. Cybercrime is an uncontrollable evil having its base in the misuse of growing dependence on computers in modern life. Usage of computers and other allied technology in daily life is growing rapidly and has become an urge which facilitates user convenience. It is a medium which is infinite and immeasurable. Whatever the good Internet does to us, it has its dark sides too [8].

Materials and Methods

Design of the Study

This study employed ex-post facto research design. This type of research seeks to establish cause-effect relationships but differs from it in that the researcher usually has no control over the variables of interest and therefore cannot manipulate them. Indeed, the researcher only attempted to link some already existing effects or

observation to some variable(s) as causative agent(s).

Area of the Study

This study was conducted in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Population of the Study

The population of this study consists of one thousand, one hundred and fifty-six (1,156) senior secondary two (SS 2) students in the 25 public secondary schools in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State (Enugu State PPSMB Statistics, 2025). Out of the 25 secondary schools, 22 are co-educational secondary schools.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Multistage sampling technique was used to first of all select four co-educational secondary schools from the 22 co-educational secondary schools, using simple random sampling technique (balloting). There are three hundred and five (305) SS 2 students from the four schools sampled. The researcher further used Taro Yamane Formula to determine a sample size of one hundred and seventy-three (173) SS 2 students (73 male and 100 female) to be used for the study. To distribute the sample size among the four sampled schools, the researcher used proportionate simple random sampling technique.

Instrument for Data Collection

Data were collected using the social media, cybercrime and academic performance questionnaire (SMCAPQ) carefully designed by the researcher to be administered to the students. The questionnaire contains section A and B. Section A contains demographic data about the respondents such as name of school and gender. The name of the student is not required to assure them of confidentiality. Section B contains the 40-item researcher structured questionnaire through which the opinions of the respondents will be expressed. The questionnaire will be accompanied with a letter introducing the

researcher to the management of the sampled schools. The students' responses will be measured by means of a four-point likert scale as follows:

Cluster A is VHE – Very High Extent (4); HE – High Extent (3); LE – Low Extent (2); VLE – Very Low Extent (1); while Clusters B – D is SA – Strongly Agree (4); A – Agree (3); D – Disagree (2); SD – Strongly Disagree (1).

Method of Data Collection

The SMCAPQ was personally administered by the researcher to the respondents in the schools during normal classes. The exercise was done with the help of the class teachers in each class. The teachers were trained by the researcher on how to administer the questionnaire. This helped in the return of the entire distributed questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean and Standard Deviation statistics were used to answer the research questions, while independent samples t-test statistic was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Real limit decision points were used in interpreting the mean responses of the students to the research questions. The detail is as follows: 0.50 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree (D), 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree (A), and 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree (SA). For the test of hypotheses, a null hypothesis was accepted when the p-value is less than 0.05, and rejected when the p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The analysis of data obtained from the respondents was done using Psychological Package for Social Sciences (SPSS ver. 22).

Results

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents on their level of addictiveness to social media

S/N	Item Statement	Gender	N	X	SD	Decision
1.	I am addicted to social media and it is a problem that affects my studies.	Male	73	2.78	.99	HE
		Female	100	2.73	1.01	HE
2.	Social media networks distract me from my studies.	Male	73	2.89	1.03	HE
		Female	100	2.83	.92	HE
3.	I spend time chatting on Facebook and WhatsApp.	Male	73	2.79	.91	HE
		Female	100	2.67	.88	HE
4.	My results have been negatively affected since I became engaged into these social media.	Male	73	2.45	1.00	LE
		Female	100	2.30	.88	LE
5.	Overuse of social media platforms makes me lazy in doing my take home assignments.	Male	73	2.66	1.00	HE
		Female	100	2.57	.96	HE
6.	I leave school for Internet Café to do 'Yahoo Yahoo'.	Male	73	2.67	.97	HE
		Female	100	2.51	1.01	HE
7.	I watch pornographic images and videos.	Male	73	2.82	.82	HE
		Female	100	2.89	.86	HE
8.	I have sleepless night engaging myself on social media.	Male	73	2.74	.96	HE
		Female	100	2.70	.94	HE
9.	I chat on social media even when I am eating.	Male	73	2.41	.94	LE
		Female	100	2.45	.99	LE
10.	I come to school with phone in order to chat on social media.	Male	73	2.64	.89	HE
		Female	100	2.58	.93	HE
Overall Mean		Male	73	2.69	.51	HE
		Female	100	2.62	.49	HE

Key: 3.50 – 4.00= Very High Extent (VHE); 2.50 – 3.49 = High Extent (HE); 1.50 – 2.49 = Low Extent (LE); 0.50 – 1.49 = Very Low Extent (VLE)

Table 1 shows the mean responses of both male and female SS 2 students on their level of addictiveness to social media in Udi LGA, Enugu State. It indicates that the mean responses of the male and female students to items 1 – 3, 5 – 8 and 10 are within the real limit decision point of 2.50 – 3.49. This implies that both the male and female SS 2 students in the secondary schools engage in the statements in items 1 – 3, 5 – 8 to high extent. Also, the mean responses of both male and female students to items 3 and 9 are within the real limit decision point of 1.50 – 2.49. This implies that the

male and female students engage in the statements in items 3 and 9 to low extent. The overall mean of 2.69 (SD = .51) and 2.62 (SD = .49) for the male and female students respectively, imply that the male and female students in the secondary schools are equally engaged in the statements in the items. It also implies that the male and female students are equally addicted to social media, though the male students obtained higher mean rating, which indicates higher level of addiction than their female counterparts.

Table 2: t-test score on the level of mathematics students' addictiveness to social media by gender

Gender	N	X	SD	df	t	Sig.	Decision
Male	73	2.69	.51	171	.83	.410	HO ₁ Accepted
Female	100	2.62	.49				

Data in table 2 shows the t-test score on the level of students' addictiveness to social media by gender, $t(171) = .83$, $p = .410 > .05$. Since the p -value of .410 is greater than the 0.05 probability level set for the study, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the

mean responses of male and female students on their level of addictiveness to social media is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on their level of addictiveness to social media in secondary schools.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents on the influence of social media on their involvement in cybercrime

S/N	Item Statement	Gender	n	X	SD	Decision
11.	I use the Internet to dupe people.	Male	73	3.18	.77	A
		Female	100	3.01	.88	A
12.	I constantly place unwanted calls to people.	Male	73	2.86	.85	A
		Female	100	3.01	.73	A
13.	I send unwanted text messages and email to people.	Male	73	3.05	.74	A
		Female	100	2.85	.81	A
14.	I upload female pictures on social media without their consent.	Male	73	3.00	.78	A
		Female	100	3.07	.84	A
15.	I use the Internet to do illegal business.	Male	73	2.52	.94	A
		Female	100	2.46	.96	D
16.	I always access cyber pornographic images and videos.	Male	73	3.29	.70	A
		Female	100	3.20	.82	A
17.	I hack into people’s personal and sensitive information in the Internet.	Male	73	2.66	.97	A
		Female	100	2.69	.94	A
18.	I use social networking sites and technology to track people.	Male	73	2.05	.88	D
		Female	100	2.07	.95	D
19.	I use social networking sites to blackmail people.	Male	73	2.42	.90	D
		Female	100	2.29	.84	D
20.	I use cell phone to bridge into people’s privacy.	Male	73	2.88	.90	A
		Female	100	2.83	.87	A
21.	I use social media for examination malpractice.	Male	73	3.05	.81	A
		Female	100	2.75	.91	A
Overall Mean		Male	73	2.82	.36	A
		Female	100	2.75	.38	A

Key: 3.50 – 4.00= Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree (D); 0.50 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 3 shows the mean responses of both male and female SS 2 students in Udi LGA, Enugu State on the influence of social media on their involvement in cybercrime. It indicates that the mean responses of the male and female students to items 11 – 14, 16, 17, 20 and 21 are within the real decision point limit of 2.50 – 3.49. This implies that both the male and female SS 2 students in the secondary schools agree to the statements in items 11 – 14, 16, 17, 20 and 21. Secondly, the mean response of male students to item 15 is within the real limit decision limit of 2.50 – 3.49, while that of their female counterparts is in the real limit decision point of 1.50 – 2.49. This implies that the male students agree to the item statement while their female

counterparts disagree. Again, the mean responses of both male and female students to items 18 and 19 are in the real limit decision point of 1.50 – 2.49. This indicates that the male and female students disagree to the items statements in items 18 and 19. The overall mean 2.82 (SD = .36) and 2.75 (SD = .38) for the male and female students respectively, imply that the male and female students in the secondary schools agree to the statements in the items. It also implies that the male and female students' involvement in cybercrime are influenced by social media, though the male students obtained higher mean rating, an indication that male students are more involved in cybercrime as a result of social media influence.

Table 4: t-test score on the influence of social media on students' involvement in cybercrime by gender

Gender	N	X	SD	df	t	Sig.	Decision
Male	73	2.82	.36	171	1.19	.237	HO ₂ Accepted
Female	100	2.75	.38				

Data in table 4 shows the t-test score on the influence of social media on students' involvement in cybercrime by gender, $t(171) = 1.19$, $p = .237 > .05$. Since the p -value of .237 is greater than the 0.05 probability level set for the study, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses

of male and female students on the influence of social media on their involvement in cybercrime is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on the influence of social media on their involvement in cybercrime in secondary schools.

Table 5: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents on the influence of social media on their academic performance

S/N	Item Statement	Gender	n	X	SD	Decision
22.	Online social networks distract me from studying.	Male	73	2.44	.99	D
		Female	100	2.63	.97	A
23.	I will not perform well in school even if I stop using social media.	Male	73	2.55	1.08	A
		Female	100	2.71	1.03	A
24.	My unlimited access to Facebook through my cell phone has affected my academic performance negatively.	Male	73	3.22	.82	A
		Female	100	3.17	.84	A
25.	I make use of WhatsApp to share information with my classmates.	Male	73	3.44	.83	A
		Female	100	3.29	.86	A
26.	Social media has negatively impacted on	Male	73	2.05	.81	D

	my skills.	Female	100	1.99	.81	D
27.	Sometimes I use social media to understand what I have been taught in class.	Male	73	2.67	1.04	A
		Female	100	2.75	.99	A
28.	I use social media for making new friends and socializing more than I use it for academic purposes.	Male	73	1.86	1.06	D
		Female	100	2.13	1.06	D
29.	Once I interrupt my study time with social media, I lose concentration.	Male	73	2.67	.91	A
		Female	100	2.85	.89	A
30.	I concentrate on how to make money than focusing on my academics.	Male	73	1.96	.99	D
		Female	100	2.07	.96	D
Overall Mean		Male	73	2.54	.44	A
		Female	100	2.62	.43	A

Key: 3.50 – 4.00= Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree (D); 0.50 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 5 shows the mean responses of both male and female SS 2 students in Udi LGA, Enugu State on influence of social media on their academic performance. It indicates that the mean responses of the male and female students to items 23 – 25, 27 and 29 are in the real limit decision of 2.50 – 3.49. It implies that both the male and female SS 2 students in Udi LGA agree to the statements of items 23 – 25, 27 and 29. The table also shows that the mean response for the male students in item 22 is in the real limit decision point of 1.50 – 2.49, while that of their female counterparts is in the real limit decision of point of 2.50 – 3.49. This implies that the male students disagree to the statement in item 22

while the female students agree. Again, the mean responses of both the male and female students to items 26, 28 and 30 are in the real limit decision point of 2.50 – 3.49, implying that the male and female students equally disagree on the statements in items 25, 28 and 30. The overall mean 2.54 (SD = .44) and 2.62 (SD = .43) for the male and female SS 2 students respectively, imply that they equally agree to the statements in the items. It also indicates that the female students obtained higher mean ratings than their male counterparts, implying that the female students' academic performance is negatively influenced more by social media than that of their male counterparts.

Table 6: t-test score on the influence of social media on students' academic performance by gender

Gender	N	X	SD	df	t	Sig.	Decision
Male	73	2.54	.44	171	-1.21	.227	HO ₃ Accepted
Female	100	2.62	.43				

Table 6 shows the t-test score on the influence of social media on students' academic performance by gender, $t(171) = -1.21, p = .227 > .05$. Since the p -value of .227 is greater than the 0.05 probability level set for the study, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on

the influence of social media on their academic performance is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on the influence of social media on their academic performance in secondary schools.

Table 7: Mean and standard deviation of the respondents on their involvement in cybercrime in senior secondary schools

S/N	Item Statement	Gender	n	X	SD	Decision
31.	I use social media to defraud unsuspecting users.	Male	73	2.70	.79	A
		Female	100	2.93	.78	A
32.	I blackmail people through social media in order to get money.	Male	73	2.59	1.04	A
		Female	100	2.84	.95	A
33.	I engage in cyberbullying.	Male	73	2.77	.95	A
		Female	100	2.94	.88	A
34.	I engage in sexual harassment on social media.	Male	73	2.10	.84	D
		Female	100	2.67	1.00	A
35.	I hack people’s social media accounts and use it to defraud people.	Male	73	3.14	.87	A
		Female	100	3.14	.88	A
36.	I use impersonation on social media to scam people.	Male	73	3.00	.82	A
		Female	100	3.04	.76	A
37.	I see Internet fraud as creative thinking and smartness.	Male	73	3.10	1.04	A
		Female	100	2.96	.96	A
38.	I view cybercrime as social exposure.	Male	73	2.93	.96	A
		Female	100	2.96	.86	A
39.	I persuade people to invest small amounts of money with the promise of giving larger amounts of money later on the social media.	Male	73	3.15	.89	A
		Female	100	3.12	.83	A
40.	I am in a ‘Yahoo Yahoo’ group.	Male	73	2.96	.92	A
		Female	100	3.01	.82	A
Overall Mean		Male	73	2.84	.36	A
		Female	100	2.96	.35	A

Key: 3.50 – 4.00= Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree (D); 0.50 – 1.49 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 7 shows the mean responses of both male and female SS 2 students in Udi LGA on their involvement in cybercrime. It indicates that the mean responses of the male and female students to the statements in items 31 – 33 and 35 – 40 are in the real decision point limit of 2.50 – 3.49. It implies that both the male and female SS 2 students in the secondary schools agree to the statements in items 31 – 33 and 35 – 40. The table also shows that the mean response of the male students to item 34 is in the real decision point limit of 1.50, while that of the female

students is in the real decision point limit of 2.50 – 3.49. This implies that the male students disagree to the statement in that item while their female counterparts agree. The overall mean 2.84 (SD = .36) and 2.96 (SD = .35) for male and female students respectively, indicate that the male and female students equally agree to the statements in the items. It also shows that the female students obtained higher mean rating than their male counterparts, implying that the female students are more involved in cybercrime in secondary schools than their male counterparts.

Table 8: t-test score on students' involvement in cybercrime by gender

Gender	N	X	SD	df	t	Sig.	Decision
Male	73	2.84	.36	171	-2.19	.030	HO ₄ Not Accepted
Female	100	2.96	.35				

Table 8 shows the t-test score on students' involvement in cybercrime by gender, $t(171) = -2.19$, $p = .030 < .05$. Since the p -value of .030 is less than the 0.05 probability level set for the study, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on their involvement in cybercrime is not accepted. This implies that there is significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on their involvement in cybercrime in secondary schools, and female students are more involved than their male counterparts.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that male students have higher level of addiction to social media than their female counterparts in the secondary schools in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State. The study also found out that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the male and female students on their level of addictiveness to social media in secondary schools. This finding agrees with the findings of Osharive[9] that a great number of students in University of Lagos are addicted to social media. This is collaborated by Ayatalumo and Ukegbu[10] who revealed that most of the Nigerian students spend 3 – 5 hours of their study time on social media. The finding of this study is also in line with Azizi et al. [11] who found out that male students had higher level of addiction to social media than the female students. Bhandarkar et al. [12] revealed strong positive correlation between social media usage and the social media addiction score. Supporting this finding, Wordu et al. [13] revealed that students who spent more time on social media were more likely to have higher Internet addiction. This calls for proper

orientation of the students, especially in the senior classes on the adverse effect of addiction to social media usage. The students should also be guided on the proper usage of social media to benefit them academically.

Evidence from the study reveals that the male students are more involved in cybercrime as a result of social media influence than their female counterparts. It also reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on the influence of social media on their involvement in cybercrime in secondary schools in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State. This agrees with the finding of Umeozulu[14] who found that Internet is used by Nigerian youths for the perpetuation of criminal spamming activities. It is also in line with Asogwa[15] who revealed significant association between digital media and cybercrime, and Agara et al. [1] who found out that Facebook, Instagram and Twitter use significantly expose students to cybercrimes. The school authorities should do their best to discourage students from use of phones in school. The students should also be made to understand the law of the land against cybercriminals.

The findings of this study also revealed that the female students are more involved in cybercrime in secondary schools than their male counterparts. It also showed that there is significant difference in the mean responses of male and female students on their involvement in cybercrime in secondary schools, and this is in favour of female students. This is in line with the finding of Odo and Odo[16] who revealed that students' involvement in cybercrime is dependent on gender, and Demo [6] who found significant difference between gender and cybercrime on social media. However, the finding disagrees with

the findings of Khan [17] that male students mostly use social networking sites. It also disagrees with Agwi and Ogwueleka[18] who found that the gender of the student has no impact on the usage and activities of social media. The implication is that female students are taking over male students in cybercrime involvement, and this should be checked by the school authorities. The school authorities should monitor both the male and female students on the usage of social media in schools as its usage has positive relationship with their involvement in cybercrime.

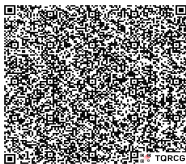
Conclusion

Evidences from the findings of this study on the level of addictiveness to social media showed that the male students had more level of addiction to social media than their female counterparts in the secondary schools in Udi Local Government Area. This calls for proper orientation of the students, especially in the senior classes on the adverse effect of the addiction to social media usage. The students should also be guided on the proper usage of social media to benefit them academically. The results of the findings on students' involvement in cybercrime as a result of social media revealed that male students are more involved in cybercrime as a result of social media influence than their female counterparts. The school authorities should do their best to discourage students from use of phones in school. The students should also be made to understand the law of the land against cybercriminals.

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