ADDICTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS OF SHEHU SHAGARI COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, SOKOTO

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Abstract

The study was conducted to examine the difference between social media addicts and social media non-addicts based on academic achievement, and to find out whether there is significant gender difference in terms of addiction to social media tools both in relation to students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto. The research design used was a descriptive survey of correlational type. The total population of the study was 6, 120 students (as obtained from the Registry unit of the college at the time of the research) made up of the entire NCE II (Level II) students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto. Stratified, random and proportionate sampling techniques were employed to arrive at a sample of 2, 233 from six different schools (faculties) in the college. The final sample of the study derived from the Research Advisors table (2006) was 333. Two instruments for data collection were used: Students' Cumulative Grade Point Averages (CGPA's) as academic achievement, and Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) Adapted by Al-Menayes (2015). Out of the 333 total sample size, 235 respondents were identified as social media addicts, 98 as non-addicts. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level on SPSS. Both hypotheses were tested on independent sample t-test. The results indicated no significant gender difference because of social media addiction, and no significant difference between social media addicts and social media non-addicts in terms of academic achievement. Based on these results, it was recommended that educational institutions should continue to ban students' use of social media devices during examinations; and should promote meaningful use of social media by lecturers in conducting certain academic activities along with their students to save time and resources.

Introduction

Being addicted to social media technology is aligned with non-substance addiction, which is otherwise referred to as behavioural addiction. Such a form of addiction is classified behavioural because it has to do with being obsessed with thoughts, habits, and lifestyles in one's everyday life. Social media is, according to Dollarhide (2023), a computer-based technology that facilitates

the sharing of ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual networks and communities. Researchers like Reid and Weigle (2014) and Uhls, Ellison, and Subrahmanyam (2017) opine that all observed or speculated problems of social media are taken into cognizance without anybody ever overlooking the uncountable benefits derived from such social networking tools. This article is only interested in studying how addiction to such tools correlates with students' academic achievement. The concept of addiction implies the presence of a psychological phenomenon. Thus, conducting a study on addiction in relation to social media infers that what is of interest is the abnormal rate of participation on such online platforms.

Social media tools are a network of websites and applications which enables individuals to converse with each other; it also allows users to generate, use, exchange and discuss the content available in the worldwide web (Bhandarkar, Pandey, Nayak, Pujary, & Kumar, 2021). Web-linked platforms such as Facebook, Tiktok, Snapchat, Telegram, Wechat, Twitter, Youtube, Whatsapp, and Skype are major examples of social media sites subscribed to in Nigeria. The world keeps witnessing rapid technological inventions and advancements from which emanate electronic gadgets which are apparently fast becoming essential and indispensable objects in our endeavours. It is an indefatigable fact that mere utilization of electronic devices that are web-connected without getting hooked obsessively and compulsively is not viewed as a psychological problem, either to the consumers of such equipment or other people around them. Rather, to psychologists, the bottom-line in relation to such gadgets is the people's addictedness towards the technology.

The term addiction is described as a compulsive behaviour that leads to negative effects (American Psychological Association [APA], 2017). Addiction is characterized by one's inability to control a particular behaviour; it creates a dysfunctional emotional response, and it affects the user's ability to abstain from the substance or behavior consistently (Psychology Today, 2011). It is a fact that addiction to social media affects millions of Internet users on the globe today, which for quite many people there is need for some sort of serious psychotherapy for them to recover from or overcome such compulsive behaviour (Powell, 2014). It is common knowledge that addiction to drugs and activities like gambling, sports-viewing, tea consumption, masturbation, cinema going, swimming, and so forth make people feel bound to such activities such that they become almost harmful habits to them and obstruct other important activities in their lives. This can equally be said of people who use social media excessively. A social media addict can be considered as one with an urge to subscribe to social media excessively and compulsively (Pavlicek, 2013).

Such an individual would constantly be online sharing their views on both private and public issues, digging into other people's profiles, looking for the number of likes gotten by their previous posts, sending friend-invites, initiating chats with others, and much more for quite several hours to the detriment of their day-to-day engagements concerning their immediate family, school tasks, occupation, or other necessities. The way young people in Nigeria generally today fondle with their web-enabled devices on various social networking platforms, because of which all types of relationships and behaviors emerge, is an alarming cause for concern to parents, teachers, government, and all other stakeholders in childcare programmes. It is obvious that the emergence of social networks on our planet gave us the unrestricted opportunity to disseminate globally whatever information we possess. Information that flows through social networking technologies often goes uncontrollably in forms of images, written notes, videos, audios, and in many other forms in a matter of seconds or minutes.

Addiction to social media technology is a behavioural disorder whereby people irrespective of age become glued to social media sites without being able to cut or wisely schedule their participations in such media despite being plainly affected by the negative consequences and severe drawbacks of such platforms (Paradigm Treatment Center, 2022). Equally in the words of Zayed (2023), social media addiction is a form of behavioral addiction in which a person engages in the compulsive and excessive use of social media, which end up interfering with other aspects of one's life, affecting the person in several harmful ways. Social media platforms are obviously replete with diverse experiences, part of which are compelling features which psychologists think can prompt thoughts and behaviours that are troubling or tormenting to the social media subscribers and their environment. Social media avenues such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok, WhatsApp, and Skype are quite a global phenomenon.

Despite being channels of communication, such Internet-linked platforms are modern avenues for innovations and sustenance of relationships between friends, acquaintances, relatives, couples, and so forth. Although, miscreants and their accomplices equally take advantage of such Internet links to abuse, deceive, incite, or dupe people. Moreover, politicians and their cohorts or loyalists at times subscribe to social networking sites to eulogize and exaggerate their every move, and to defame their perceived adversaries. Looking at people's participation on social media platforms from a psychological perspective, the diversity of online interactions is a fast track to developing and sustaining different social behaviours. It is a normal thing that as interactions between people

occur, Albert Bandura's model of social learning swings into action. Imitation of other people's thinking patterns and behaviours arises irrespective of the nature of such behaviours and thinking patterns, whether positive or negative. Through social media, certain people acquire knowledge-based experiences and cultivate favourable study habits and learning styles which may improve their academic studies. Azizi, Soroush, & Khatony (2019) opine that social networks create many opportunities and threats for students in various fields.

There is no denying, however, that the length of time squandered on social networking platforms is quite much among many people, including students on campuses. Kigotho (2023) writes that, research shows that African students spend too much time on social media; and that this does not only negatively affects their studies, but also their mental health. Stevens (2021) also holds the notion that excessive use of social media leads to decrease in academic performances in students. The researchers thus decided to study addiction to social media tool as a correlate of academic achievement in relation to students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto.

Problems thought to be caused by addiction to social media platforms include the following (Stevens, 2021; Sinh, 2017; Robinson & Smith, n.d; Akram & Kumar, 2017; and Valkenburg, 2017).

1.   Stress. Instead of providing solace to users in times of solitude or worry, social media bring or worsen mental stress particularly if the contents are boring or despicable.

2.   Anxiety. Scary and ominous contents of social media make the user anxious.

3.   Depression is due to horrible and distressing news, and certain people's exaggerated life experiences. Most news dropped on social media is not professionally verified or screened. Every participant can share any stuff unrestricted.

4.   Poor interpersonal physical relationship with close ones.

5.   Imitation of and cultivation of customs and lifestyles that contravene norms and values of the addict's society.

6.   Procrastination. Social media addicts often miss, delay, or skip certain important activities in their lives. This is one reason for classifying them as social media addicts.

7.   Irregular sleep patterns. Due to prolonged sessions online, participants on social media platforms experience distorted sleep patterns, which poses a threat to their health.

8.	Low self-esteem. This occurs due to constant viewing of other people's inflated, exaggerated, and bogus successes.

9.	Envy. People easily get envious over what others claim to have.

10.	Loss of privacy.

11.	Neglect of those in need of the user's primary care. Children and old parents requiring care may be forgotten due to addiction to social networks.

12.	Development of fake role identities. Role identity, according to Erikson's model, is a person's commitment to certain specific roles in life. Someone may fake their life to remain relevant in certain online groups.

13.	Loneliness/isolation. Extreme participation in social media keeps an individual isolated and lonely, which are both risk factors for certain psychological problems.

A pair of researches conducted by Griffiths (as cited in Social Media Victims Law Center, 2022), found some six behavioural components characterizing addictive behaviour: salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, conflict, and relapse.

Statement of the Problem

The rate of participation or subscription with respect to various social media platforms is very high and has become a source of concern in our society and indeed the world. That is a phenomenon that has swung into action many researchers across the globe to conduct research and surveys on the subject [of social media] from psychological viewpoint. As any other human environment in the world today, Sokoto State is left out as far as the high, abnormal, problematic rate of participation on social media sites is concerned. Adolescents and adults of all backgrounds in the state are active participants on social networking platforms. Based on the researchers' consistent observations, most students studying in Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto make use of web-linked devices on which they link themselves up with their study mates, friends, teachers, and other categories of people on such platforms as Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Skype, and TikTok within the college premises and indeed everywhere. These students are apparently on such sites far beyond the normal level. This is made evident by their attitude of constant online activities which include chatting, watching movies, songs, tournaments, and much more.

These students undeniably exhibit all signs of addiction towards social networking platforms. They look quite obsessed with these technologies and seemingly appear unable to put such technologies

away or set themselves on an optimum level of participation in favour of their studies and other important activities in their lives. This is inferred from the interminable complaints and serious warnings flowing from lecturers and guardians pertaining to such students' excessive, obsessive, compulsive participation on online social activities. As these students apparently spend more time on online social activities on their devices than on their academic activities, fears about their academic achievement take center stage. The main thrust of this study, therefore, is to examine how addiction social media tools correlates with the academic achievement of students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is primarily to examine the difference in academic achievement between students who are addicted to social media tools and students who are not addicted to social media tools in Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto. The study's major objective is to compare the students' academic achievement scores to find out whether there existed any significant difference between social media addicts and social media non-addicts in relation to social media tools. It is also part of the purpose of the study to assess the difference between male and female students based on addiction to social media tools. The research is interested in how significant such a difference was if it existed.

Research Hypotheses

This study tests the following null hypotheses in relation to students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto.

1.   There is no significant difference between social media addicts and non-addicts in terms of academic achievement.
2.   There is no significant gender difference among social media addicts in terms of academic achievement.

Theoretical Framework

The study uses the following theories to define addiction to social media and academic achievement.

Choice theory of addiction was explained by American Psychiatrist William Glasser sighted in his book titled *Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom*. One of the propositions of the theory is that all behaviour is chosen. The theory explains that addiction to certain behaviours or substances happens due to the choices individuals make and primarily not owing to certain kinds of infections they have. An addicted individual must take responsibility for their behaviour in order for them to be able to change their situation. The theory outlines some five human needs as indicated:

1.   Survival needs, which include things like diet, home or shelter, safety and security.
2.   The need to belong.
3.   The need to have fun.
4.   The need for power or authority.
5.   The need for freedom.

The *need to belong*, the *need for fun*, and the *need for freedom* undoubtedly aggravate the level of social media participation among students and other people. Many students would be on social networking platforms just to experience a sense of belonging concerning what is going on in society. Some log in to have fun and feel free among other people. They want to reduce stress, depression, and other negative emotions they might have developed. *The self-medication theory of addiction* first appeared in a publication in 1985 in an article by Mark S. Gold in the American Journal of Psychiatry. The theory is based on the idea that people consume substances, or become addicted to certain behaviours such as eating, watching movies, masturbation, gambling, etc., to tame the effects of their unfavourable situations. The self-medication theory originally addresses substance consumption disorder, but behavioural psychologists apply it to non-substance addiction, which social media addiction is part of.

The theory of self-medication explains that it one's attempt to self-soothe with substances and certain behaviours that eventually causes addiction. As a normal person realizes that the substances or habits, he chooses to have given some relief, they would want to have more and more of such substances or behaviours. This leads them to a point where they are both psychologically and physiologically dependent on such addictive behaviours or substances.

This research adopts *Herbert Walberg's model of educational productivity* to explain academic achievement. Walberg (as cited in Neumann, Kauertz, & Fischer, 2012) assumes that academic progress occurs with the availability of the following: ability or prior achievement, age and development, motivation or self-concept, quantity of instruction or time engaged in learning, quality of instruction, home environment, classroom environment, peer group environment, and the mass media.

Research Methodology

The research design employed for this study was a descriptive survey of correlational type, which attempts to examine the relationship or differences between variables. Martins (2016) defines correlational study as a type of research which collects data with the aim of finding the existence and status of a relationship between or among some specified variables. The target population for this study was 6, 120 students (as obtained from the Registry unit of the college at the time of the research) made up of the entire NCE II (Level II) students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto. Stratified, random and proportionate sampling techniques were employed to arrive at a sample of 2, 233 from six different schools (faculties) in the college. The final sample of the study derived from the Research Advisors table (2006) was 333. Percentages were worked out in arriving at the numbers of male and female respondents. Social Media Addiction Scale (SMAS) Adapted by Al-Menayes (2015) was used, which consisted of 14 items adapted from the 20-item Young's Internet Addiction Test (IAT) (1998) to fit the context of social media usage. The items were rated on a four-point Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, scored 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. SMAS is a variant of IAT customized to measure addiction to social media instead of the Internet as a whole. Scores range from 14–56. Higher scores indicate addiction, while lower scores indicate non-addiction. Scores from 14–35 represent non-addiction. Scores from 36–56 represent addiction. The range of the scale is 56−14= 42. This 42 is split into two halves, for addiction and non-addiction. The original Internet Addiction Test (IAT) was validated and adopted by many researchers around the world. Moreover, Damilola (2016) further exposed SMAS to lecturers in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria who also adjudged that the instrument had enough content validity to measure social networking addiction on Nigerian population.

The SMAS received a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94 based on a sample of 120 Undergraduate students randomly picked from various Departments in Kuwait University. Damilola (2016) conducted a

test-retest on 30 students in University of Ibadan and arrived at an 'r' of 0.76, which was high enough for consideration. The Cumulative Grade Point Averages (CGPA) of the NCE II Students, who formed the sample size of 333 respondents participating in this study, were adopted [as obtained from various departments] as academic achievement of the students. The data collected for this research was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics on SPSS software. The two null hypotheses of the study were run on Independent Sample t-test.

Data Presentation and Analyses

Table 1: **Number of addicted and non-addicted respondents in SSCOE**

Soc. Med. Addiction	Total
Addicted	235
Non-Addicted	98
Total	333

Table 2: Academic Achievement of Respondents in Relation to Gender in SSCOE

Gender	Distinct. 4.5-5.0	Credit 3.50-4.49	Merit 2.5-3.49	Pass 1.50-2.49	Low Pass 1.00-1.49	Fail 0.00-0.99	Total
Male	0	21	53	67	41	7	189
Female	0	14	35	51	39	5	144
Total	0	35	88	118	80	12	333

This hypothesis compares the CGPA's of social media addicts and non-addicts to find the level of academic difference, if any, between the two independent groups. The independent sample t-test happened to be the appropriate statistics for the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between social media addicts and non-addicts in terms of academic achievement among students of Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto.

Table 3: Difference between Social Media Addicts and Non-Addicts Based on Academic Achievement among Students of SSCOE Sokoto

Variable	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-Cal	*p*-Value	Decision
Addict	235	1.98	0.80	331			
					0.384	0.702	H_0 Retained
Non-Addict	98	1.94	0.78				

Table 3 above shows the independent sample t-test analysis of the difference between social media addicts and non-addicts based on academic achievement among students of Shehu Shagari College

of Education (SSCOE), Sokoto. It is indicated that there were 235 and 98 addicts and non-addicts respectively. Addicts and non-addicts show arithmetic means and standard deviations of 1.98 and 1.94, and 0.80 and 0.78 respectively. The two independent variables on the hypothesis resulted into a t-Cal of 0.38 at 0.05 level of significance with p-Value of 0.70 under 331 degree of freedom. As the p-Value (0.70) > α (0.05), the hypothesis is thus retained, indicating a lack of significant difference between social media addicts and non-addicts in terms of academic achievement among the respondents.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant gender difference in terms of social media addiction among students of Shehu Shagari College of Education (SSCOE), Sokoto.

Table 4Gender Difference on the Basis of Addiction to Social Media Tools among Students of SSCOE Sokoto

Variable	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Male	183	52.99	7.57	233			
					−1.34	0.18	H_0 Retained
Female	52	54.59	7.78				

Table 4 displays the analysis of gender difference on social media addiction among students of SSCOE, Sokoto. According to the table, there was a total of 235 respondents addicted to social media platforms, 183 males, 52 females. Means of 52.99 and 54.59, and standard deviations of 7.57 and 7.78 were recorded for the male and female respondents respectively. A t-Cal of −1.34 and a p-Value of 0.18 at an alpha of 0.05 under 233 degree of freedom were found. This result indicates that the p-Value (0.18) > the level of significance (0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between social media addiction among students of Shehu Shagari College of Education (SSCOE), Sokoto and gender is hereby retained. What this result means is that, the male and female respondents of the study were not significantly different in their levels of social media addiction.

Discussions

The Independent sample t-test analysis on the difference between social media addicts and non-addicts based on academic achievement among students of Shehu Shagari College of Education (SSCOE), Sokoto indicated a t-Cal of 0.38 at 0.05 level of significance with p-Value of 0.70 under

331 degree of freedom. As the p-Value (0.70) > α (0.05), the hypothesis got retained, indicating a lack of significant difference between social media addicts and non-addicts in terms of academic achievement among the respondents. This finding was statistically necessitated by the result of the analysis of the first hypothesis, which examined the difference social media addicts and social non-addicts in terms of academic achievement in which the hypothesis was retained to indicate that no significant difference existed between the two independent groups based on academic outcome. Since male and female social media addicts among the samples would statistically most likely show no significant difference in terms of addiction to social media tools.

Studies by researchers such as Choney (2010), San Miguel (2009) and Enriquez (2010) on students' use of social media sites revealed a negative effect on students' academic performance. The American Educational Research Association (cited in Landry, 2014) conducted a research that found that social media users studied less and generated lower grade (Abaleta et al, 2014). San Miguel (2009) focused on the relationship between time spent on Facebook and the academic performance of students. The overall findings indicated more time on Facebook equals slightly lower grades. In that study, the average Facebook user had a GPA of 3.0 to 3.5, while the non-Facebook user had a GPA of 3.5 - 4.0. Also, the average Facebook user study for 1-5 hours per week, while the non-Facebook user would study 11 – 15 hours per week. Enriquez (2010) revealed that students who multi-task between social networking sites and home work are likely to have 20% lower grades than a student who does not have a social networking site. Choney (2010), in looking at the time spent on Facebook and its effect on academic performance said a user of Facebook has an average GPA of 3.06, while non-users have an average GPA of 3.82.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Karpinski and Duberstein (2009) in Ohio Dominican University on college students who use social network have significantly lower Grade Point Averages (GPA's) than those who do not. According to Khan (2009), Facebook users often times experience poor performance academically. Similarly, Englander, Terregrossa, & Wang (2010) posit that social media is negatively associated with academic performance of students and is a lot more momentous than its advantages. The analysis of gender difference on social media addiction of students of SSCOE Sokoto ended up with a t-Cal of –1.34 and a p-Value of 0.18 at an alpha of 0.05 under 233 degree of freedom. The hypothesis stating that there is no

significant gender difference in social media addiction got retained because the p-Value (0.18) > the level of significance (0.05). This reports that the male and female respondents of the study had no significant difference in their levels of social media addiction.

As male students participated constantly on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Skype, Instagram, , LinkedIn, weChat, Yahoomail, Gmail, and Google+, so did their female counterparts. The research has found that a lot of young men who are always chatting, sharing pictures and doing other things online are doing so with the support of young girls who equally feel attracted. The researcher has also learnt that many students irrespective of sex do exchange learning experiences via social networks, which may have some positive effect on their academic performance. Some empirical studies have in contrast indicated different results as regards the existence of gender difference in terms of addiction to social media. Susan (cited in Jocabsen & Forste, 2011) researched on gender difference and social networking addiction with a sample of 800 respondents from among the students of University of Kashmir, and t-test results revealed a significant difference between male and female social media addicts; that study indicated that girls were more nailed to social networks than boys.

Another study conducted by Yeboah and Ewur (2014) in Ghana, with 2,700 men and women, showed a significant gender difference, in which women indicated more adherence to Facebook than men. A study also by Fowler and Nicholas (2008) in Mumbai with 1,200 students of the students of Amity University, comprising equal numbers of males and females. Results revealed that more men frequented their email accounts than women, but women were more inclined to Facebook site than men. Schroeder, Minocha and Schneider (2010) discovered that girls in Miami had more chats than boys of their age in social networks. Pappas (2013) surveyed 380 students in the University of Jos in Nigeria and found that girls had more participation level in Whatsapp network than boys; while boys participated more in Facebook.

Conclusion
The study is a success as both hypotheses have been tested accordingly, and based on the results of data generated from the instruments employed in collecting required data from 333 NCE II students of Shehu Shagari College of Education (SSCOE), Sokoto, the survey has found no significant difference between social media addicts and non-social media addicts in terms of

academic achievement. There is also no significant gender difference on the basis of addiction as far as social media is concerned.

Recommendations

Below are recommendations of the study based on its findings.

1. Educational institutions generally should promote the use of social media by lecturers in conducting certain academic activities along with their students. Such a recommendation is made obviously because assignments, home-works, question-and-answer sessions, and submission and retrieval of different academic tasks can conveniently take place on various social networking platforms. Such academic activities can be facilitated by teachers even during vacations irrespective of gender difference, and no matter the physical distance keeping participants apart.

2. Educational institutions or authorities should however employ the use of social media in information dissemination to stakeholders concerning circulars, examination questions, staff deployment and redeployment, promotion of students, audit of staff, accreditation exercises and much more. This is recommended owing to the significant benefits of social media as highlighted by the study, which would always save time and economic resources.

3. Educational institutions should continue to entirely ban students' importation of all social media devices such as Android phones and notebook computers during examinations. This would avert illicit sharing or exchange of ideas between candidates.

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