

# **The Use of Social Media for Collaborative Learning Towards Improved Students' Performance in University of Ilorin**

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## **Abstract**

*Social media in its entirety has affected humans in various fields of life endeavours and the rate is still on the increase. Its usage in higher institutions of learning across the globe has affected students' academic performance and this has aggrandized concern among stakeholders. On this basis, the study leaned towards the investigation of the perception of undergraduates on social media usage as a way of facilitating learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive design of explorative type. The study population are undergraduate students of the 15 faculties in University of Ilorin. The faculties were stratified into two i.e Humanities and sciences. Thereafter, the respondents were selected randomly from five faculties in the University. A well validated researcher-design questionnaire was used for data collection and it was titled "stakeholder's perception of social media usage for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance" (SPSMCLSP). The research questions raised were analyzed with the aid frequency and percentages. Major findings revealed that interactive platforms social media- to be effectively used among students towards collaborative learning for improved academic performance. The study recommended that school administrators should enhance the usage of media platforms for learning because it helps acquire information much faster and easier compare to classroom. Also, students should possess basic understanding of media platforms and its usage to enhance collaborative learning for better performance.*

**Keywords:** Social media, Collaborative Learning, Students' Academic Performance

## **Introduction**

Education is a vehicle for national development and progress and this has been well noted by many researchers. As a means of fostering development of the country, it has helped improved intellectual way of thinking both academically and morally, it has also helped greatly in skill acquisition aspects. The development of a strong educational system that is hinged on Information and communication technology is the basis for building a solid foundation for sustainable and knowledge-based economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when the widespread of ICT became prominent.



Introduction and adoption of media platforms in the educational system has given students an easy way to learn adequately and conveniently. Among university undergraduates, its usage is a welcomed development and is on the rise. Its usage among students in the Nigerian universities has gained prominence in recent times because of the numerous advantages it offers. Social media have a large scale membership among students in higher institutions of learning because of its benefits.

The unique positions that universities all over the world occupies as a means of fostering national development cannot be contested. Universities as an institution are therefore expected to be agency saddled with the task of extending the frontier knowledge for the overall benefit of the society. It is in line with these that university is recognized as an ivory tower of education by many scholars and researchers. According to Odoweye (1995), a university is populated by three major actors, the administrators, the academic staff and non-academic staff and the students. Adoption of the various social media will not negate the effectiveness of universities as it is undoubtedly a giant stride in the right direction. Social media are now regularly used by teachers, lecturers and students as a means of communication and this has gained high popularity. Majority of university undergraduate are adept in its usage; in addressing issues about their learning and other traditional use. Most universities in Nigeria are familiar and engaged in the use of e-learning platforms such as online classroom connected through Google to ensure a more meaningful and satisfactory learning experience. It gives the lecturer a higher control over collaborative features.

Social media as opined by Boyd and Ellison (2008) is a web-based platforms which fosters connections of people from diverse settings with a view of cross fertilising ideas that will be beneficial to those made by others within the system. It is defined as the application which makes interaction among people possible through textual, visual and audio mediums (Selwyn, 2012). Hansen (2017) viewed it as a set of online tools which provide basis for harmonious relationship between platform users for knowledge sharing. In the words of Bryer and Zavatarro (2011) it is equally viewed as technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders.

Dillenbourg (1999) expressed that collaborative learning is a form of learning platform which brings people together in an attempt to learn something together. It is a platform by which members of the same cohort learn together in a co-operative way with the view of ensuring that effective learning takes place. According to Shoshani and Braun (2007), opined that it is supported by social media which assist in creative learning. It is essentially based on the relationship between the students with the curricula. As opined by Rowlands, Nicholas, Russell, Cauty & Watkinson (2011), majority of the scholars in Information and communication technology are of the view that the ability of it to aid learning is one of its advantages.

The researcher observed during one of his class session that some of the students prefer typing what is been taught or having an online classroom session in which they can access directly through the internet at any point in time than the conventional teaching and learning situation. Nowadays, students are more



knowledgeable through the introduction of media platforms because it has highly influenced manner of communication and relationship among colleagues & acquaintances, it has given us the opportunity to become the contributor and create digital contents. Social media has greatly allowed individual's to source for information and be able to share personal experiences and perspectives among others.

According to Bryer and Zavatarro (2011), it involves technologies such as Blogs, networking platforms (social networks), wikis, virtual worlds and media sharing tools which aids interaction and collaboration among stakeholders. Additionally, the various platforms contribute individually to the educational activities. For example, Wikispaces classroom, MinecraftEdu and Edmodo which allow students to collaborate, explore, assess tool and problems solving within the sites. It should be noted that some of the most popular websites are Baidu, Facebook, Tieba, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, Viber, WeChat, WhatsApp, Weibo, Wikia, Facebook Messenger (Pivec & Ma'cek, 2019). Therefore, it is on the basis of this introduction that this study was carried out.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In recent times, the use of social media platforms has really impacted life of different actors in the university system. It is considered as a prevalent part of modern society particularly among university students. Its prevalence among students necessitates that they spend more time in paying more attention to the its use for chatting, watching videos, downloading movies, exploring social media platforms with no goal set in stone to be achieved academically. This leads to low self cognition, lower interest is developed for education oriented lines; poor academic performance is imminent. Majority of the undergraduate students now finds it difficult to go about their normal life without ritually surfing the internet in the exploration of social media; this oftentimes affect their academic performance. Its usage among undergraduate students has brought more harm than good in the areas of cyber crime, addiction, laziness, exemption from reality (fantasies) and cyber-bullying among others as against fostering collaborative learning activities which could bring about improvement in their academic performance.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This research aimed at examining the perception of undergraduates on usage of social media platforms for learning by students' in university of Ilorin. Other specific objectives include:

- i. investigate perception of undergraduate students' on forms of social media sites used for collaborative learning.
- ii. find out extent of social platforms used for collaborative learning based on undergraduate students' perception.
- iii. determine undergraduate students' perception on the advantages to be derived from social media platforms as a means of fostering learning.



## Research Questions

The study was guided by three questions:

1. What is the perception of undergraduate students' on the forms of social media sites used for learning towards improved student's performance in university of Ilorin?
2. What is the undergraduate students' perception on the extent of social media usage for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in university of Ilorin?
3. What is the undergraduate students' perception on the benefits of social media usage for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in university of Ilorin?

## Review of Related Empirical Studies

Jaffar, Jaffar, Mohammad & Shaher (2019) investigated social media on learning behavior for sustainable education from selected universities in Pakistan. Results showed that its usage in Pakistan has a negative influence on a student's behavior as compared to positive aspects. Also, the effect of usage of social media on collaborative learning was conducted by Bozanta and Mardikyan (2017). It was revealed that its usage fosters symbiotic relationship. Positive significant relationship exists between student interactions in achieving collaborative learning.

Kamil (2017) researched on social networking using students' performance in Thi-Qar as a case study. The findings revealed a positive relationship between learning and students' performance. Raymond and Afua (2016) carried out a study on social media and students' academic life in Higher Education. The results revealed that social media effectively put into use by students of higher institution and it contributes significantly academic life progress of the students.

Al-rahmi, Othman & Yusuf (2015) conducted a research on Malaysian Higher Education on social media for collaborative learning to improve academic performance. The study found that social media fosters improvements among researchers in Malaysian higher education. Al-rahmi, Othman and Musa (2014) examined improvement of students' academic performance by using social media through collaborative learning in Malaysian Higher Education. The findings revealed that social media brings about collaborative learning.

Eke, Omekwu & Odoh (2014) worked on social networking sites based on the experience of undergraduate students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN). Major finding of their work was that undergraduate student of University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nigeria make use of all the sites for their school work. It also found that virtual meeting is made possible as a result of the various categories of networking sites.

A research was conducted by Idakwo (2011) social media as a means of communication in Nigeria. Findings showed that youths are fond of Facebook than other media platforms. Lastly, Folorunso, Vincent, Adekoyo & Ogunde (2010) investigated diffusion of innovation based on social networking sites among university students. Results were that users of the sites most times are fully aware of the benefits that they could derive before they used the sites.



## **Research Design**

For this study, descriptive survey was used. It sought to establish a relationship between the variable which the researcher has no control over and cannot manipulate because various situations relating to perception of undergraduates on social media usage as a way to improve performance of students were and analyze in a method that would allow the respondents to give their views on items of the questionnaire and give their opinions to provide tangible solutions to the research problem.

## **Population, Sample and Sampling Technique**

The study population consist of all undergraduate students of the University of Ilorin. There are 15 faculties in the University with a total number of 44,919 undergraduate students (Student Affairs Unit, University of Ilorin, 2019). However, random technique was adopted to select 381 respondents out of the undergraduate students based on table of sampling by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The faculties from which sample was drawn were Education, Management Science, Arts, Engineering and Agriculture.

A self-structured instrument titled "Perception of undergraduate students on the use of social media for collaborative learning for improved students' performance Questionnaire" (PUSSMCLSPQ). Items of the instrument were subdivided into two parts. Part A deal with the personal information of the participants and part B consist of items on perception of media usage for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance among undergraduate in the University.

Questionnaires were given to experts from Faculty of Education for face and content validities of the items on the questionnaire. The final questionnaire emerged after taken into consideration the corrections and suggestions of the experts. The internal consistency of the instrument was determined through test-retest which was done by administering the same questionnaire twice to the undergraduate students from faculties that was not part of the sample. The researcher carried out the administration of the questionnaires to the respondents personally to tick the appropriate responses that best represents their opinions and the questionnaire was collected back after the completion. However, 381 copies were administered but only 311 were fully retrieved and used for analysis. The research questions were analyzed and collected by making use of questionnaire using simple statistics such as frequency and percentages complex statistic for the research hypothesis.

## **Results**

### **Answering Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** What is the perception of undergraduates based on forms of socialmedia sites for collaboration towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin?

**Table 1**  
**Perception of Stakeholders on the Forms of Social Media networkss**

S/N	Statement	Used	Not Used
1	WhatsApp	306 (98.4%)	5(1.6%)
2	Facebook	291 (93.6%)	20 (6.4%)
3	Edmodo	95 (30.5%)	216(69.5%)
4	Instagram	291 (93.6%)	20 (6.4%)
5	YouTube	286 (92%)	25(8%)
6	WeChat	286 (92%)	25 (8%)
7	MoChat	281 (90.4%)	30(9.6%)
8	Eskimo	286 (92%)	25 (8%)
9	E-Classroom	296 (95.2%)	15(4.8%)
10	LinkedIn	286 (92%)	25(8%)
	<b>Total Average</b>	<b>2704 (86.9%)</b>	<b>406 (13.1%)</b>

Table 1 indicated that 306 (98.4%) of respondents were of the opinion that WhatsApp was being used for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin and ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 291 (93.6%) of the respondents were of the view that Facebook was one the media sites that was being used for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin and was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> while Edmodo with 216 (69.5%) respondents revealed that it was not used for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin. In summary, majority of the respondents 86.9% supported the view that social media sites were effectively put to use collaborative towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin.

**Research Question 2:** What is the perception of undergraduates on extent of usage for collaborative towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin?

**Table 2: Perception of Stakeholders on Extent of Usage**

S/N	Statement	Always Used	Often Used	Sometimes Used	Not At All Used
1	WhatsApp	177 (56.9%)	35 (11.3%)	48 (15.4%)	51 (16.4%)
2	Facebook	57 (18.3%)	174 (55.9%)	32 (10.3%)	48 (15.4%)
3	Edmodo	16 (5.1%)	67 (21.5%)	206 (66.2%)	22 (7.1%)
4	Telegram	57 (18.3%)	168 (54%)	38 (12.2%)	48 (15.4%)
5	YouTube	92 (29.6%)	171 (55%)	32 (10.3%)	16 (5.1%)



6	WeChat	35 (11.3%)	51 (16.4%)	57 (18.3%)	168 (54%)
7	Google	48 (15.4%)	212 (68.2%)	32 (10.3%)	19 (6.1%)
8	Wikis	16 (5.1%)	212 (68.2%)	35 (11.3%)	48 (15.4%)
9	E-Classroom	15 (4.8%)	192 (61.7%)	16 (5.1%)	55 (17.7%)
10	LinkedIn	51 (16.4%)	76 (56.6%)	51 (16.4%)	51 (16.4%)
	<b>Total Average</b>	<b>564 (18.8%)</b>	<b>1358 (45.3%)</b>	<b>547 (18.3%)</b>	<b>526 (17.6%)</b>

As reflected on Table 2, majority of the respondents 56.9% supported the view that WhatsApp was always used for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin. Facebook, with 55.9% also supporting the view that it was often used for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin. Last but not the least, 12.2% of the respondents agreed that Telegram was sometime used for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin. Thus, 45.3% agreed that the extent of its usage for collaborative learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin was that social media usage was sometime used for collaborative learning towards improve student's performance in University of Ilorin.

**Research Question 3:** What is the perception of undergraduate based on advantages of social media usage for collaborative towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin.

**Table 3: Perception of based on advantages of usage**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	X	Rank
1	Encouragement and generation of information in solving assignment	54 (17.4%)	22 (7.1%)	183 (58.3%)	52 (16.7%)	2.25	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2	Increase students' research skills in acquiring relevant information related to studies	35 (11.3%)	185 (59.5%)	52 (16.7%)	39 (12.5%)	2.69	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	Creative learning environment among peers	45 (14.5%)	219 (70.4%)	16 (5.1%)	31 (10%)	2.89	1 <sup>st</sup>
4	Enables exploration of curricular contents	56 (18%)	27 (8.7%)	177 (56.9%)	51 (16.4%)	2.28	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Gives students freedom to learn and share basic knowledge and synthesize information	51 (16.4%)	21 (6.8%)	183 (58.8%)	56 (18%)	2.21	5 <sup>th</sup>

The results on table 3 revealed that creative learning environment among peers was the benefit of its usage for collaboration towards improved performance of students in University of Ilorin and was ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, while increase students' research skills in acquiring relevant information related to studies, encouragement and generation of information in solving assignment, enables exploration of curricular

contents and gives students freedom to learn and share basic knowledge and synthesize information and were ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively.

### Hypotheses Testing

H0: There is no significant difference in the perception of undergraduates on the categories of social media sites used for collaborative learning towards improved students' performance in University of Ilorin on the basis of gender

**Table 4: Difference in perception of Male and Female undergraduate students**

Gender	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig (2-tail).	Decision
Male	200	1.92	.26	309	3.468	.000	Ho <sub>1</sub> Rejected
Female	111	1.90	.28				

As shown on table 4, the hypothesis was rejected because the P-value of .000 was less than the significant value of .05. Hence, there was a significant difference in the perception of undergraduates on the categories of social media sites used for collaborative learning towards improved performance in University of Ilorin based on gender

### Discussion of Results

This section gives detailed explanations on the various findings discovered based the questions raised and the hypothesis tested. For instance, findings on on Table 1 shows that perception of undergraduate students based on forms of social media sites used for collaboration towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin was that the sites were effectively used for improvement of student's performance in University of Ilorin. The findings on table 1 agreed with earlier findings by Al-rahmi, Othman and Musa (2014) whose study revealed that it is significantly useful for improved performance and collaborations. It also agreed with the findings made by Raymond and Afua (2016) that contribute significantly to students' academic life.

Meanwhile the analysis on the extent of social media usage for learning towards improved student's performance in University of Ilorin as indicated in table 2. It was revealed that its usage was sometime used for collaborative learning towards improve student's performance in University of Ilorin. This finding agreed with Bozanta and Mardikyan (2017) that it significantly encourage interactive atmosphere. Also, it agreed with Kamil (2017) that relationship exists between collaborative learning and academic performance.

Findings on benefits of media usage for collaborative learning towards improved performance of students in University of Ilorin on Table 3 revealed that creative learning environment among peers was the benefit of its usage for collaborative learning in other to improve academic excellence in University of



Ilorin and was ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, while increase students' research skills in acquiring relevant information related to studies, encouragement and generation of information in solving assignment, enables exploration of curricular contents and gives students freedom to learn and share basic knowledge and synthesize information and were ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively. This finding was in consonance with Eke et al. (2014), Idakwo (2011) and Folorunso et al. (2010) that social networking sites encourages virtual meeting which allows for relationship among students and their teachers.

The finding highlighted in table 4 revealed that there was difference in perception of stakeholders on categories of social sites used for learning towards improved students' performance in University of Ilorin based on gender. This is finding is similar to World Bank (2002) who asserted that categories of different sites used for collaborative learning towards improved academic success vary according to its usability.

### Conclusion

It is glaring that most students are accustom to the use of different media platforms for academic activities which goes a long way in helping them to learn together in a co-operative manner which assist to improve their performances. The usage of it among students brings about interaction which has positive significant impact on their collaborative learning. Also, the sites encourages virtual/online learning atmosphere, fosters effective interpersonal relationship, builds confidence, improves quality of research outputs and academic excellence.

### Recommendations

It was recommended that:

1. The school administrators should enhance its usage for learning activities as it helps students acquire information much faster and easier compare to regular classroom.
2. School administrators should provide e-classroom and e-learning facilities for convenient learning exercise.
3. The students should have adequate knowledge on the basis of how to make effective use of the different platforms for learning.

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