

Facebook Usage and Secondary School Students' English Language Performance in Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract. The rapid proliferation of social media has significantly impacted communication and learning, with Facebook being one of the most widely used platforms among students. While Facebook offers educational benefits, concerns about its potential impact on students' academic performance have arisen. This study examines the relationship between Facebook usage and secondary school students' performance in English Language with a focus on Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. Using a survey research design, data were collected from 105 senior secondary school students through a structured questionnaire. The study assessed the frequency and duration of Facebook usage and students' academic performance in English Language. Results revealed that a majority of students (63.81%) accessed Facebook daily, with 46.67% spending between 30 minutes to 1 hour per session. The analysis of academic records indicated that over 80% of the students scored below the average grade in English Language. However, the regression analysis demonstrated no significant relationship between Facebook usage and students' academic performance ($R^2 = 0.001696$, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that while students frequently engage with Facebook, its impact on academic outcomes is negligible. The study concludes that other factors, such as study habits and access to learning resources, may substantially influence English Language proficiency. Based on these findings, it is recommended that educators and policymakers focus on improving teaching methodologies and providing adequate learning materials rather than solely discouraging Facebook usage. Additionally, students should be encouraged to balance their social media activities with academic responsibilities to maximize learning outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technology has revolutionized human interactions, particularly in education and social networking. Social media, a product of this digital evolution, has significantly impacted various aspects of society, including communication, business, and education. Among the various social media platforms, Facebook stands out as one of the most widely used, especially among young people, including secondary school students. The platform provides an avenue for social interaction, knowledge exchange, and entertainment. While Facebook provides numerous benefits, including networking and access to educational resources, its excessive usage has raised concerns about its potential impact on students' academic performance, particularly in secondary schools (Ibrahim, 2020). In recent years, researchers (Tess, 2013; Oduolowu, 2018; Wang et al, 2018; Ogunyemi & Tunde-Awe, 2020) have shown increasing interest in understanding the impact of social media on students' academic

outcomes in secondary schools particularly in core subjects such as English Language. This study, therefore, focuses on examining the effect of Facebook usage on secondary school students' performance in English Language in the Akungba Akoko area of Ondo State, Nigeria.

English Language plays a fundamental role in the Nigerian education system, particularly in secondary schools, where it serves as the primary medium of instruction. As Nigeria's official language, English is used to teach all major subjects, including Mathematics, Sciences, and Social Sciences. This makes proficiency in English essential for students to understand lessons, complete assignments, and excel in examinations (Adegbite, 2003; Fakeye & Ogunyemi, 2017). Without a strong command of English, students often struggle to grasp key concepts across various disciplines, leading to poor academic performance. Beyond its role in the classroom, English is also a crucial requirement for higher education. Admission into Nigerian universities and other tertiary institutions depends significantly on students' performance in English Language examinations. Standardized tests such as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) assess students' ability to read, write, and comprehend English. Poor performance in English often limits students' chances of gaining admission into higher institutions, thereby restricting their academic and professional aspirations (Oluwole, 2008).

Moreover, English proficiency is a key factor in securing employment in Nigeria. Employers in various sectors expect job seekers to demonstrate strong written and spoken communication skills. Since English is the dominant language in business, governance, and international relations, mastery of the language enhances employability and career prospects. Secondary school education lays the foundation for these skills, preparing students to meet modern workplace demands (Bamgbose, 2011). In an increasingly globalized world, the ability to communicate effectively in English provides Nigerian students with access to international opportunities. English is the dominant language for global education, commerce, and diplomacy. Proficiency in English enables students to apply for scholarships, participate in online courses, and engage in international academic collaborations. It also allows them to access a wealth of knowledge from books, research papers, and digital resources that are predominantly available in English.

Despite its significance, many Nigerian secondary school students struggle with English due to various challenges. Poor reading culture, inadequate teaching methods, and distractions from digital media have negatively impacted students' proficiency in the language (Abdullahi et al, 2020; Chukwuemeka & Chinwe, 2019; Ogunyemi & Tunde-Awe, 2020). Many schools also lack qualified teachers who can effectively teach English, and students often rely on informal language structures they encounter on social media, which further weakens their grammatical skills. Consequently, students' performance in English Language examinations remains a significant concern for educators and policymakers (Ogunmodimu, 2015). Intervention programs have been introduced to help students manage academic pressure, with some incorporating structured breaks from social media platforms, including Facebook, to address these challenges.

Facebook, one of the most widely used social media platforms, enables users to create profiles, connect with others, share multimedia content, and engage in real-time communication (Oduolowu, 2018). Facebook has grown exponentially since its inception in 2004, amassing billions of users worldwide. As of 2021, Facebook had over 2.8 billion monthly active users globally, with more than 30 million users in Nigeria alone (Ibrahim, 2020; Statista, 2020). Secondary school students, being digital natives, are particularly attracted to the platform due to its interactive nature. They spend hours daily engaging in conversations, watching videos, and participating in online discussions. However, its widespread use among students has raised concerns about its potential impact on academic performance.

Several studies (Junco, 2012; Tess, 2013; Onyekwena & Odeh, 2019) have examined the relationship between social media usage and academic performance, with mixed findings. Some researchers argue that social media platforms like Facebook can enhance learning experiences by providing access to educational materials, fostering peer collaboration, and facilitating engagement with subject content (Junco, 2012; Tess, 2013). Students can join academic groups to share notes, discuss complex topics, and receive academic support from peers and teachers. Moreover, educators have started integrating social media into the teaching-learning process to deliver content, organize virtual discussions, and enhance students' digital literacy skills.

However, despite these potential benefits, concerns persist about the adverse effects of excessive Facebook usage on students' academic performance. One major issue is time mismanagement. Many students spend excessive time on Facebook, engaging in non-academic activities such as chatting, liking posts, watching viral videos, and playing online games. This often leads to reduced study time, lack of concentration, and increased procrastination, all of which negatively impact academic performance (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010; Onyekwena & Odeh, 2019). Additionally, frequent exposure to informal language and slang used in social media communication may affect students' writing skills and grammatical accuracy, leading to a decline in their proficiency in English Language. Moreover, studies have shown that excessive social media engagement contributes to decreased attention span and cognitive overload (Oye, Helou, & Rahim, 2012). Students who constantly multitask between academic work and social media are more likely to experience difficulties retaining and processing information. This has significant implications for their ability to comprehend and analyze texts, which are critical skills required for success in English Language.

In Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria, the increasing accessibility of smartphones and internet connectivity has made Facebook a popular social networking site among secondary school students. Many students use the platform as a primary means of communication and socialization. While some students use Facebook for educational purposes, others primarily engage in entertainment, social networking, and leisure activities. Educators and parents are concerned that prolonged exposure to social media may be detrimental to students' academic pursuits, leading to declining performance in subjects such as English Language. A significant challenge in assessing the impact of Facebook usage on students' academic performance is the difficulty in distinguishing between productive and unproductive social media engagement. While some students use Facebook to access educational materials, others use it as escapism, engaging in activities that contribute little or nothing to their academic development. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how students interact with Facebook and to what extent their usage influences their academic outcomes.

The debate on whether Facebook usage is beneficial or detrimental to academic performance continues to evolve, as researchers attempt to find a balance between its educational advantages and distraction risks. In the Nigerian context, there is limited empirical evidence on how Facebook usage affects students' English Language performance. While some studies have explored the general impact of social media on education, there is a need for a more focused investigation on secondary school students and their engagement with Facebook concerning their English Language proficiency. Given the importance of English Language in academic and professional development, understanding the influence of Facebook usage on students' proficiency is essential for educators, policymakers, and parents. If Facebook is found to have a significant negative impact, strategies should be devised to regulate its use and promote responsible digital engagement. On the other hand, if Facebook can be harnessed as an effective

learning tool, then efforts should be made to integrate it into the teaching-learning process to enhance students' language skills.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the relationship between Facebook usage and secondary school students' performance in English Language in Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. By analyzing students' usage patterns and academic outcomes, this research will provide valuable insights into how social media affects learning and how best to optimize its benefits while minimizing its negative impacts. The research questions raised to guide the study include;

1. What is the frequency of Facebook usage among secondary school students in Akungba-Akoko?
2. What is the duration of Facebook usage among secondary school students in Akungba-Akoko?
3. What is the academic performance of secondary school students in English language in Akungba-Akoko?

The questions will be used to examine the formulated hypothesis below;

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and academic performance of secondary school students in English language in Akungba-Akoko.

METHOD

The study made use of the survey research design to obtain information about the effect of Facebook usage on secondary school students' performance in English Language in Akungba Akoko. A survey design entails collecting data through a questionnaire or interview, which is administered to a sample of individuals or organizations (Akuezilo, 2002).

The population of this study consists of all secondary school students of schools located within Akungba-Akoko area of Ondo State as at when this study was being conducted. The sample size of 105 respondents was selected from four secondary schools in Akungba Akoko community. Thirty-five (35) students who had access to mobile phones, internet connectivity and active on social media were purposively selected from each of the schools from senior secondary school level 2 (SSS2).

A self-designed closed ended questionnaire was used for data collection for this study. The questionnaire was divided into two sections (A&B), where section A consists of the demographic distribution of respondents; while section B consists of questions/statements meant to obtain information about effect of Facebook usage on secondary school students' performance in English Language in Akungba Akoko.

The test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Twenty (20) copies of the instrument were administered to students outside the study sample on two different occasions. Their responses were collated and analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. A reliability coefficient of 0.73 was obtained. Hence, the instrument was adjudged reliable for data collection.

The researcher visited the principals of the selected schools to explain the research's purpose and obtain permission to use students from the schools as respondents. Access was granted to distribute the research instruments with the assistance of the English language teachers in the various schools. The instruments were collected from the students immediately after the needed information was provided. The academic records of the participating students were also obtained from the schools. Data collected was analysed using the descriptive statistics of mean and simple percentage as well as regression analysis

Results and Discussions

Frequency of Facebook Usage among Secondary School Students

Table 1. Frequency of Facebook Usage among Secondary School Students

Frequency	Number of students	Percentage
Daily	67	63.81%
At least thrice a week	12	11.43%
At least once a week	21	20%
Rarely	5	4.76%

Source: Author's field survey (2024)

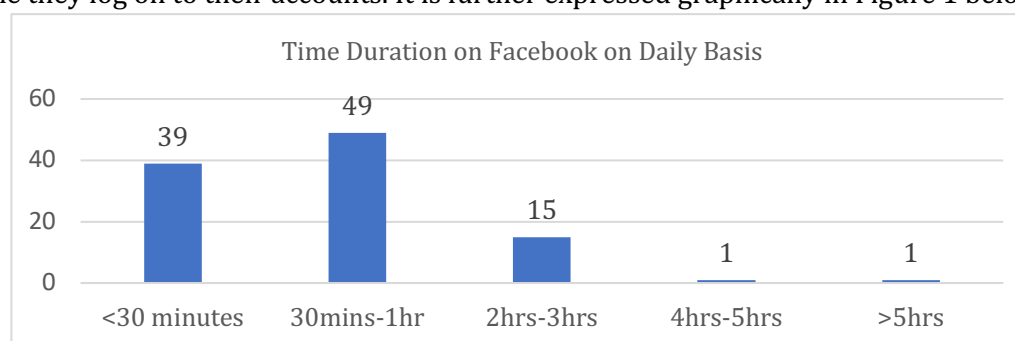
Table 1 illustrates the frequency at which secondary school students visit Facebook. The figures indicate that, out of the 105 students who participated in the survey, 67 students, representing 63.81% of the total respondents, log on to their Facebook accounts daily. The remaining 38 students log on to their Facebook pages at least thrice a week (12 = 11.43%), at least once a week (21 = 20%) or rarely (5= 4.76%).

Duration of Facebook Usage among Secondary School Students

Table 2. Duration of Facebook Usage among Secondary School Students

Duration	Frequency	Percentage
<30 minutes	39	37.14%
30mins-1hr	49	46.67%
2hrs-3hrs	15	14.29%
4hrs-5hrs	1	0.95%
>5hrs	1	0.95%

Table 2 indicates the time duration of Facebook usage among secondary school students anytime they log on to their accounts. It is further expressed graphically in Figure 1 below.



Source: Author's field survey (2024).

Figure 1. Time Duration of Facebook Usage among Secondary School Students

Figure 1 illustrates the time spent on Facebook by the students anytime they log in to their accounts. Thirty-nine (39) students, representing about 37.1% of the respondents, spend less than 30minutes on Facebook while 49 students, representing about 46.7%, spend between 30minutes to 1hour on Facebook anytime they log in. Fifteen (15) students represent about 14.3% of the respondents spend between 2hours and 3hours time on Facebook anytime they log in to their accounts. One student each, which represents about 0.9% of the respondents, spends between 4hours and 5hours, and more than 5hours respectively on Facebook every log in session.

Academic Performance of Students in English Language in the previous academic term (2nd Term 2023/2024 Academic Session)

Table 3. Academic performance on the basis of Grade

Academic Performance on the Basis of Grade			
Grade	Score	Students	Percentage
A	80-100	Nil	Nil
B	60-79	3	2.6%
C	50-59	15	14.3%
D	40-49	30	28.6%
E	30-39	25	23.8%
F	Below 30	32	30.5%

Source: Author's field survey (2024)

The table above indicates students' performance in English Language exams with the applicable grades. None of the students from the 3 schools in consideration scored an "A" grade. Only 3 students from the 3 schools scored a "B" grade which amounts to 2.6% of the entire respondents. Fifteen (15) students scored a "C" which amounts to 14.3% of the respondents. Thirty (30) students scored a "D" grade of 28.6%. Twenty-five (25) students, representing 23.8% of the respondents, scored an "E" grade. Thirty-two (32) students, representing 30.5% of the respondents, scored an "F" grade. It can be deduced from the table that over 80% of the students from the three schools in consideration scored below the average score/grade which is capped at grade "C".

Test of Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and the academic performance of secondary school students in the English language in Akungba-Akoko.

A regression analysis was conducted using the Facebook Usage (FBU) and Academic Performance (ACA) variables to test for the formulated hypothesis.

Regression Result

Table 4. Regression Analysis

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Intercept	2.600991	0.11859	21.93272	1.33E-40
FBU	0.001264	0.003022	0.418268	0.676622
Multiple R	0.041178			
R Square	0.001696			
Adjusted R Square	-0.008			
Standard Error	0.414446			
F-Statistic	0.174948			
Observations	105			

Source: Author's computation (2024)

From the table above, the $R^2 = 0.001696$ which implies that Facebook Usage has a little impact of about 0.016% on Academic Performance of students in English Language. The f-statistic (0.174948) is less than the p-statistic (0.67662) at 0.05 significance level. Thus, we accept the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and academic performance of secondary school students in English language in Akungba-Akoko.

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between Facebook usage and the academic performance of secondary school students in English Language in Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. The study examined the frequency and duration of Facebook usage among students and their academic performance in English Language and tested the hypothesis regarding a potential relationship between Facebook usage and academic performance.

Frequency and Duration of Facebook Usage: The study revealed that a significant proportion of secondary school students in Akungba-Akoko actively engage with Facebook. A majority (63.81%) of the respondents access Facebook daily, while smaller percentages use it at least thrice a week (11.43%), at least once a week (20%), or rarely (4.76%). This indicates a high level of engagement with Facebook among the students, suggesting that social media plays an integral role in their daily lives.

In terms of duration, the study found that most students spend a moderate amount of time on Facebook per session. Approximately 46.67% of respondents spend between 30 minutes to 1 hour on Facebook per log-in, while 37.14% spend less than 30 minutes. A smaller percentage (14.29%) spends between 2 to 3 hours, and only 0.95% of students spend 4 to 5 hours or more per session. This suggests that while many students access Facebook frequently, their engagement duration is relatively controlled for most users. This is in line with the findings of Maria and Haider (2023) and Kelzang and Tshering (2021) who found that students spend limited time on Facebook per login session.

Academic Performance in English Language: The study also analyzed students' performance in English Language in the previous academic term. The results indicated that none of the students obtained an "A" grade (80-100), and only 2.6% of students achieved a "B" grade (60-79). A larger proportion (14.3%) obtained a "C" grade (50-59), while the majority (83.1%) scored below average, with 28.6% obtaining a "D" grade (40-49), 23.8% earning an "E" grade (30-39), and 30.5% failing with an "F" grade (below 30). These findings suggest a concerning trend of underperformance in English Language among the students surveyed.

Relationship between Facebook Usage and Academic Performance: A regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between Facebook usage and academic performance in English Language. The results showed an R-squared value of 0.001696, indicating that Facebook usage accounts for only 0.16% of students' academic performance variation. Additionally, the f-statistic (0.174948) was found to be less than the p-statistic (0.676622) at a 0.05 level of significance. Based on this result, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and academic performance in English Language, was accepted.

The results of this study align with and diverge from previous research findings on the impact of social media usage on academic performance. Studies such as those conducted by Onyekwena and Odeh (2019) and Hou et al. (2017) highlighted that excessive social media engagement, including Facebook, often leads to academic distractions and reduced study time, thereby negatively affecting academic outcomes. However, this study found no significant relationship between Facebook usage and students' academic performance in English Language, indicating that while students frequently use Facebook, it does not directly impair their performance.

Chukwuemeka and Chinwe (2019) suggested that declining academic performance in English Language can be attributed to multiple factors, including poor study habits, lack of educational resources, and inadequate teaching methods. This study reinforces their findings by demonstrating that despite the widespread use of Facebook among students in Akungba-Akoko,

the observed poor academic performance is more likely due to broader systemic issues rather than social media engagement alone.

Similarly, Hwang and Kim (2022) emphasized the role of psychological factors such as stress, anxiety, and academic burnout in students' academic performance. While Facebook usage might contribute to mental health challenges, this study did not find evidence supporting a direct correlation between Facebook usage and lower academic achievement. This suggests that other variables, such as students' mental well-being and access to academic support, may significantly influence performance in English Language.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while Facebook is a prevalent social media platform among secondary school students in Akungba-Akoko, its direct impact on English Language performance is insignificant. This implies that other factors—such as study habits, availability of learning resources, and teaching methodologies—may play a more substantial role in determining students' English Language proficiency. The study also highlights the generally poor academic performance in English Language, which may be attributed to broader systemic issues rather than social media usage alone.

Since Facebook usage does not significantly impact academic performance, it is recommended that educators and policymakers should focus on addressing other factors contributing to low performance in English Language, such as improving teaching methods, enhancing learning resources, and promoting effective study habits. Students should also be encouraged to balance their social media activities with academic responsibilities. This is because while Facebook usage does not directly affect academic outcomes, excessive engagement may still contribute to distractions.

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