NEW MEDIA IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE AMONG STUDENTS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA, NIGERIA.

By

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DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS, FACULTY OF ARTS, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA, NIGERIA.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled **New Media in Higher Education: A Study of Social Media Use Among Students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria** was written by me in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of the dissertation was previously presented for another degree at this or any other institution.

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NAME **SIGN** **DATE**

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled **New Media in Higher Education: A Study of Social Media Use Among Students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria** written by RASHEEDAH LIMAN meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Doctor of philosophy in Development Communication of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge.

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DEDICATION

For,Baba and Mama!We lost both of you but Allah did not forsake us**!**

For,Husby and our Children!May this Joy never end!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page ----------i
Declaration----------ii
Certification----------iii
Dedication----------iv
Acknowledgement----------vii
Table of Content----------viii
List of Tables----------xi
List of Figures----------xiii
Abstract----------xiv

Chapter One: General Introduction

1.0 Background to the Study----------1
1.1 Higher Education in Nigeria ----------12
1.2 A Brief History of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria----15
1.3 Statement of the Research Problem----------16
1.4 Aim and Objectives----------17
1.5 Research Questions----------17
1.6 Justification of the Study----------18
1.7 Scope of the Study----------18
1.8 Definition of Terms----------19

Chapter Two

2.0 **Literature Review**---------- 22

2.1 The Evolution of the New Media----------22
2.2 The Internet and the World Wide Web----------24
2.3 Virtual Communities----------29
2.4 The Reign of Social Networking Sites (SNSs)---------- 38
2.5 The Birth of a Medium with a Face----------42
2.6 The Digital Divide and Social Media in Nigeria---------45
2.6 Social Media and Higher Education----------49
2.8 Social Media, Youth and Democratic Rights----------57
2.9 New Media in Ahmadu Bello University----------61
2.10 The Role of University Administration----------64
2.11 Preliminary Observation on Social Media---------- 66

2.2 **Theoretical Framework**---------- 68
2.2.1 The Constructivist Learning Theory---------- 68
2.2.2 Transformative Learning Theory---------- 71
2.2.3 Participatory Communication Theory---------- 76

Chapter Three

3.0 **Methodology----------82**

3.1 Research Design----------82
Population and Sampling Procedure

3.2 Research Instrumentation----------85
Questionnaire
Focus Group
On-Line Forum

3.3 Methods of Data Analysis----------89

Chapter Four

4.0 Data Presentation----------92
4.1 Data Analysis----------95
4.2.1 Further Analysis and Reexamination of Research Questions ----------136
4.2.1 Use of New Media Communications----------137
4.2.2 A.B.U Students Use of Social Media----------138

Chapter Five

5.0 **Study Summary----------143**

5.1 Summary of Findings----------145
5.1.1 Personal Choice----------145
5.1.2 Positive Opinion----------145
5.1.3 Need for Boundaries----------146
5.1.4 Digital Literacy----------146
5.1.5 Bridging the Digital Divide----------147

5.1.6 Barriers to Educational Use----------147
5.1.7 The Fear of Social Media Policy----------148

5.2 Future Research----------149

5.3 Conclusion----------149
5.4 Recommendation----------150
5.4.1 Academic Use----------150
5.4.2 Establishing Awareness----------151
5.4.3 Making a Generational Connection----------152
5.4.4 Social media Policy----------152

Bibliography----------154
Webliography----------165

Appendices----------167

Appendix A: Questionnaire----------167
Appendix B: Letter of Invitation----------173
Appendix C: Focus Group----------174
Appendix D: On-line Forum----------199
Appendix E: TAPASA Discourse----------191
Appendix F: IYA Abubakar Centre----------192
Appendix G: Stars from the Well----------193

List Of Tables

1. Age of Respondents----------91
2. Sex of Respondents----------91
3. Marital Status----------92
4. Faculty of Respondents----------93
5. Department of Respondents----------94
6. How Frequent do you use your favorite Media----------98
7. Do you switch off your handset in the classroom---------100
8. How often do you browse the Internet----------101
9. Do you have a Social Networking Account----------103
10. How often do you log in social Networking sites---------105
11. How much time do you spend on websites each time----106
12. Most important reasons for Social Networking Sites-----109
13. Do Lecturers post work materials on Social media-------110
14. Communication with Lecturer----------111
15. Communication with Classmates----------111
16. Communication with students in your Department-------112
17. Learn about Campus Activities----------113
18. Find out about Social activities ----------113
19. Belong to SNS before admission----------114
20. As a student do you belong to any Social Network-------115

21. Concern about image on SNS----------115

22. Access to education and reference material----------116

23. Offers another channel for different learning styles-------116

24. Enable greater collaboration with fellow students---------117

25. Create room for interactive discussion----------118

26. Opinions of students on “others”----------118

27. Summary Table for question 20----------119

28. Time spent on Education/school work----------120

29. Time spent on Communication----------120

30. Time spent on Entertainment----------121

31. Time spent on News----------121

32. Internet and Academic Development----------123

33. Need for restriction/censorship----------125

34. Where do you currently reside----------126

List of Figures

1. Year of Study of Respondents----------101
2. Which New media forms are you familiar with----------102
3. Which of these New media forms do you use----------104
4. At what hours of the day do you use your phone---------- 106
5. What do you use your handset for in the classroom----------101
6. Which SNS do you have account(s) with----------110
7. What do you use SNS for----------112
8. Most important benefits of Social Media----------126
9. Average time spent on the Internet----------129
10. Possible challenges----------131
11. Residency On/Off Campus----------134
12. Provision of E-mail address----------135
13. Variable of Male/Female Respondents----------138
14. Variable of Student levels----------139

ABSTRACT

This research examines the relationship between Social Media usage and its educational and social influence on the undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. The research explores both the negative and positive dimensions of Social Media within the larger framework of New Media and higher education. Students have generally been using Social Media to connect with friends. However, the increased use of Social Media has in turn led to the utilization of Social Media inside and outside the classroom, based on the real and theoretical potential benefits to educational institutions. The potential benefits include enhancing the overall college experience (Banaria, 2004) expanding educational opportunities (LaRose 2010), library services (Kaplan, 2010). The problematic remains that both in the developed world, and in a developing country like Nigeria, the full benefits or otherwise of New Media in the education arena is still conjectural. This study helped to provide further clarification on the benefits or otherwise of Social Media in education, by exploring what is obtainable within the context of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria Nigeria. Participatory Communication theory was used as a framework for the study. The study used a three-phased approach with questionnaire, on-line forum and focus group methods to collect data, and then the data was analyzed using a concurrent convergent method. Based on the findings of the research, Social Media use in education will continue to increase because participants felt that Social Media is not only a matter of personal choice but also a societal expectation. The overall attitude of respondents and participants was positive towards Social Media and its use in academic settings. While the larger use of Social Media in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria is for socialization, the percentage use for academic purposes is also considerable. In addition to the issue of blurring of boundaries between their personal and academic lives, the most significant challenges presented by the use of Social Media as identified by this research among Ahmadu Bello University undergraduate students are; plagiarism, Social Media as a distraction to academic pursuit and the posting of inappropriate online content.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Social Media has not only changed the way users socialize and communicate, it has also redefined the idea of friendship, community and learning. The widespread adaptation of Social Media, particularly amongst students, all over the world has engendered researches on the impact of Social Media on students' educational outcome. This research examines the relationship between Social Media use and its educational and social impact on the undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. The research explores both the negative and positive dimensions of Social Media within the larger framework of New Media and higher education. The study draws on previous researches done with students, particularly in developed countries like the United States with the insight of highlighting the implications for students in Nigeria, where Internet literacy is still low and traditional methods of teaching and learning remain dominant despite several studies that indicate that Nigeria has one of the fastest growing Internet users globally.

The last few years have seen dramatic increases in the presence and use of Social Media, which is defined as a "group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, turning communication into interactive dialogue by allowing the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Social Media has indeed allowed people to express themselves through blogs, websites, Social Networking

Sites (Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram, Flicker, YouTube, 2Go, Badoo, LinkedIn etc). According to Burnett and Merchant (2011),

> The recent and rapid dissemination of new forms of digital technology has had a noticeable impact on the social and cultural lives of large sectors of the global population. Along the infusion and availability of more interactive and user-friendly interfaces and software designs, and the increasing sophistication of affordable mobile devices, we are witnessing the emergence of ever-newer forms of popular communication (Burnett and Merchant, 2011:41).

Furthermore, web-based Social Media makes it possible to connect people who share interest and activities, across political, economic and geographical borders through instant messaging. Scholars such as LaRose (2011), Livingstone (2006), Boyd and Ellison (2006) have investigated how Social Media impact on student education in higher institution. Boyd and Ellison (2007) in their book, *Social Network Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship* look at, among other issues, the implication of social networking sites use in schools. They argue that social networking sites are not only beneficial to students, but they can also provide new opportunities for participatory communication among teachers and students. This point seems to be accurate to the extent that there are various instances where teachers and students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, communicate on social networking sites like Facebook about classroom activities (See appendix E).

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation (2004), "youth spend the equivalent of a full-time work week using Social Media, plus overtime. Educators agree that anything that takes up that much space in students' lives certainly deserves our full attention". What educators do not know particularly in Nigeria is why Social Media is not being harnessed in formal learning environment given its

ubiquitous use by particularly students of higher learning in Nigeria. This situation cannot be divorced from the fact that there are very few researches and literature on Social Media use among students of higher institutions in Nigeria. This study was therefore carried out, in order to highlight the potential advantages and consequences of Social Media use by students in the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. It is necessary at this introductory point to understand this study within the broader scope of New Media and Education before properly foregrounding it in the Social Media context.

New Media is a broad term that has emerged recently. In its various applications, it encompasses the amalgamation of traditional media forms such as radio and television, the more interactive power of computer communications technology and, most importantly, the Internet. Livingstone (2008:6) describes New Media as interactive forms of communication that "encompass terrestrial television, cable and satellite television, the video recorder, computer games, tele-text, the camcorder and, most important, the personal computer and its associated technologies-the CD-ROM, Email and the Internet". New Media requires a computer or mobile device with Internet access, which makes it possible for anyone to create, modify, and share content with others, using relatively simple tools that are often free or inexpensive (Manovich 2003:12). There is little doubt that the New Media technologies, platforms, outputs and practices are rapidly transforming the communication environment.

Levinson (2009) in his book *New New Media* sees New Media as competitive and synergistic with older media since "bloggers take readers away from books and viewers away from television but then write books and appear on television themselves." Levinson (2009:3) adds that "media by appointment were

and are characteristic of all old media, and the freeing of users from some of this appointment bondage by TV and DVR represents an evolution of television from old to new medium." Lister (2008) went further to say that "every traditional medium (radio, TV, newspaper) has a new media trajectory". In fact, every traditional medium can at the same time be a new medium. It is therefore easy to use the term "old" and "new" media without specifying exactly what is meant. New Media in this research will be employed to capture the key features of the changing media environment. These include smart phone, personal computer, and its associated functions such as the E-mail, the Internet and indeed, Social Media (Social Networking Sites, Blogs, Podcast, YouTube, Wikipedia etc.), within the context of education.

New Media, particularly the Internet is said to have made it possible for anyone to be a mass communicator. This situation is having a serious impact on how people receive news, education and entertainment. The discourse on the impact of New Media is one that is polarized between the optimist and the pessimist perspectives (Livingstone, 2005). Livingstone in her article "Critical Debate in Internet Studies: Reflections on an Emerging Field" has contextualized the optimist and pessimist perspectives on the binary of modern and postmodern debate. According to Livingstone, "the research agenda continues to be contested by scholars taking more optimistic or more pessimistic approaches, working within more market liberal or more critical frameworks, from a late modern or postmodern stance" (Livingstone, 2005:23). Nonetheless, the central debate is whether New Media technologies automatically carry with them social, economic, political and educational benefits or whether they are detrimental to the development of young people.

It is essential to also state that interactive participation distinguishes New Media from earlier mass media forms. New Media technologies afford users an interactive opportunity in their choices of information sources with other people. The immediacy, responsiveness and social presence of interaction via New Media contents, constitute a substantively different experience than what was possible via mass media channels (Livingstone, 2005:25). Livingston, however also argues, "debates continue about the nature and quality of mediated interaction, especially in contrast with face-to-face conversation as the presumed ideal mode of interpersonal communication." Nonetheless, the ability of New Media forms to effectively promote and enhance interactive communication and participation definitely distinguishes it from traditional media forms.

Research examining the effectiveness of media and technology in higher education can be traced back almost one 100 years. Higher education, also referred to as post-secondary education or tertiary education, is the final stage of formal learning that occurs after secondary education. It includes undergraduate and postgraduate education, which is obtained at universities, colleges, polytechnics and institutions of technology. The urgency and need to better understand the potential benefits and impact of New Media technologies in higher education, is like never before, particularly in Nigeria where, as shown by *World Statistics* (2012) as having the highest Internet and Facebook users in Africa (internetworldstats.com).

The credence to this argument in the context of Nigeria has also been upped by the report on Nigeria's Education Policy, which maintains in its 2011 report that "individuals in our society who do not possess the levels of skills, literacy and training essential to this new era will be effectively disenfranchised,

not simply from the material rewards that accompany competent performance, but also from the chance to participate fully in the national development of Nigeria". Section 1, sub-section 5 of the NEP also states that Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen. The report continues "therefore the full integration of the individual into the community, and the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system is essential." In this light, it is important not to foreclose the possible potential benefits of both informal and formal learning through Social Media or experimentation with teaching using Social Media in classroom.

Scholars like Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), Davies and Merchant (2009), LaRose (2011) have put forward arguments that New Media offers new and exciting possibilities for education. Some of the identified benefits of New Media in higher education include "enhancing the overall college experience (Davies and Merchant, 2011:6) and "expanding educational opportunities" (Brown and Adler, 2008:19). In fact, some scholars such as Glenn (2008), Boyd and Ellison (2007) have argued that the New Media technologies can generally be employed through two major approaches in schools; students can learn 'from' New Media technology, and they can learn 'with' New Media technology.

Reacting to the potentials of New Media in advancing modern learning, Glenn (2008: 2) states that,

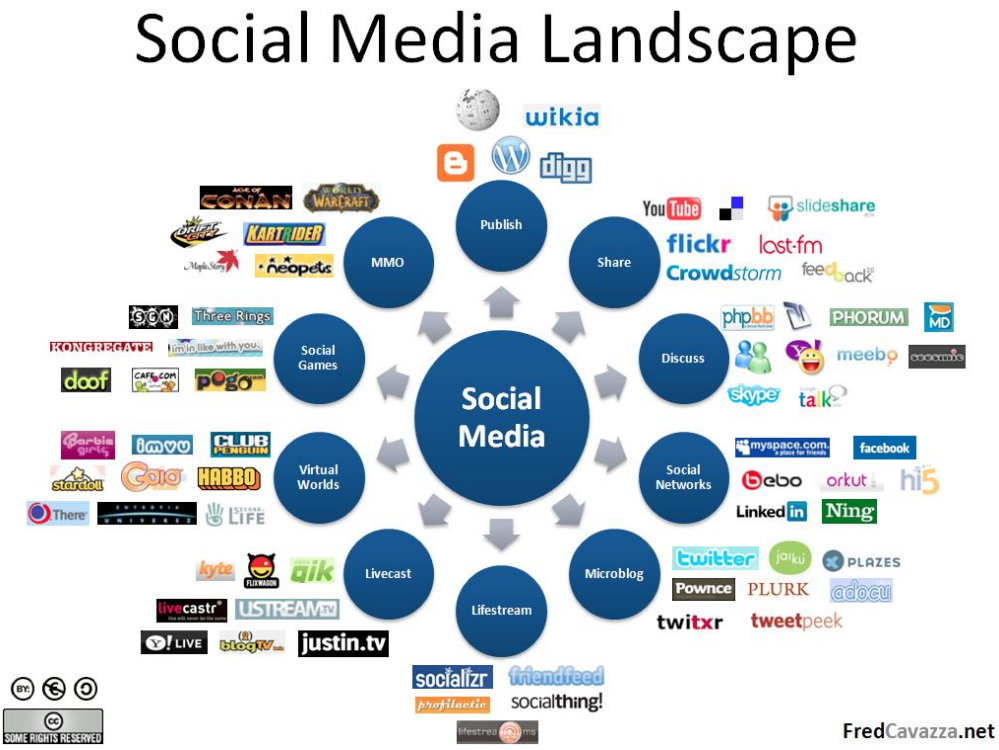
> No generation is more at ease with online, collaborative technologies than today's young people—"digital natives", who have grown up in an immersive computing environment. Where a notebook and pen may have formed the tool kit of prior generations, today's students come to class armed with smart phones, laptops and iPods…. Technology allows students to become much more engaged in constructing their own knowledge, and cognitive studies show that ability is key to learning success.

Indeed, New Media appears to have brought about the redefinition of literacy via the emergence of what is called "New Literacies". According to Thomas Frey, a senior Futurist at the DaVinci Institute, "Literacy will continue to evolve along with new systems and each form of technology that gets created along the way, basic reading and writing forms of communication will no longer be sufficient for the workforce of the future. People will still need to read and write, but they will also need a whole lot more". In this regards, Leu et al (2004) is inclined to the position of Thomas Frey when he argued that,

> Clearly, definitions of literacy must change to include electronic environment. In some ways, however, incorporating technology into definitions of literacy becomes less an argument about whether or not such changes are needed or are effective and more recognition that schools must incorporate technology or be viewed as out of touch or even irrelevant. Even though many are calling for more research on the efficacy of technology in learning, there is increasing recognition that technology is here to stay; the demand from business, parents, and society at large is such that technology will continue to appear in schools even before research outcomes are known (Leu et al 2004).

There seems to be a lot of positive dimensions and discourses on the benefit of the New Media to social and economic development but these benefits are particularly more burgeoning in respect of education and young people's global awareness. "Raised in the "always on" world of interactive media, the Internet, the digital messaging technologies, today's student has different expectations and learning styles than did previous generations" (Baird and Fisher, 2006). Indeed, this present net-centric generation value their ability to use the

Web for on-demand learning that include multiple forms of interactive, social and self-publishing media tools, such as blogs, websites and social networking sites. A multitude of blogs has for instance, sprung up around specific topics, allowing users to interact with varying degrees of control over content. Wikipedia is a place for information on any topic, even though it depends heavily on users for maintaining accuracy and concurrency of available articles. Photo sharing sites such as Flickr, Picasa and Pinterest are all being used for educational purposes to varying degrees. Flickr is not only a good place to find images; it can also enable student's collaboration and participation. For instance, students can embed comments on images and also do some critical analysis of images found on Flickr. The new Flickr GeoTag can also provide students with a fast and easy way to find and share photos that can be used in the classroom for the purpose of discussion and illustration.



Social Media could promote both formal and informal learning, while "formal" learning is what happens within the classroom, "informal learning" can be described as learning and engagement that occurs outside of formal school settings. Formal learning may or may not be guided by a teacher, but it definitely happens within the context of supervised instruction (Jenkins, 2009:4). Social Media content created by teachers and learners in *Virtual Worlds* are, according to Alkha, (2011), examples of such informal learning environment with personalized learning experiences that allows for creativity and self-expression. Also in popular and political parlance, Social Media are often referred to as being significant in achieving a more equitable society through increased social participation. From a developmental perspective, blogs can offer youth a place to construct narratives and share stories, which is an important aspect of identity exploration. It can also help to promote critical and analytical thinking. This view is further supported by (Huffaker, 2006:23) when he says "blogs can have many characteristics that can help create or maintain social ties which can enhance developmental, cognitive, and social connections for young people."

According to Tynes (2007:7) "social networking sites (SNSs) have the potential of opening up avenues for beneficial cognitive and psychosocial development for young people in the online social world." Tynes (2007), maintains that adolescent participation in social networks can foster learning that reinforces and complements what is taught in traditional classrooms. The same benefits are also attributed to content communities and collaborative projects. Bonk and King (1998) identify some benefits of online collaboration as:

1. Democratizing of student input,
2. Minimal off-task behaviours

3. Deeper reflection time,
4. Immediate access to resources through the Internet,
5. Larger audience for presentation/publication,
6. Extended discussion,
7. Student-centeredness

This medium does encourage students to work more collaboratively where physical and time barriers may have previously prevented such. Research (Griffith, et. al 1983, Sims and Mayer 2002, Green and Bavelier, 2003) also suggests that online video games may help young people to develop cognitive skills such as spatial visualization and analog representation. Drew and Waters (1986) demonstrated that video games play could increase not only hand-eye coordination but also improve scores of general and verbal intelligence. Delwiche (2006) in his research demonstrates that video games enhance literacy, attention, and reaction time, role-playing and higher-level of thinking. Further arguments and studies have also linked Social Media use by students to higher levels of motivation, affective learning, and more positive classroom environment. Based on initial research, it appears that there are potentials for Social Media to have a positive impact in multiple areas of higher education.

However, other scholars have strongly presented their argument concerning the several negative effects the New Media have on knowledge, opinion, attitudes and the levels of violence among youth in the society. New Media, they say, is responsible for aggressive tendencies among children and young people due to the amount of excessive violence in media representations that can be found in some movies or video games. Theories like the "hypodermic needle or bullet" theory

give further support to these media effect behavior. However, these theories did not account for the different responses individuals may have to the same media source. There appears to be a consensus that the media may heavily influence some vulnerable groups such as children more than others (Bryant & Thompson, 2002; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; McLuhan, 1964). Manohar is one of the recent scholars who have argued strongly about the negative effect of the New Media.

According to Manohar (2010:1):

> The New media is responsible for creating ideals about body images, owing to which several teenagers (especially girls) suffer from inferiority complex and resort to unhealthy practices to lose weight and get skinny… the amount of celebrity hype created by the media causes many children to make irrational demands for designer clothing, accessories and other perks of the celebrity life that they are exposed to. Glorification of unhealthy habits like smoking, drug abuse, unprotected sex and alcohol can encourage these habits in teenagers, which can permanently scar their lives.

There are also several privacy and safety concerns on Social Media that have not yet been addressed in education. The most frequently raised issue is with the material posted on social networking sites. This issue involves students posting materials deemed inappropriate, which can include violation of privacy (nude pictures, unauthorized information, character defamation etc). Indeed, the posting of these types of materials appears to be frequent. There is certainly no shortage of cases involving the misuse of Social Media reported in the traditional media all over the world, including Nigeria. These findings raise some interesting questions. If Social Media is creating an additional distraction for students with so many factors already competing for their time, should educational institutions be promoting the use of Social Media? Or will entering this arena allow institutions,

to redirect some of this time currently spent on Social Media toward educational functions?

Having considered the various debates surrounding the influence of New Media, particularly social media use amongst students, what is clear is the fact that they play an important role in shaping the behaviour and opinions of young people around the world, including Nigeria.

1.1 Higher Education in Nigeria

Education has been recognized as a basic human right since the 1948 adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human rights. Higher education in Nigeria comprises Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. Universities have been established for the training of professionals as well as high-level manpower needs of the country. Polytechnics were established purposely to train middle cadre manpower with technical skills while colleges of education were established to complement Universities in the area of teacher training for secondary and primary levels of education. Yaba Higher College was the first Nigeria institution to provide higher education to train Nigerians in the fields of Medicine, Teacher training, Agriculture, Commerce and Engineering. Before the establishment of Yaba College in 1932, the Colonial administrators in Nigeria had conveniently restricted the Nigerian educational system to only Primary, Secondary and Vocational levels of education.

Indeed, the establishment of the Yaba College for higher education was also criticized by the Nationalists, who felt that the College's curriculum was too narrow and therefore incapable of meeting the development needs of Nigeria. This argument was also based on the fact that "the certificate awarded by the

College had no recognition outside Nigeria and only qualified Nigerians as junior staff and assistants in the colonial civil service" … and … "fears were being expressed that the colonial government was implementing a deliberate policy to ensure that locally produced middle-level human resource from the college was of poor quality compared with those trained in equivalent institutions in the UK" (Taiwo 1982 cited by Okebukola 2010:2). This agitation gave rise to the establishment of the University College Ibadan, which was affiliated with the University of London in 1948. Approval was given by the colonial administrators of Nigeria for the transfer of about 104 students of Yaba Higher College to form the foundation students of University College, Ibadan, which is the first University in Nigeria. The University took off with Programmes in Medicine, basic science, arts, social science and education. Programmes such as agriculture, forestry, veterinary medicine, pharmacy, technology and law were later added in 1950.

However, the newly created University College of Ibadan was said to be British oriented as exemplified by its curriculum and its overwhelming expatriate staff. At independence in 1960, the first indigenous higher institution was established and named the University of Nigeria Nsukka. The mission was to create a University rooted in African life with the objectives of balancing vocational and rhetoric contents that will be Nigerian in content. This was followed with the establishment of other regional universities in the northern and eastern regions of Nigeria and the Lagos protectorate. These include the; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Ile-Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), University of Lagos. These three institutions of higher education established in 1962 are known as the first generation universities in Nigeria.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has major control of higher Education in Nigeria. According to Maigida (2012) a total number of 128 Universities are registered by the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC). Federal and State governments own 40 and 38 respectively while 50 Universities are privately owned. In 2010, the total number of students enrolled in Nigeria Universities alone was estimated at 1.5 million. Students normally enter higher institutions from age 18 and study for various degrees, certificates and diplomas. The typical duration of undergraduate programs in Nigerian universities depend largely on the program of study. For example, Social Sciences and Humanities related courses last for four years; Engineering, Law and Technology related courses are often run for 5 years, while courses like Pharmacy and Medicine take 6 years.

In Nigeria, three national regulatory agencies have been statutorily empowered to take charge of quality assurance within the higher education system. These are the National Universities Commission (NUC)-established in 1964, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTC) established in 1977, and the National Commission for Colleges of Education, established in 1989. The three regulate the Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. The laws setting up higher education institutions in Nigeria as superintended by these agencies accord the institutions concurrent powers to ensure the quality of process, product and services (Okebukola, 2012:3)

The purpose of these regulatory agencies is to assess general teaching and learning interactions (curriculum delivery) in all higher institutions throughout Nigeria in relation to producing national relevance and globally competitive graduates through the relevance of research undertaken by staff and students. Other functions of the agencies also include the deployment of e-learning and use

of new technologies components for teaching, learning and research; research ethics, code of conduct, regulations on plagiarism and intellectual property rights (Okebukola, 2006).

1.2 A Brief History of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Nigeria was established in, October 1962 by the then Northern Region Government of Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto. The vision of Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U) was proclaimed to be that of "a world-class University comparable to any other, engaged in imparting contemporary knowledge, using high quality facilities and multi-disciplinary approaches, to men and women of all races, as well as generating new ideas and intellectual practices relevant to the needs of its immediate community, Nigeria and the world at large" (A.B.U @50, 2012). Moreover, it was asserted that its mission would be to advance the frontiers of learning and break new grounds, through teaching, research and dissemination of knowledge of the highest quality.

A.B.U as it is popularly called has earned the reputation of being the largest University in Africa South of the Sahara because of its size in terms of land and the population of its students and staff. As at the 2012/2013 academic session, the university registered a total number of 39,366 students. The post graduate total enrolment was 8,709 with 2738 female post graduate students and 5971 male post graduate students. The total number of registered undergraduate students was 30,657 with 9540 female undergraduate students and 21,117 male undergraduate students. The University has 12 Faculties, 78 Departments and 10 Institutes. According to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Abdullahi Mustapha (2012: iv) "The various Faculties, Departments, Research Institutes and Centres,

Schools and Colleges, Service units, Administrative complexes and business outfits of the University have highlighted not only some of the achievements of the University but also the unavoidable challenges facing the Institution." The challenges faced by the University as stated by the Vice Chancellor stemmed mainly from inadequate materials and human resources to accommodate the growing rates of student population. However, in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), A.B.U is one of the leading Universities in Nigeria, having established the Iya Abubakar computer centre as far back as 1973 to facilitate digital learning processes in the University (See appendix F).

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

It has been argued that Social Media use, as learning tools is promising because youth participation with Social Media would foster learning that reinforces and complements what is taught in traditional classrooms. Social Media is said to foster important technological, educational and social skills, including confidence, leadership, and communication because it allows for creation and collaboration through blogs, social networking sites, YouTube, content communities and virtual worlds (Tynes, 2007:5).

However, while Social Media appears to present a new world of opportunities in education, it also presents a new wave of potential problems in education in both the short and long-term future. The problematic remains that both in the developed world, and in a developing country like Nigeria, the full benefits of New Media in the education arena is still conjectural. And this requires further research for better understanding and effective implementation. This

study, therefore, makes a case for the necessity of understanding the potential benefits or otherwise of Social Media use in higher institution, making use of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria undergraduate students as a case study.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Research

In order to obtain the benefits of Social Media while minimizing its pitfalls, there is the need to better understand the extent and impact of Social Media use among students and to identify solutions to the negative consequences that could result from the use of Social Media. The aim of the study is to provide an understanding of the usefulness and efficacy of Social Media in the educational enterprise in Nigeria.

The study therefore sets its objectives as follows:

- To map the Social Media in common usage by Undergraduate Students of Ahmadu Bello University.
- To assess the influence of the New Media on knowledge, attitudes and practices of Ahmadu Bello University Students.
- To examine the prospects of synergizing classroom teaching with Social Media in order to create effective learning among students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to guide this study, the following questions have been drawn;

1. What is the map of Social media usage by undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria?
2. What is the impact of new Media on knowledge, attitudes and practices of students of Ahmadu Bello University?
3. What are the prospects and challenges of Social Media as multi-method ways of communication within the context of higher education in Nigeria?

4. Can Social Media create negative consequences such as educational and moral decadence amongst students?

1.6 Justification of the Study

Given the increasing evidence that Internet technology is transforming societies, there is little reason to believe that Social Media will not be the defining innovation for education in the 21st century. Social Media does have the potential to significantly impact the field of education in both the short and long-term. This study is important and timely because there is a significant hole in our current knowledge about Social Media in higher education in Nigeria, and this research helps to close this gap. The gap in the literature lies at the cognitive benefit of Social Media use in classrooms, but that cannot be examined until educators identify why Social Media tools are not being used at the same pace as they are in informal learning environments. Thus, significant work is required to identify the potential advantages, consequences and appropriate use of Social Media by institutions of higher education in Nigeria. This study is intended to identify these aspects of Social Media for the institution of study.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on Social Media use among undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria. The study is done within the larger context of New Media communication and Education. This study focuses on only undergraduate students of Samaru campus and their Social Media uses as it relates to education. The focus on a single case study, or single institution in this case, presents a challenge in generalizing the findings to other institutions. Although the methods that are used to collect data may prove useful as a framework for

future research, the findings from this study may not be widely generalized. Additionally, Social Media is a growing and rapidly changing phenomenon and has been described as a "moving target" because of the rapid changes that takes place due to regular technological innovations. Thus, the findings from this study may be limited to a specific time or period in the evolution and adoption of New Media forms. In addition, the study is limited in its scope because only students of Samaru main campus are studied.

1.8 Definition of Terms

New Media: Is a catchall term for all forms of electronic communication system that range from GSM, Internet, etc. It refers to on-demand access to content any time, anywhere, on any digital device, as well as interactive user feedback, and creative participation.

Higher Education: Higher Education is also referred to as post-secondary education, tertiary education or third level education. It is the final stage of formal learning that occurs after secondary education. Higher education also includes undergraduate and postgraduate education. It is obtained at universities, colleges, polytechnics and institutions of technology.

Web 2.0: Describes World Wide Web sites that use technology beyond the static pages of earlier Web sites. The term was coined in 1999 by Darcy DiNicci and was popularized by Tim O'Reilly at the Web 2.0 conference in 2004. It is a web-based application, which allow users to generate information and also make

the process of information sharing interactive. It includes online applications such as blog, wikis, social bookmarking, media-sharing services, social networking, collaborative editing tools, syndication, and modification technology.

Social Media: This is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0, turning communication into interactive dialogue by allowing the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). It is a means of interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual community and Social Networking sites. Social Media utilizes social networking tools in addition to a number of other Web 2.0 applications such as wikis, blogs, content communities, and virtual worlds.

Virtual Worlds: Are platforms that replicate a three-dimensional environment in which users can appear in the form of personalized avatars and interact with each other as they would in real life (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Virtual world provides one of the highest level of social presence and media richness of all social media, examples include multiplayer online real-life games like *Second Life.*

Social networking Sites: Online platform that allows users to create a public profile and interact with other users on the website. Social Networking is one frequently utilized component of Social Media. The most visited Social

Networking sites in 2014 include Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LindedIn, Whatsapp and Ning.

Facebook: The most popular social networking site, founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. The site is free to members and derives it revenue from ads. There are three representation on Facebook; Profile, Pages and Groups. By using the search facilities, members can locate their facebook members and "friend" them by sending them an invitation. It is the most frequently used Social Networking website in the world and the most popular Social Networking website among college students (Facebook, 2013).

Guidelines: Guidelines are best practices, tips, and standards for users to follow. Guidelines are typically not mandatory; they can either be recommendations or can be part of the terms of use.

Policies: Policies may often require approval according to a set process. It can have a legal status and it can result in serious consequences when not followed.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in this study is concerned with researches that are in consideration of Social Media in education. The purpose is to ascertain what recent research has already been undertaken in the field and determine the gaps in existing knowledge. The historical evolution of New Media, education and technology, the Internet and Social Networking sites are examined with a view to situate the study in its proper context. The review also present preliminary observation of Social Media in Ahmadu Bello University along with youth democratic rights and the question of the digital divide.

2.1 The Evolution of the New Media

It is important in this section to highlight the fact that New Media is not completely "new" but it is a product and continuation of an on going process of technological development. New Media are shaped by society and it seems to be a product of a "continuous hybridization of both existing technologies and innovations" (Livingstone, 2005:11). As the product of an ongoing cycle of human action and available technical and cultural resources, New Media technologies are continuously renewed. "Today, the New Media has become an ongoing process of remediation in which older media are appropriated, refashioned or absorbed by the new, therefore simultaneously shaping the new and reshaping the familiar (Bolter and Grusin, 1999:34).

Indeed, earlier communication milestones have helped to change the way information is stored and transmitted. Technological inventions such as the Gutenberg press have changed the traditional notion of communication. Johannes Gutenberg's invention of mechanical movable type printing started the printing revolution and it is widely regarded as one of the most important events of the modern period (Childress, 2008:9). Gutenberg's printing technology as therefore allowed the mass-production of printed books and is economically viable for printers as well as making it available and affordable for readers.

This situation played a key role in the development of the renaissance and the scientific revolution that had laid the material basis of the modern knowledge-based economy and the spread of learning to the masses (Dominick, 2009:56). According to Dominick (2009:57),

> The printing press had a profound effect on the growth of scholarship and knowledge. Whereas access to handwritten textbooks was difficult, university students now had printed texts. As the number of books increased, so did the number of students who studied at a university. Literacy increased further. Interest in the classical works of Greece and Rome was revived as they appeared in printed books that were read by many. Books based on the scholarship of other countries appeared. The advances in mathematics made by Indians, Muslims, and Arabs were disseminated. Without the printing press the renaissance of the 16th century might not have occurred (Dominick, 2009:57).

The telegraph and telephone are also two related technologies that presaged many of the features of New Media. The Telegraph and telephone were the first devices that made possible instantaneous point-to-point communication at long distance through the use of electricity. Concerning the telegraph, Dominick (2009:45) states that "it may not be too much of an overstatement to contend that the telegraph introduced the notion of a "global village" that was to be popularized a century later by Marshall McLuhan." The telephone's

interconnected network of wires and switchboards also helped to conquer time and space with the added advantage of requiring little or no special skills for its use. The telegraph and telephone are forerunners of digital communication "what we today might call, to use an overworked cliché, the information superhighway" (Dominick, 2009:59).

Furthermore, the emergence and development of Radio and Television in the 1920s and 1930s served as an invaluable milestone that set the stage for mass communication. Radio was the first mass medium that brought entertainment and news into homes and work places due to its accessibility and affordability in both urban and rural areas. As was the case with radio, television also became very popular and served as an important entertainment and information medium and a major cultural and social force in most countries of the world. The advent of Walkman, Video Cassette Recorder (VCR), CDs and DVDs, Cable and Satellite Television, Polaroid and Digital Camera, Cellular Phones and Smart Phones etc. have all contributed to a shift towards more individually controlled and interactive media environment (DeLahunta, 1998: 1).

2.2 The Internet and the World Wide Web

At the centre of the New Media technology is also the development of a global system of interconnected networks called the Internet. Regarding the development of the Internet, Dominick (2009) states that "the development of the Internet meant that computers could send digital information to all parts of the globe. All of a sudden, a new distribution medium was available that permanently changed the media environment." He continues: "the Internet triggered a revolution in the way information is stored and transmitted. As a result, the

traditional mass communication media found themselves in uncharted waters and had to figure out how to cope with this drastic development."

Indeed the new digital age has had profound impact not only on the mass media but also on other institutions, businesses, groups and individuals. New Media scholars such as Lievrouw (2004), Manovich (2007), Castell (2002), Pettras (2007), Livingstone (2006), Ellison, (2009), LaRose (2010), Boyd (2006), have highlighted the beginnings, functions, impact and uses of the New Media across a diverse range of social, political, cultural and educational settings in their various studies and research. Lievrouw and Livingstone in their book titled, *A Handbook of New Media, (*2006), provide an insight into the emergence of the Internet as a hub of New Media.

Lievrouw and Livingstone (2006) traced the history of the Internet to the development of computers in the 1950s. The earliest versions of computers were designed solely for cumbersome mathematical calculations. Howard Aiken, a Harvard University Mathematician in 1940 created "Mark 1", which was the first multi-purpose digital computer (Dominick, 2006:276). Lister, et al. (2009) in *New Media: A Critical Introduction* and Lievrouw and Livingstone in *A Handbook of New Media* (2006), traced the advent of the Internet, as we know it today to the creation of ARPANET (The Advanced Research Project Agency Network). ARPANET was a system developed for the United State Department of Defense during the cold war. The idea behind ARPANET was to develop a communication network that could survive a nuclear attack.

The system was to enable every computer to connect to every other computer. Thus, an interconnected web of computer networks was created, such that, if one portion of the network happened to be disabled the rest of the network

could still function normally. The designers of the ARPANET had intended the system to link a relatively small, elite group of scientists. Thus, the users of this early network were primarily military personnel, selected scientists, engineers and researchers within some military bases and universities in the United States. Lievrouw and Livingstones describe the development of the network thus,

> The ARPANET project began in the late 1960s as a means to share data processing facilities at universities, military bases and other DARPA-funded research sites, via satellite and telecommunications networks. The system allowed researchers to move data files among sites and gave them access to remote computing facilities when local systems were unavailable or insufficient to handle a given job. The centerpiece of the system was the sabotage-resistant technique of packet switching, which divided files or data processing jobs into small chunks called packets. Packets were sent separately through any available network links, and reassembled into their original form at the destination computer. Packets could be moved through any open route among networked computers, even if some links or nodes in the network were damaged or unavailable. The ARPANET grew rapidly from 11 nodes in 1970 to almost 90 in 1985; each node connected many computers to the network.

However, as networked computing grew a barrier was said to be "created particularly between scientists and engineers and other university based scholars and researchers who recognized the potential benefits of high-speed asynchronous messaging for their own specialties" (Abbate 1999:34). Jennings (1989) quoted in Lievrouw (2006), observe that, "ARPANET had the negative effect of creating a have-have not situation in experimental computer research. Scientists and engineers carrying out such research at institutions other than the twenty or so ARPANET sites were at a clear disadvantage in accessing pertinent technical information and in attracting faculty and students."

Consequently, a consortium of non-ARPANET colleges and universities using IBM mainframe stabled BITNET. By 1985 BITNET connected about 600 computers in 175 institutions. "It is not limited to specific academic disciplines

and may be used for any academic or administrative purposes (Jenning et al. 1986:47). Abbate (1999) gives a detailed account of how the National Science Foundation built its own system using the Internet Protocol and hooked with other regional networks like BITNET and CSNET and was eventually linked to a supercomputer. Subsequently, the Internet was privatized in the late 1980s and it became opened for commercial, educational and entertainment uses.

Furthermore, the advent of the E-mail is said to be one of the developments that promoted the use of the Internet. Electronic mail, commonly known as e-mail is a method of exchanging digital messages from an author to one or more recipients. An email message consists of three components, the message envelope, the message header, and the message body. The message header contains control information, including email address and one or more recipient addresses. E-mails are not restricted to text, attachments such as graphics, pictures and spreadsheets can also be sent. E-mail is usually fast and cheap and is said to be the most widely used Internet resource. The PEW Internet Project (2007) estimated that more than 10 trillion e-mails messages moved through the net in 2006 only.

Scholars have also identified World Wide Web (www), which was developed in 1990 as one of the most important factors that enhanced the popularity of the Internet. The web is a system of interlinked hypertext that allow individuals access to web sites and pages that may contain text, images, video and other multimedia modes (Best, 2006). The purpose of the World Wide Web is to use hyperlink "to link and access information of various kinds as a web of nodes in which the users can browse at will (Best, 2006:12). Thus, individuals, social and educational groups, the academia and business organizations could create a

web site which users can access via navigational tools or browsers like Internet explorer, Mozilla, Outlook Express, Safari, Firefox etc.

The more recent Web 2.0 goes even further and allows users to do more than retrieve information but also actively participate in an interactive manner. While projecting into the future emergence of Web 2.0 in 1999, DiNucci in her article "Fragmented Future" writes that,

> The Web we know, which loads into browser window in essentially static screenfuls are only an embryo of the web to come. The first glimmerings of web 2.0 are beginning to appear, and we are just starting to see how the embryo might develop. The Web will be understood not as screenfuls of text and graphics but as a transport mechanism, the ether through which interactivity happens (DiNucci, 1999:20).

Indeed the Web 2.0 has popularized the Internet by offering its users the possibility of online collaboration and debate via features such as Search, Link, Authoring, Tags, Extension and Signals. All these features also enhanced the use and operation of Social Media web sites, which created a fundamental shift in the way people communicate. The Social web consists of a number of online tools and platforms where people share their perspectives, opinion, thoughts and experience (MCAfee 2007). Applications such as podcasting, blogging, tagging and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, 2go, WhatsApp, Ning, YouTube, Orkut, MySpace, Meetup Badoo etc, tend to promote more interactivity and participation among Internet users. These Social Media tools will be discussed further later in this chapter.

What is apparent is that Web 2.0 was designed to enhance the participation and power of users by providing users with more user-interface, software and storage facilities. This explains why Bart Decern (2006) referred to

Web 2.0 as "participatory Web" and regards the World Wide Web as "web-as-information source.

Although some Internet experts have mentioned other advanced Web such as Web 3.0, they are yet to concretely distinguish it from Web 2.0. Interaction and participation are fundamental elements that have created tremendous changes within the sphere of communication and the context of human development.

The benefits of people being equipped with communication tools in order to make social changes by contributing to, and influencing decisions that affect them remain at the heart of the New Media revolution. Herein, one may say lie the reasons for the agitation for a change in the conventional communication paradigm. Scholars such as Freire (1973), Habermas (1979), Rogers (1976), Boal (1979) Rheingold (1993), Chambers (1997) Abah (2003) Nair and white (1995), Livingstone (2005) etc. have in one way or the other emphasized the benefit of creating space for people to freely participate in the process of communication and development. Undoubtedly, technological developments are currently playing a large role in the on-going process of social, economic, cultural, political and educational transformation that is happening in most societies of the world.

2.3 Virtual Communities: The beginning of a New Sense of Community

A number of scholars Rheingold (1993), Donath (2004), Boyd and Ellison (2007) and LaRose (2011) have pointed out that New Media expands the potential for human learning/ knowledge and have also greatly enlarged the scope of the sense of community. The educational, social and cultural implications of the digital age are indeed considerable. First, the notion of communication and

community has been redefined. In the past people developed friendship based on local geography. But the Internet makes possible virtual communities based on shared needs and interest rather than locale. J. C.R Licklider, MIT professor and futurist wrote about a future technology he called the "Galactic Network" in 1962. Licklider predicted a future with individuals communicating through computers more effectively than they could otherwise do face-to-face. According to Licklider,

> What we do say is that we, together with many colleagues who have the experience of working on-line and interactively with computers, have already sensed more responsiveness and facilitation and power than we had hoped for, considering the inappropriateness of present machines and primitiveness of their software. Many of us are therefore confident (some of us to the point of religious zeal) that truly significant achievements, which will markedly improve on effectiveness in communication, are now on the horizon (Licklider, 1962:113).

Licklider went further to predict the rise of on-line interactive communities where individuals would be connected to each other not only by space but through shared interest. Licklider's prediction "was hastened by the development of personal computer" (Vitak, 2008:39). Howard Rheingold (1993) in his book, *The Virtual Community*, defines virtual community as "social aggregations that emerged from the net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough with sufficient human feeling to form personal relationships in cyberspace" (Rheingold, 1993:5). Ridings et al. (2002: 273) offer a more comprehensive definition of the term. Virtual Communities he said are "groups of people with common interests and practices that communicate regularly and for some duration in an organized way over the Internet through common location and mechanism."

While much of the earliest communication occurring over the Internet was institutional in nature, i.e. government and academic, these virtual communities allowed regular users to post comments and interact. These interactions according to Ridings et al. (2002) are not based on a physical location as can be said of traditional communities but instead brings together users from a wide range of locations, backgrounds and groups who shared common interest. Donath (1999) in her contribution believes that virtual communities provide many of the characteristics of traditional communities without limitations of time, place and identity. According to her "a member can connect from anywhere in the world at anytime of the day. And because of the absence of a physical presence, a user's virtual identity is equal to the amount of information provided in text band forum" (Donath, 1999:13).

While the traditional definition of a community is a geographically circumscribed entity, i.e. neighborhoods, villages, virtual communities are normally dispersed geographically. Although some online communities are linked geographically, and are known as community websites, much as there are community radio or television. Most virtual communities cut across countries, race, socio-political and economic boundaries. This type of computer-mediated communication is often characterized by four essential elements of speed, interactivity, reach and anonymity. These components allow people to locate and talk to others with similar interest, thereby forming and sustaining virtual communities. The element of speed, for instance, means that information can travel very fast. This therefore encourages users to share more information with a wide range of audiences. Virtual communities do resemble real life communities

in the sense that they provide support, information, friendship and acceptance between virtual strangers (Wellman 1999:5).

The earliest virtual community site called Usenet was created in 1979. Usenet is said to have grown exponentially in many ways similar to the ways in which Facebook's user base grew "from initially connecting two computers and processing a few post per day in 1979 to handling 300,000 messages by 20,000 people per day in 1999 (Smith 1999:196). Describing the expansion of Usenet, Smith 1999 contends:

> In addition to the sheer size of the community, Usenet also saw its member base grow from solely a domestic site to a global forum, connecting users from around the world who would, in all likelihood, never have met in the "real" world. In 1999, fully 59 percent of the site's participants lived in location outside the US (Smith 1999:197).

Like Usenet, the WELL community is another virtual community, which was launched in 1985. It brought together an otherwise disparate group of users to form "a real community in a digital space" (Vitak, 2008:41). Rheingold (1993) reflects on his experience in the introduction to his book *The Virtual Community (1993),*

> Finding the WELL was like discovering a cozy little world that had been flourishing without me, hidden within the walls of my house; an entire cast of characters welcomed me to the troupe with great merriment as soon as I found the secret door. Like others who fell into the WELL, I soon discovered that I was audience, performer and scriptwriter, along with my companions, in an ongoing improvisation. A full-scale subculture was growing on the other side of my telephone jack and they invited me to help create something new (Rheingold, 1993:2).

The key difference between the earlier Usenet and WELL is that Usenet permits anonymity while anonymity was not allowed in WELL. All post and comments are done only under the name registered with WELL. This policy

"most likely encouraged a closer sense of community among users than in the much larger and less certain world of Usenet (Vitak 2008:42).

The freedom to express one's self may have played a fundamental role in the development and spread of virtual community use among both old and young people. However, the idea that online interaction provides an opportunity for participation among individuals with common interest and also provides freedom from judgment remains an issue of debate in present day discussions of the Internet and virtual communities. Rheingold claims, "the Internet offered a level playing ground of sorts for individuals who, for whatever reason struggled to interact in face-to-face situations." According to him:

> Because we cannot see one another in cyberspace, gender, age, national origin and physical appearance are not apparent unless a person wants to make such characteristics public. People whose physical handicaps make it difficult to form new friendships find that virtual communities treat them, as they always wanted to be treated; as thinkers and transmitters of ideas and feelings. Beings not carnal vessels with a certain appearance… (Rheingold, 1993:26).

Rheingold's assertion has since been superseded with the introduction of New Media tools such as Skype and Yahoo messenger where people see one another but the lack of real world knowledge of fellow users may prompt users to still feel free and talk more openly about otherwise difficult subjects. For instance, university students may find it easier to discuss educational challenges. Boys as well as girls may open up about issues bordering on body image, sexual relations etc. with virtual strangers. In the case of the WELL, Rheingold offers the example of a member of a health community who posted about his young son, who was diagnosed with leukemia. Members of the virtual community quickly responded by researching the disease, and as Rheingold writes, "over the weeks, we all became experts on blood disorder" (Rheingold, 1993:22).

Similar instances can also be drawn from "Stars from the Well" a Facebook group, where students of Theatre and Performing Arts Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, post questions concerning class assignments and members of that group also have online discussion concerning any posted subject matter. Virtual communities can in so many ways provide an ideal medium for these types of relationships because information can easily be posted and response period can be very quick. Users can thus easily give and receive support. However, it does not necessarily mean that there is a strong bond among the members because they may remain relative strangers despite shared interest.

On the one hand, Internet optimists like Howard Rheingold, (1993), Spears (1992). Ridings (2002) have focused on the opportunities that virtual community present by suggesting that the Internet can solve many of the issues of information, differentiation and integration found with traditional communities. Spears (1992:13) argues that: "it is true that verbal social cues are limited within these forms of communication, but online relationship is influenced more by time and by participants perceived similarity than by the limitations of a text-based environment."

On the other hand, pessimists such as Wellman and Gulia (1999), Smith (1999) and Foster (2000) have argued that on-line worlds and virtual interaction would replace real world realities, and that people especially children and adolescents who are said to be more vulnerable would be incapable of differentiating between the two worlds. Some other critics like Arinze (2002) believe that online relations are not as valuable as offline ones because there "is less socialization". According him, "interaction via a computer could never equate face-to-face interaction particularly in an African context where communal and

physical interaction is central to every day existence" Wellman and Gulia (1999) further argue that "those who pursue such a relationship lose contact with "real life" (Wellman and Gulia, 1999:169).

Concerns with these kinds of interaction also include the possible acts of verbal aggression, promotion of immorality, promotion of suicide among young people, issues of child abuse by predators, fraudsters and identity theft. There is little doubt that young people can easily learn and get influenced by what they see, particularly if the media reinforces it. The "always on" syndrome created by Social Media use could potentially create several problems. Social Media researchers within this field are also concerned that students may replace face-to-face social interaction, such as going out with their friends, with social technology, which leads to sitting at home and texting their friends on their cell phones or surfing social networking sites. The biggest detriment of Social Media use has been identified as the considerable amount of personal information that is revealed in Social Media, especially real names, age, and offline location. This situation according to (Huffaker, 2006) makes young people susceptible to three kinds of social danger: Cyberstalking, Cyberbullying, and Cyberpredators.

Huffaker (2006), presents Cyberstalking as a growing danger to all Internet users. He when describes Cyberstalking as the use of the Internet or email to stalk, harass or threaten another individual". A survey of 1,500 teenagers, ages 10-17 by Li (2007) suggests that one in seventeen teenagers who regularly use the Internet have been harassed or threatened online and over 25% of young people had been cyberbullied. Cyberbulling is the use of technology for social cruelty, which can include harassment, impersonation and stalking (Li 2007:16). Another concern involves actual sexual predators and paedophiles using Social Media to

contact youth. Cyberpredators use the Internet to hunt for victims to take advantage of them sexually, emotionally, psychologically and financially. Li (2007) found that one in five teenage Internet users had been approached or received a sexual solicitation within a year of Internet use. "Sexting" the act of sending sexually charged messages or images via cell phone has also become a new trend amongst teenagers.

At the level of educational development, a troubling issue with New Media tools such as smart phone use in the classroom and the academic environment generally is distraction from learning processes. More so, cell phones are associated with cheat-notes during examination (Lenhart 2010:34). Use of data without authorization leading to plagiarism is also a challenge of integrating social media tools with education, particularly where students are concerned. In addition, a study by Kord (2008) found that Social Media has a negative influence on academic performance, potentially caused by the amount of time students were spending on social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter; 2.5 hours per day according to this study. Kord's study also found that there was minimal social networking interaction between students and staff. Lenhart (2010) reports that some schools in the United States, for instance, have tried to minimize cell phone distraction by eliminating cell phones on school property or allowing phones at school but not in the classroom.

One major problem that has emerged particularly, among young users of the Internet is the issue of Internet addiction. For instance, in 2007 South Korea opened a "boot camp' (rehabilitation center) for young people who are said to be suffering from Internet addiction (Fackler, 2007). Similar psychiatric centers are springing up across Africa, Asia, Middle East, Europe and the United States. The

first Internet addiction center in the United States was opened in Seattle in 2008; Turkey stabled its own center in 2010, while Kenya's center began operations in 2011.

According to a research conducted at the University of Maryland's Internet Center for Media and Public Agenda in the United States, most of those addicted to the Internet cannot do without it. The research was conducted in 2010 and carried out amongst 1,000 college students in 10 countries around the world. The countries include Uganda, Mexico, China, the United States, Argentina and the United Kingdom. The participants were said to have reported "feeling isolated, distressed, confused and harboring feelings of addiction when their Internet access was cut for a day" One of the student participants was reported to have said, "Clearly, I am addicted and dependency is sickening. Between having a Blackberry, a laptop, television set and an iPad, I have become unable to shed my media skin" (Internet Center for Media and Public Agenda, 2010, Report). The study goes further to suggest that most of the children accessing social media sites subjected themselves to sexual suggestions or pornographic materials, in effect, making them candidates for pornographic addiction.

Another research carried out by *CRADLE: The Children Foundation*, an organization in Kenya, revealed that more than 40 percent of children in Kenya are addicted to the Internet. Statistical data in their 2011 report shows that children online activities include downloading music, playing games and visiting social networking sites. According to the chairperson of the Kenya Counseling Association, Catherine Gachutha, "Internet addiction in Kenya is worse than substance abuse". She adds that:

> Incidentally, the number of youth addicted to various Internet sites surpasses that of those addicted to drugs and alcohol. This is because most of them are idle and the cost of accessing the Internet is much lower than drugs and alcohol. The problem is apparently multi-faceted because aside from pornography, the patients often find themselves addicted to online relationships. The end result is that some derive satisfaction from just watching porn and end up sacrificing their marriages and relationships. (Gachutha, 2011:3).

Gachuthat concludes that the bulk of Internet addicts seeking rehabilitation say they cannot control their urge for pornography, entertainment and social sites such as Facebook, Twitter etc. In 2009, the global Web Metric Site, alex.com ranked Facebook, YouTube and Twitter in the top 10 sites visited by people in Africa. While there are yet to be established Internet addiction centers in Nigeria, the Kenya scenario may be developing fast in Nigeria without appropriate studies and attention being paid to the situation. The typical price of a bottle of beer in Nigeria is about 200 Naira; the minimum cost of cigarette is 500 Naira per pack, while Internet cafes charge as low as 50 Naira per 30 minutes of Internet service. More so, most Internet literate secondary and university students can access the Internet for almost free via Wi-Fi using their cell phones and personal computers.

2.4 The Reign of Social Networking Sites (SNSs)

At present, Social Networking Sites seem to be patronized by almost everyone with access to the Internet, regardless of age, race, social status or physical location. Since their introduction, SNSs such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, 2Go, Bebo, YouTube etc have attracted millions of users, many of whom have "integrated these sites into their daily practices" (Ellison, 2007:1). The key technological features of these SNSs are said to vary because "most of

these sites support the maintenance of pre-existing social networks and also connect people based on shared interest, common language or shared racial, sexual, religious, or nationality based identities" (Ellison, 2007:2). Currently, there are no accurate data regarding how many people use SNSs worldwide. Although marketing research indicates that SNSs are growing exponentially (Comscore, 2008:18). This growth has prompted many corporations and businesses to develop interactive communities that connect individuals based on shared business interest, needs and experience. LinkedIn is an example of such sites that is opened up for business opportunities among its users.

Some scholars such as Boyd and Ellision (2007), Livingston (2006) LaRose (2010) have examined SNSs in order to understand the practices, implications, culture and meaning of these sites in their various contexts. Boyd and Ellison (2007) define Social Networking Sites (SNSs) as web-based services that allow individuals to do the following:

- Construct a public or semi-public profile with a bounded system
- Articulate a lot of other users with whom they share connection
- View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

On the whole, most Social Networking Sites (SNSs) focus primarily on creating connection, friendship and interpersonal relationships. They are also geared towards sharing latest news and activities. Social Networking Sites vary. Some are intended primarily to establish connection between users, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and MySpace; others are directed towards a specific function such as Flicker for photo sharing and YouTube for sharing video (Boyd and

Ellison, 2007). In addition to the variation in purpose across Social Networking Sites, the functions, which can be performed, varies but many have similar features.

It is almost impossible to chronicle all available Social Media platforms in this research, however, it is apparent that some major players have emerged from the numerous Social Networking Sites: Twitter, MySpace Facebook Ning, Bebo, Flickr, Youtube, LinkedIn, Orkut, Meetup. Whatsapp, hi5, Friendster, Pinterest, 2Go etc. Each of these sites serves a general audience with the primary purpose of connecting to other users and most often to friends. The popularity of these websites vary over time and country, with the websites described "as most popular" changing as frequently. Twitter is an online social networking service that enables its users to send and read text-based posts of to up to 140 characters, known as tweets. Jack Dorsey created it in March 2006. The service rapidly gained worldwide popularity, with over 300 million users as of 2011 (Taylor, 2011).



Demonte (2009:3) described Twitter as the "SMS of the Internet". He further described Twitter as the foremost site that set the trend for real-time services, where users can broadcast to the world what they are doing, or what is on their minds within a 140-character limit. YouTube allows users to create a profile and share connections with friends. The main purpose of the site is posting and sharing user-generated content with a general audience. Profiles and connections is a secondary concern for YouTube users, and visitors to the site are not required to create an account or be friends with another user in order to view videos (Lehartz, 2012:47). Since its inception, MySpace has had significant ties to the music community, and these connections have remained an important part of the site's appeal to young people. "On April 3, 2008, MySpace announced an online music venture with three of the four largest record labels to offer MySpace users access to both free music and paid-for downloads" (Stone and Leeds, 2008).

MySpace differentiated itself by regularly adding features based on user demand and by allowing users to personalize their pages (Boyd, 2006). 2Go is a

mobile application site, which allows users to chat, view pictures and exchange files through mobile telephone. The networks is claimed to have reached 15 million memberships as at February 2012. 2Go's status settings is similar to that of Facebook and Twitter with features like Chat rooms which users can use to connect to other chat networks including Facebook and Google Talk.

MySpace is reported to have held the title of the most popular social networking site based on the sheer number of registered users. While reports vary, most claim that as of the beginning of 2008, MySpace has more than 100 million active users, compared with 69 million active users on Facebook then, and 52 million active users on Twitter, where an active user is defined as "a registered user who has logged the Web site in the past month" (Eldon, 2008:10). Over the years however, Facebook is said to have continuous growth on its site, while MySpace, YouTube, and Twitter have seen its membership drop. WhatsApp and its membership are also still growing and some of its fans have regarded it as the post-Facebook network but it still cannot be compared with Facebook in terms of membership.

2.5 The Birth of a Medium with a Face

One site that has gained a significant advantage in numbers of users seems to be Facebook. Facebook started in a Harvard dorm room in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg who was a student at the time. The main purpose of the site at its inception was said to "connect fellow Harvard students through an online network that allowed students to post a photo and personal information, such as where they lived on campus and the campus organizations to which they belonged. By the

following day, more than 1000 students had signed up; by month-end, that number reached approximately 75% of Harvard students" (Cassidy, 2006:23).

As the site's popularity grew, the network of colleges expanded, and by the end of the year it had reached one million users. In September 2006, Facebook executives made the decision to open up the site to everyone, rather than those in specific networks, and membership soared from "12 million active users at the end of 2006 to 845 million active users by February 2012" (Cassidy, 2006:23). The site currently ranks as the number one most-trafficked Web site in the world (Internetstats.com, retrieved 2013).

Facebook offers some unique features and modifications from other social networking sites. As with all SNSs, members create an online profile and control the amount of information they choose to reveal to other users. This information can include simple information as their hometown, college name and birthday, to as specific as relationship information, favorite movies, individual hates, likes and dislikes, etc. Users can communicate with friends and other users through private or public messages and a chat feature. A status bar allows users to update their status at any time with what they are doing, how they are currently feeling, or any other information they want to include. This status is typically viewable by all of the users' friends or general public, depending on individual page setting.

The Wall is one of the features of Facebook that allows friends to post comments, links, and images on a user's profile page. Depending on the privacy setting, anyone who can see a user's profile can also view that user's Wall. In 2007 Facebook began "allowing users to post attachments to the Wall, whereas the Wall was previously limited to textual content only" (Der, 2007:9). Photo tagging involves associating pictures of an individual with his name and his

profile. Users can create or join groups that may interest them. For instance, a group called "Stars from the Well" is made up of both past and present students of the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This group was formed in 2010 and students both current and old can join the group to discuss past and current events taking place at the Ahmadu Bello University Studio Theatre called Drama Village. Members also pass out information about graduation, deaths, marriages, illnesses of their members and nonmembers alike.

The Facebook platform also allows for the creation and growth of applications, which allow users to interact, to bring members to the site more often and to encourage non-users to join the site. The Scrabulous application, for example, allows friends to play Scrabble online, with no time limit. Taken together, these features add up to a website to which members frequently return. "On average, two-thirds of users log in at least once every 24 hours, and users spend about 20 minutes on the site each day" (Cassidy, 2006:24). Facebook is said to have also managed to win the trust of its users by prioritizing their privacy with detailed account and privacy settings. Unlike sites such as MySpace, which allow members to search for and view the profiles of any registered user, Facebook limits searches to only those within that user's networks, unless specifically approved by that user.

Cassidy (2006) quotes Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg as saying "these restrictions encourage users to reveal more personal information about themselves than they would had anyone been able to see their profile…giving people control over who sees what helps to increase over-all information flow" (Cassidy, 2006:25). Another privacy aspect in Facebook is in the area of identity

verification. Although a potential Facebook user does not need to belong to a specific network to join, she or he must verify a relevant email address before joining the network. Donath and Boyd (2004) discuss the importance of such verification processes, especially in relation to the connections between users, as a way of ensuring honest self-presentation online.

Facebook is currently being described as the fastest growing "country" because it is said to be the leading Social Networking Site, having surpassed 900million users as at the end of 2012 (checkfacebook.com), while Facebook announced that it passed the one billion users mark in September 2013. According to PEW Research (2013), two-third of online American adults (67%) are Facebook users, making Facebook the dominant Social Networking site in the United States. Statistics show that while both Internet penetration and Facebook use is over 60% in the United States, Nigeria has less than 3.5% of both. This of course is not too surprising going by the high disparity in broadband availability and access. Ironically, Internet and Facebook usage Statistics put Nigeria as having the highest Internet and Facebook users in Africa (internetworldstats.com).

2.7 The Digital Divide and Social Media in Nigeria

Some people in Africa perceive Social Media as an American phenomenon because most of the networking sites are concentrated in the United States. This situation gives further support to the arguments for scholars like Andres (2010), Oyelaran, (2005), Soniake, (2004), Roycooft (2008) and Anantho, (2003) who have previously buttressed the digital divide argument in relation to technological development, particularly between western societies and African societies. The idea of the digital divide is one that brings to the fore issues of

technological disparity, accessibility and Internet literacy. While, the divide is present within country, between countries and between continents, the most prominent disparity seems to be between Africa and the rest of the world (Oyelaran, et al. 2005). The report of the World Summit on the Information Society (2005) indicates that less than 3 out of every 100 African use the Internet, compared with an average of 1 out of every 2 inhabitants of the G8 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and US).

Africa had some 22 million Internet users in 2001, an Internet penetration of just 3%. While Europe's Internet utilization is 11 times higher. The statistics also show that there are more than 8 times as many Internet users in the United States than the entire African continent. Despite the fact that the African continent is home to 57 countries, it is reported to have fewer Internet users than France alone. (State of the Internet, 2012) This explains why "many people in the west still see Africa as a vast offline or non-Internet compliant continent" (Ignatius, 2010:4).

However, over the last 12 years, the digital divide is said to have shrunk in terms of Internet users (Ignatius, 2010) even though accessibility in most African countries like Nigeria is largely restricted to urban areas, particularly in higher institutions and the business sector (State of Internet, 2012). Estimates of the number of broadband subscribers vary, Nielson Online citing Lange (2010:2) writes that "some 7.3 million people accessed the Internet via their mobile phones during the second and third quarter of 2008" while Business Monitor International (2010) estimate a much lower broadband market in Nigeria, judging that there were 1.5 million 3G subscribers in Nigeria at the end of 2009 but 3.4 million broadband subscribers overall. The difficulty of estimating the number of

broadband subscribers arises from several reasons. One of such reasons is that operators do not make basic data information available. Despite this uncertainty, it is clear that the number of Internet users and subscribers is growing rapidly as prices for services and devices fall.

The rise in Internet use in Nigeria, for instance, can be noticed in the growth of mobile phones with Internet connection and the proliferation of Internet café's in urban areas due to the increased demand for both business and educational information. The Internet is thus seen as a tool that has immense potentials in encouraging and facilitating teaching and learning. Hence, in terms of education it is becoming "increasingly feasible to think in everyday terms about the practical application of learning, which rely upon Internet and mobile communications" (Demirlilex, M 2009).

Mathieu Plourde, Instructional Designer, in *Wikis in Higher Education*, states "in order to promote deeper student learning and leverage technology for teaching and learning, it is now more than ever time to start rolling out read/write web technologies" (Plourde 2008:6). Social media technology is presented not merely as a valuable way to learn and participate in class, but also as an essential part of preparing for future career. Social Networking sites is for instance also said to have the potential to "foster successful adjustment by helping new students identify like-minded friends and obtain useful information from peers about classes and study strategies (Liccardi et al. 2009, cited by LaRose 2011).

Other researchers Reingold (1993), Donath (2007), Joinson (2008), Boyd and Ellison (2007), Ellison et al. (2007), Lamp et al. (2008) have also found that students employ SNSs as a way to both formally and informally discuss academics. Even though "Facebook is not a formal system implemented by the

University, but rather a commercial publicly available system that students usually join for social reasons" (Joinson 2008:43). Ellison et al. (2007) sees Facebook as a potential tool that may facilitate "Collaborative Sense-making" among students because the majority of students in the United States use Facebook. What then does this mean for students in Nigeria where Internet accessibility and Social Media literacy is still relatively low.

According to Jensen in her book, *ICT in Africa: A State Report* (2003), "Africa has the world's lowest use of the Internet and information technology, yet, these offers the greatest hope for the future. The primary commodity of the 21st century will be information; information translated into knowledge, education and savoir-faire" (Jensen, 2003:5). Jeffery Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at New York's Columbia University, supports Jensen when he says " I actually think that we've turned the corner on the digital divide… a gap that seemed to be widening pretty relentlessly is now going to be narrowing in the coming years and I think narrowing quite quickly" (Sachs, 2010:98). Sachs's statement can be corroborated by the rate of new Internet subscribers that are signing up with mobile phone services in Nigeria. Most people can now make monetary transactions using their smart phones and students can now also search their university web sites for information, check their email and Facebook pages using Internet compliant smart phones.

On the whole Africa and Nigeria does appear to see an increase in access to Internet services. This development of course cannot be divorced from the rapid growth witnessed in the telecommunication sector. For instance, there was no mobile phone firms operating in Nigeria in the year 2000 but by 2005 there were four; MTN, ZAIN, MTEL and Globacom, which is locally-owned. With a

mobile phone of less than 4000 Naira, individuals can connect with families and friends anywhere in the world. This development has in so many ways boosted the growth of different sectors of the Nigerian economy, particularly educational development.

Sani Al-Basheer, the Director of the Development Bureau of the ITU in his "Weekly Trust" article states that "we've seen the relationship between the penetration of these services in a country or in a region and the economic wellbeing of that region" he continues with his optimist assessment of the digital communication in Nigeria when he says that,

> I think the fundamental premise is that if people have access to information and people can communicate better, there is a general principle that they can better their living. In a global world today, its really about being able to use your brains. If you're able to expose people to access to information in a global platform a lot of interesting things can happen (AlBasheer, *Weekly Trust* News Paper, Saturday, 16 July 2011).

Indeed, Nigeria from the International telecommunication Union, (2012 Report) appears to see an increase in Internet access despite the challenges of broadband capacity and poor connectivity. More so, there is fast spread of high-speed broadband connections within some higher institutions of learning. For instance, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria, installed a Fiber Optic Internet connection in 2010. Since then students and staff have enjoyed a much faster Internet connection. This was made possible when the ICT directorate won a £1.4 million MacArthur Foundation grant for the implementation of an optical fiber intranet for the university.

2.7 Social Media and Higher Education

The use of technology has historically been linked to the field of higher education and the use of Social Media has continued this trend. The use of technology in education has been studied at least as far back as 1974 (Gagne, 1974) but began to resemble the current use and format in the late 1990s, with the introduction of Microsoft Windows platform (Martinez-Aleman and Wartman, 2009). The introduction of the personal computer made computer more user-friendly and accessible. This reduced the skill required to operate a computer and is said to have "ignited the use of personal computers on college campuses" (Lehartz, 2012). The link between technology and education necessitates paying attention to how students, in this case, students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, use Social Media and how it impacts their education.

The term "Social Media" and "Social Networking" is often being used interchangeably without a clear definition. In general, the term "Social Media" seems to be most often used as a broader umbrella term that includes many Web 2.0 functions, including Social Networking. The term Social Media will be used in this study to address a broader category that contains social networking sites, blogs, YouTube and Wikis. While "Social Networking" will be used to describe social networking sites used primarily as a means of communication and building community. For example a blog would be considered a Social Media application used to share a message but does not necessarily fit the description of a social networking site.

Facebook, on the other hand, is used primarily as a communication device and to build community, so it is considered a social networking website as

well as being part of the broader category of social media tools. According to Lehartz (2012:11) "social networking applications are automatically part of social media, but the inverse is not necessarily true". Having a clear understanding of these concepts ensures a proper focus on the research area. Social Networking sites have become an important part of most people's lives in terms of entertainment, information and education. Unfortunately there are very few literatures on Social Networking Site use amongst students in Nigeria. This present study is therefore important because it attempts to fill the gap on SNSs literature in Nigeria.

However, Waheed (2012) did a study on teacher's usage of Internet as a teaching tool in class in Nigeria. Waheed Oluwa (2012) in his article "Assessment of Internet Uses, Practices and Barriers for Professional Development by Agricultural Science Teachers in Lagos State" carried out a study on the utilization of the Internet by agricultural science teachers in Lagos State Nigeria focusing on uses, practices, and barriers. A survey was developed based on literature and was administered to 300 agricultural science teachers in Lagos schools. Of the 275 returned survey, only 130 (47.2%) teachers indicated that they have access and use Internet for teaching and learning activities in classrooms. The remaining teachers (144) reported that they have not used the Internet at all for the purpose of teaching and learning in the classroom. The study found that agricultural science teachers in Lagos State have not fully utilized the Internet because of barriers related to time factor, accessibility, and facilities (Waheed, 2012).

LaRose at el. (2011) in their article "Facebook Fiends: Compulsive Social Networking and Adjustment to College" investigates the relationship between

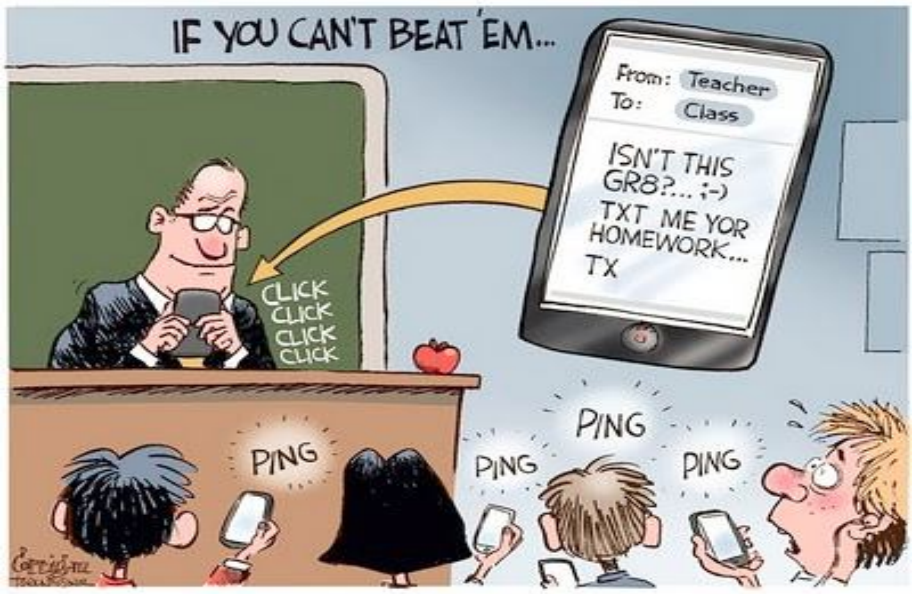
Social Networking Sites use and academic, social and psychological adjustment in a population of first year college students in the United States. Facebook use was defined in this article as "overt, observable acts of SNS activities." This can be linked with the amount of time users spend on Social Networking Sites per day or week or the number of friends the user has accumulated over a period of time. The study points to the fact that compulsive use of Social Networking sites had a negative relationship with all academic adjustment dimensions (motivation, performance, attachment) (LaRose, 2011). Thus, compulsive use is what is potentially problematic for educational outcome rather than habitual involvement with Social Networking sites particularly, amongst first year college students in the United States.

Minocha (2009) provided a series of case studies on social media software use at English Universities, including the use of virtual world website "Second Life" and blogs by students to create group discussion, a Facebook group specifically created for first year English students, a library blog using the social bookmarking website "Delicious", a social network specifically designed for doctoral students, and blogging as a support network for trainee teachers, and the use of social photo sharing website "Flicker" as a tool for photography students. It seems doubtful that all of these innovative uses of Social Media will prove to be successful. However, with time and additional research, it will be interesting to see which of the many uses of social media in higher education listed by Minocha (2009) will prove to be successful and become part of the educational experience.

Lampe et al (2011) in their research "Student use of Facebook for Organizing Collaborative Classroom Activities" examine how undergraduate students use Facebook to engage in classroom related collaborative activities,

such as arranging study groups and learning about course processes. The research was done in order to learn how Facebook might be used as an "informal tool that students use to organize their class room experience." Hsiu-Tin Hung et al. (2009) explored how social networking technology can be used to supplement face-to face courses as a means of enhancing student's sense of community and, to promote classroom communication practice in the context of higher education.

Their study titled "Educational Use of Social networking Technology in Higher education" indicates that the majority of participants developed strong feelings of social connectedness and expressed favourable feelings regarding their learning experiences in the classes where Social Networking sites were used as a supplementary tool. The picture below illustrates how teachers can use Social networking sites as supplementary teaching tool.



A survey conducted in 2011 by The Babson Survey Research Group drawing from 1000 college and University faculty members through out the

United States revealed that more than 80 percent use social networking sites in some capacity (Facebook, YouTube, Wiki etc). More than half of the faculty members surveyed use Social Networking site as part of their teaching. The Babson survey notes that 30 percent use Social Networking sites to communicate with their students while more than 52 percent use online videos, blogs and Wikis during actual class time. However, the limitation of this research may be attributed to the number of colleges and Universities surveyed compared to the size and number of Universities in the United States.

In order to appropriately understand the relationship between Facebook use and the sense of community among university students, this researcher, along side Anna Popp and Christine Carmichael conducted a quasi-experimental research in the United States in 2012. The study titled "Community Dynamics and Social Media Use" was designed to investigate whether Facebook can be used as a tool to promote sense of community in university classrooms. A quasi-experimental design approach was developed using two classroom populations that were identified in the Department of Communication at Michigan State University. Both classrooms were introductory undergraduate classes.

These classes were selected based on the similarity of their course subject matter, their introductory nature, and the shared professor teaching both classes. Additionally, one of the classes had a Facebook group specifically created by the professor for the class to utilize as part of their participation grades, while the other selected class did not. This provided the opportunity to examine differences in sense of community between the two classes to determine whether the use of a Facebook group had any effect on class participation and sense of community. A

survey instrument was developed and questions were asked to assess prior Facebook use, propensity to use Facebook for collaboration in the classroom, etc.

The questionnaire was administered to both classrooms on the same day, during scheduled class times by members of the research team. A total of 78 viable responses were collected. Even though the overall result of the data after analysis was not too significant, the result does indicate that the Facebook group has been successful in getting the academic needs of their members met and whenever there was a problem in the classroom, members could easily solve it.



It is also important to mention that there are several important educational Social Media sites, which are focused primarily for the enhancement of student's academic performance. Already, sites such as YouTube host virtual classrooms of a number of universities where video lectures from eminent professors are available free of charge. *Edmodo* is an online social learning network, which provides useful learning tools for students. The *Khan Academy* is another example

of how Social Media can provide a free and fast way to learn about almost any subject online.

The site deals with questions and answer, quizzes and online tests; there is also student feedback as part of the site. www.Academia@edu.org is also another very useful educational Social Media that provides opportunity for collaboration and learning, particularly for higher institution students or graduates who are interested in research and knowledge about current trends and issues in the academia.

In Nigeria, a new educational Social Networking site called "Kranta" debuted in March 2013. "Kranta" was established by Elara Technologies is an educational site that "affords members access to academic resource, including past questions of various examinations in Nigeria, ranging from common entrance to professional examinations for free" (Oke, 2013:19). According to the CEO of Elara Technologies, Damola Olajide, his firm decided to design the site, www.kranta.com, because of the obsession with non-educational Social Media contents by students, which is attributed to their dismal performances in examinations in recent times. He further said because "it would be virtually impossible to stop students from using smart phones or visiting social media online, the firm is launching the socio-educational portal and making learning pleasurable."

The site is loaded with Social Networking features including profiles, activity feeds, comments, and group functionality. The site also gives visitors a comprehensive assessment of one's performance in test done online with statistical analysis. It also grants users access to a large database of educational materials in various fields of learning through an aggregating search engine and

makes it easy to find people who share study-related materials or establish new contacts.

The firm's Chief Operating officer, Opeyemi Obayan, said he is extremely happy that the project has been completed. According to him, "in less than three months since we launched the site, the portal has about 3,000 registered and active users" (*The Guardian*, 2013: 19). While 3,000 memberships do not sound exciting compared to Social Media like Facebook with over 900 million members and counting, Kranta is very recent and is indeed a remarkable development for education in Nigeria.

Taken together these researches and developments underscore the fact that Social Networking sites are becoming dominant and essential to learning. Closing the digital divide between the West and Africa is therefore imperative since educational advancement can only thrive if everyone has equivalent access to critical communication and educational networks.

2.8 Social Media, Youth and Democratic Rights

Social Media have also proved its value in social and political movements. For instance, Social Media had a profound impact on politics in the United State where Barack Obama raised millions of dollars in campaign funding through Facebook and Twitter. In the Egyptian revolution, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube also played a pivotal role in keeping people connected to the 18-days revolt that began on January 25th 2011 and toppled Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. In Tunisia, YouTube was used to spread the video and pictures of Mohammed Bouazizi, the youth who set himself on fire on 17th December 2011 in the Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid in protest against unemployment and

government harassment. Viswakarma (2011) in his "Daily Times" article titled "Arab Revolution and Social Networking Sites", posits that,

> As the crusade for democracy and basic human rights rages on, today's youth have a lot of tools at their disposal which the earlier crusaders did not posses. The Internet has become a conduit for disseminating the idea of democracy, which was till now alien to the Arab civilization. From Morocco to Yemen, the Arab world is burning, and fueling the fire of change is the 21st century panacea "the social media". These agents of change helped the Arab civilization achieve what they could not for decades in just a few days or weeks. Be it Facebook, Twitter, Google or the blogosphere, they have found themselves central to the action in an unprecedented way…the influence of social networking was such that an Egyptian named his newly born child "Facebook" (Vishwakarma, 2011:4).

As the quest for democratic rights rages on from Tunisia to Bahrain, from Libya to Yeman; across Africa and the Arab world, social networking sites seems to have given a voice and platform for ordinary people to challenge authority, be it political, social or religious. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, a woman activist, Wajeha Al-Huwaider, posted a video on YouTube of herself driving in protest against government ban on women drivers. She was put under house arrest for illegal driving and women's right activists used SNSs to protest her arrest and also to collect petitions against the ban on women drivers.

The 2012 fuel subsidy protest in Nigeria or Occupy Naija (following the example of the United States Occupy Movement), was also fueled by individuals and groups that are using SNSs to pass on information concerning protest gatherings and police brutality around the country. The protests saw students, workers, unemployed, artisans becoming citizen reporters and i-reporters on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube using computers and mobile phones. Bloggers and online reporters provide commentaries and documents on their web sites regarding the protests.

Ordinary citizens like Dally Moore and Gloria Yarjen were actively sending out instant messages and photos on Facebook about happenings within and outside their states. While other people were encouraged to pass on the word via methods like SMS, MMS and Messenger on mobile phones.

President Goodluck Jonathan's Facebook page, was also bombarded by citizens, who vented their anger against the president for removing fuel subsidy. Naijablog's Jeremy Weate responds to the unexpected strength of the protests when he says "what we are witnessing in Nigeria is a radical change where activists gradually take over the baton from unionist stalwarts. Nigeria's young population is increasingly more active than their parent's generation…at long last, there is accountability pressure building up in the system". The pressure mounted on the President from all directions may have prompted him to compromise but there is no doubt that social networking sites played a role in what some critics called the "aborted Nigerian revolution". Other government officials have also been brought to what can be described as "the public courtroom" with the help of Social Media, regarding their social responsibilities in Nigeria. An example is the recent "Oga at the top" saga, where Social Networking Sites such as YouTube and Facebook were used to publicize a senior government official who seems to be ignorant of the website address of his parastatal.

Despite the importance of Social Media in the social and political sphere, some cyber skeptics have argued that the Internet and Social Network Sites cannot be used to stop the rise of autocratic regimes. "Autocrats have mastered the use of cyberspace for propaganda. Worse, they've learned to mine online information, such as Facebook profiles for intelligence purposes" says Evgency Morozov, a cyber skeptic (Newsweek.com, May 10, 2010). While the Internet and Social

Media is a vital source of alternative critical information to educate and mobilize the public, it is at the same time subject to surveillance by a lot of governments and security apparatus. Evgency's point can be supported further by the on going massive cyber spying done by the United States government on its citizens and various other countries. For example, in the United States, security agents spy on billions of emails and activities on Social Media. The recent Edward Snowden whistleblower scandal is a handy example. According to James Petras (2011:1) "the Internet and Social Media is not a free and secure source of information, debate and discussion. In fact as the Internet becomes more effective in mobilizing the social movements in opposition to the imperial and colonial state, the greater is the likelihood of police-state intervention under the pretext "combating terrorism"

As described in this section, there are many potential benefits that can be achieved through the use of Social Media in higher education. Additionally, the benefits associated with Social Media have likely not been fully identified yet. Understanding these benefits is important because educators need to use any tool available to aid in connecting with students. The potential advantages of Social Media are still significant despite some of the apparent setbacks pointed out by Petras (2011) and Morozov (2010). It is therefore important to help the youth, particularly students in higher institutions to build educational and social competencies through Social Media tools. To do this, institutional problems such as infrastructure, curriculum and organizational strain that such uses will put on university's network and resources, particularly in a developing country like Nigeria needs to be addressed. According to Owen and Moyle (2008:23), changes are needed at every level; "pedagogy, curriculum, policy, infrastructure, organization and governance, at the local institution as well as government level."

2.9 New Media in Ahmadu Bello University

The adoption of New Media is a phenomenon that has become important to the operations of many professional institutions and non-professional environments in Nigeria. The fundamental function of the New Media is evident from the ample ways in which it facilitates human interaction through effective and efficient means of communication. Many institutions of learning in Nigeria have so far started integrating the New Media, particularly Social Media such as Social Networking Sites, Blogs, Message boards, online video, etc, in their communication strategies in order to strengthen and augment the quality of their academic and social interactions with students and staff within and outside the institutions. In this regard, students in Ahmadu Bello University are clearly not left out in discovering the significance of the utilization of Social Media for both social and academic purposes.

Ahmadu Bello University joined the host of institutions that leverage ICT to improve its academic and organization process since 1979 with the creation of the Iya Abubakar Computer Centre (See appendix F). In 1999, however, Ahmadu Bello University articulated a plan for the provision of Internet connectivity, which was supported by a Federal Government grant. According to a staff of the Ahmadu Bello University ICT Directorate, Gabriel Plang (2011) in an interview with this researcher, the actual implementation of the ICT and internet connectivity within the university commenced in 2002 with the completion of the VSAT project (of 128 kbps uplink and 512 kbps downlink capacity) and network

center equipment along with a few remote sites (See appendix G). However, there was no full integration of the network centre to all proposed radio sites because the ICT Infrastructure could deliver Internet access to only less than 5% of the university community. As such most of the university students relied on private Internet cafes inside and outside the university campus.

An ICT directorate was established in March 2006, having established the need for a strategic focus on the computerization, multimedia and networking in the university. In 2007, the ICT directorate won a £1.4 million MacArthur Foundation grant for the implementation of an optical fiber intranet for the university. This has therefore ensured the take-off of an appropriate and resourceful ICT policy and programme for the university. The specific functions of the Ahmadu Bello University ICT Directorate include the following:

i. Consolidated data centre services as well as implement and manage shared services; develop, implement, and manage a new consolidated internet protocol network to provide a more robust, efficient and secure university wide infrastracture.

ii. Provide enhanced and expanded telecommunications services to meet the growing needs of departments and units in the university.

iii. Assist departments and units in providing secure, reliable university wide IT operations.

iv. Promote cyber and network security through the development of a university wide Network and security operations center.

v. To promote innovative use of information technology that adds value to the academic environment

At present the university is able to cushion the multi-media needs of its students through the creation of a digital centre for each of its 12 faculties (See appendix H). These digital centres are used by the students for word processing

and online registration. Social networking via the internet is also common amongst the students of Ahmadu Bello University. Most students of the university network through Facebook, Twitter, and other social blogs using the university New Media facilities. Gabriel Plang, explains that students have access and support to Internet facilities via the digital centers and hotspots. In addition, there is now in operation a robust optical fiber based campus network, which stretches about 35 kilometers linking the teaching hospital at Shika with Samaru and Kongo campuses of the University. This connection is an inter-campus 10GB scalable backbone with 65+ locations, having a minimum of 2GB up link connectivity comprising of the Faculties, Departments, Research Centres, Central administration, libraries, digital centers, School of Postgraduate Studies and the student's hall of residence. According to the Ahmadu Bello University *News Bulletin* (2013:11)

> The Campus network includes Internet for e-learning and multi-media applications funded under ETF Special Intervention Project. The new ICT infrastructure will enable ABU to deliver high-speed Internet access to more than 40,000 students and staff as well as facilitate enhanced e-learning, on line applications and multi-media communication services.

In addition, competent ICT staff including software and hardware experts are reported to have been employed and trained to man the robust facilities. The report contained in the *News Bulletin* (2013:11) further states that "there is indeed no doubt that with the current ICT infrastructure on ground, Ahmadu Bello University is second to none in Nigeria." Even though Internet connection is yet to reach some of the areas stated in the report like student's residence areas, it is hoped that the university Internet and Intranet networks would eventually cover

all these areas and improve the educational and social needs of both students and staff.

2.10 The Role of University Administration in Regulating Social Media Uses

The challenges associated with the use of Social Media in higher education have been attributed to the lack of policy guidelines and procedures. What then is the role of guidelines in an educational institution and why and how are guidelines needed to guard against the negative issues that can occur through the use of social Media? Getzel and Guba (1957) cited in Lehartz (2012) define policies and guidelines as methods that administrations use to set rules and expectations. Policies and guidelines can also be seen according to Lehartz (2012:3) "as tools that can aid in executing multitude of functions across a diverse enterprise, including the use of Social Media."

The role of administration is seen as being able to guide and oversee a social system. Schools are social systems and they are also part of broader social systems within communities. The administration is responsible for defining roles and setting expectations to set a direction for these social systems. Preliminary research on Social Media policy in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, found that the institution does not currently have any Social Media guidelines in place. This initial finding is not surprising because research shows that majority of institutions both in developing and developed countries do not have a social media policy.

Kaplan (2010) found that only 13% of the 132 higher institutions surveyed in the United States report having a policy in place that covered Social Media. The survey by Chretian, et al. (2009) of medical school administration found that only 38 percent of schools had any type of guidelines for the use of social networking sites. The follow-up study by Kind, et al.'s (2010) examined the websites of all 95 accredited medical schools in the United States and found that 95.45% of the schools had a presence on Facebook. However, use of the accompanying policies and guidelines occurred at a much lower rate, with researchers being able to locate social media guidelines at only 10.16% of the institution. It may therefore be difficult to precisely identify the scope of the issue with limited research that has been found thus far. However, it seems clear that the development of guidelines for the use of social media is lagging behind the adaptation of Social Media applications in institutions of higher education around the world.

A connection can therefore be made between the lack of Social Media guidelines and some of the negative issues previously discussed like plagiarism, immorality and identity theft. Creating policies in addition to guidelines for the use of Social Media is therefore important. Whether an organization has policies regarding social media or not seems to be dependent more on an awareness of the issues, rather than a lack of knowledge of the process for establishing policy. This research will assist in creating awareness in this direction, particularly in Ahmadu Bello University and Nigeria, Zaria Nigeria. However, further research is needed in this area since policies and guidelines are not the focus of this study.

2.11 Preliminary Observation on Social Media Utilization among Ahmadu Bello University Students

Students in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria are not left out in discovering the significance of the utilization of the New Media for both academic and non-academic purposes. Social networking via the Internet is common amongst the students of Ahmadu Bello University. The social web consists of a number of online tools and platforms where people make on-line friends, share their perspectives, share photos, update their status, share opinions, thoughts and experiences with a wide range of audiences. Social Networking sites (SNSs) are able to maintain user bases in tens of millions and often serve either a general audiences i.e. Facebook or a specific interest such as love-matching sites or sites for weight watchers.

Most students of Ahmadu Bello University network through Social Media and other social blogs using either their smart phones, Internet cafes or the university ICT facilities. To illustrate this point further, the media of social interaction encompasses such technologies as computers, Internet, iPods, iPads, Smart-Phones; and such applications as video games, search engines (Google, Wikipedia) Facebook, MySpace, Whatsapp, Skype, Linked, Zynga or Twitter etc. Most youth in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria also seems not to have phobia for the New Media technology probably because New Media devices are user friendly. Presently, it appears that students in Ahmadu Bello University frequent five major social network sites; Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Pinterest, WhatsApp and 2Go. Although WhatsApp and 2Go are more recent networks but

they are becoming popular because their user base among students seems to be growing faster.

Students in the university are also using Social Media to create or join associations and groups that interest them. An example is a group called "Stars from the Wall", made up of mainly past and present students of the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (See appendix G). Prince Nathan Kure formed this group in 2010 and both former and current students of the Department are joining discussions on past and current events. The group currently have a total of 204 members and these members use the forum to learn, chat, meet old and new acquaintances and also pass on information on graduation, death, marriages, illnesses of their members and non-members alike. It is a forum where students generally discuss social and educational issues.

What is however not clear is why Social Media is still not being harnessed in formal learning environments like Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This situation alludes to issues of access, infrastructure, and other organizational matters. It is thus also necessary to examine the current policies and those being considered to encourage and/or regulate the use of Social Media in education, particularly within the context of the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Having built a foundation by examining related literature on New Media, the Internet, Virtual communities, Social Networking sites, as well as examination of the digital divide question and Social Media use in higher education, the researcher will proceed to discuss the theoretical framework of this research.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

As stated by Creswell (2003), a researcher must start a project with clarity about how the data associated with the study will be understood and viewed. In order to examine Social Media use among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, a theoretical framework is constructed using Participatory communication theory. This theoretical framework is used as a guide for the exploration of the research questions. Other theories such as Constructivist learning theory and Transformative learning theory are relevant within the context of Media and Education, and are discussed in this section. However, Participatory Communication theory is used as a framework for this study.

2.2.1 The Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivist has been defined as a learning theory that attempts to explain how learners learn by constructing understanding for themselves (Jonassen, 1994). Constructivist learning theory appears to be a synthesis of critical learning, behavioural change and cognitive learning theories. As a philosophy of learning, constructivism can be traced to the eighteenth century work of the philosopher Giambattista Vico, who said that humans could understand only what they have themselves constructed. On his part, Thanasoulas (1994) extends the definition of the concept when he contends, "constructivist theory takes an interdisciplinary perspective, in as much as it draws upon a diversity of psychological, sociological, philosophical, and critical education theories" (Thanasoulas 1994:1)

The major proponents who are said to have developed a clear idea of what constructivism is are Jean Piaget *The Language and Thought of the Child (1926)*, John Dewey in *Experience and Education* (1938), Montessori in *Education for a New World* (1946) and Lev Vygotsky *Thought and Language* (1962). The Swiss psychologist, Jean Piaget, is of course one of the earliest theorists of constructivism. In his theory of Cognitive Development (1955), he demonstrated how children pass through four stages in their development - Sensory-motor, pre-operational, concrete-operational and the formal-operational. These processes occur not through direct instruction, but rather through the child's own mental activity and internal motivation to understand.

This theory helps immensely in understanding the mental capacity of children at various ages and how to engage them through age-appropriate activities. For instance, at 0 to 5 years children can begin to explore the world around them and express their views through body language and physical expressions. From 6 to12 years girls and boys can express their views and actively learn about the world through exploration, questioning and access to information. 13-18 year olds can be active social actors and citizens, improving their local and national communities. Furthermore, the principles of Constructivism are embedded within the notion of authentic activities, social negotiation, student centered learning, interactions between teachers and students and learning materials as well (Abdal-Haqq, 1998:34). Abdal-Haqq argues further "constructivism gives teachers another perspective to rethink how students learn and to focus on process and provide ways of documenting change and transformation."

Kim (2005) in her article titled "The Effects of a Constructivist Teaching Approach on Student Academic Achievement, Self-Concept, and Learning Strategies" cites several studies supporting the success of the constructivist approach. Most of the researchers cited by Kim (2005) indicate that students who learned through the constructivist problem based and inquiry learning method showed better retention of knowledge than those who learned through traditional methods. The principle of constructivism can easily be applied to the ways in which young people interact and learn from the New Media and the Internet.

The Internet, for example, provides teachers, students and learners in general with abundant materials for optimal learning. Students can be exposed to multiple perspectives through collaborative social negotiations with their peers online, within social networking sites or virtual communities. More so, in order for students to develop their mental and social capabilities and to improve their problem-solving skills, it is important for them to be exposed to complex environment, which Social Media could provide. In this light, constructivism, which is a broad theory that synthesized multiple theories, can easily be applied as a framework for research like this one.

However, the constructivist approach to learning is not without its critics. Mayer (2004) has argued that not all teaching techniques based on constructivism are efficient or effective for all learners and that constructivism is often used inappropriately. Mayer (2004: 15) states that, "I refer to this interpretation as the constructivist teaching fallacy because it equates active learning with active teaching". Instead, he proposes that learners should be cognitively active during learning and that instructors should use guided practice.

Krischner (2006:21) agrees with Mayer when he describes constructivist-teaching methods as "unguided methods of instruction". Krischner argues that constructivism is "an example of fashionable but thoroughly problematic doctrine that can have little benefit for practical pedagogy" (Krischner, 2006:56). Nevertheless, the role of the teacher in this theory is that of the facilitator whose role is to aid the students in understanding. Teachers following constructivism must challenge the student by making them effective critical thinkers. This is certainly the view of Paulo Freire.

2.2.2 Transformative Learning Theory

Transformative learning offers explanation for change in meaning structures that evolve in two domains of learning based on the epistemology of Habermas's communication theory. First is instrumental learning, which, centres on learning through task-oriented problem solving and determination of cause and effect relationships. The second is communicative learning, which involves understanding the meaning of what others communicate concerning values, ideals, moral decisions etc.

To facilitate transformative learning, King (2005) states that, "educators must help learners become aware and critical of their own and others' assumptions. Learners also need to be assisted to participate effectively in discourse. Discourse is necessary to validate what and how one understands, or to arrive at a best judgment regarding a belief." In this sense, learning is a social process, and discourse becomes central to meaning making. King continues that,

> Effective transformation depends on how well the educator can create a situation in which those participating have full information; are free from coercion, have equal opportunity to assume the various roles of discourse, become critically reflective of assumptions; are empathetic and open to other perspectives; are willing to listen and to search for common ground or synthesis of different points of view; and can make a tentative best judgment to guide action. These ideal conditions of discourse are also ideal conditions of effective learning (King, 2005:43).

Transformative learning theory encourages education that fosters critical reflective thought and imaginative problem solving. Discourse is learner-centered, participatory and interactive and it involves group deliberation and group problem solving (Cooper, 2003:4). Transformative learning tools such as role play, group projects and case studies are said to be designed to foster participation in small-group discussion to assess reasons, examine evidence, and arrive at a reflective judgment. This method, according to Mezirow (1995:5), "encourages critical thinking in discourse with focus on imagining alternative perspectives and creating an environment in which learners become increasingly adept at learning from each other and at helping each other learn in problem-solving groups." The educator in this situation is supposed to function as a facilitator who fosters peer collaboration and provides equal opportunity for participation.

According to Mezirow (1995), transformative learning is not an add-on. It is meant to help the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his or her own values, meanings and purposes rather than to uncritically act on those of others. A number of critical responses have emerged against Mezirow's theory of transformative learning. One criticism is from Robert Boyd who claims that Mezirow's theory grants rational critical reflection too much importance. Boyd (1998) advocates for a framework of transformation learning

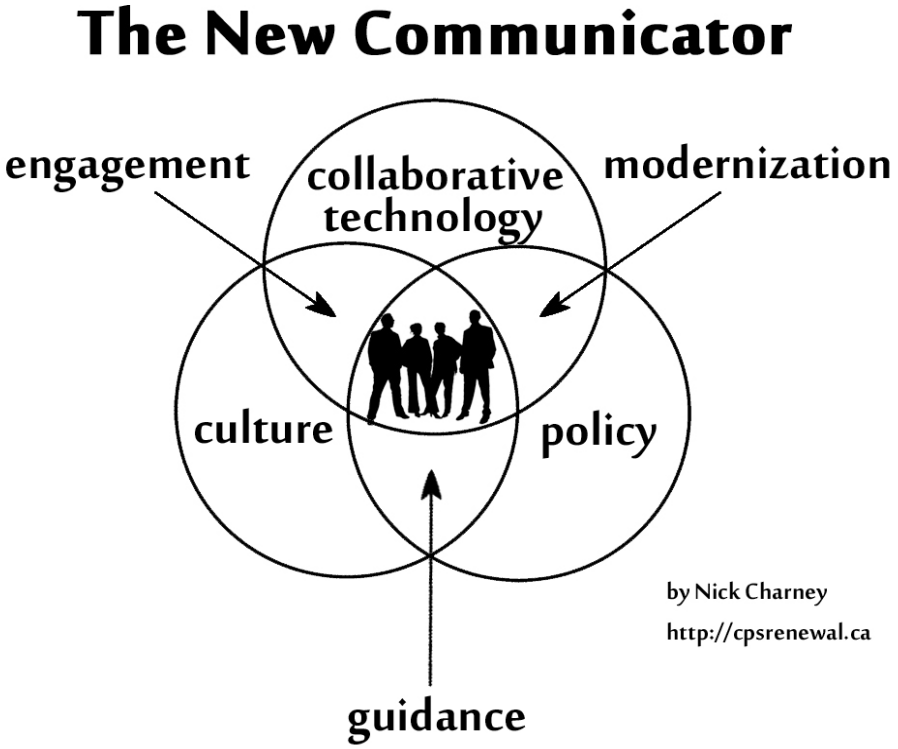
that moves beyond the emphasis on reason and logic to a transformation learning that is more psychosocial in nature. According to Boyd,

> Transformation should be a fundamental change in ones personality involving the resolution of a personal dilemma and the expansion of consciousness resulting in greater personality integration. This calls upon extra-rational sources such as images, symbols to assist in creating a personal vision or meaning of what it means to be human (Boyd and Meyers, 1998:13).

These two views of transformative learning in this researcher's opinion are not really contradictory or mutually exclusive. One advocates a rational approach that depends primarily on critical reflection whereas the other relies more on intuition and emotion. Basically, both utilize rational processes and imagination as part of a critical and creative process. The European Charter for Media Literacy can also be appropriately cited in this discourse because it is explicitly educational and also suggests a more reflective and critical engagement with young people as it concerns New Media and education (Euromedia, 2004). The European Charter describes its aim in terms of "Literacies" at the same time underscoring the importance of criticality. The charter identifies three inter-related strands, often referred to as the three Cs. These are:

1. Cultural: broadening learners' experience of different kinds of media form and content.
2. Critical: developing learners' critical skills in analyzing and assessing media output.
3. Creative: developing learners' critical skills in using media for expression and communication, and for participation in public debate.

The interpretation of these three Cs may vary but for the purpose of this study, the researcher wishes to draw attention to the notion of criticality in the context of Social Media literacy and pedagogy. The diagram below can be used to illustrate this point further.



The movement from critical theory into critical pedagogy is said to "often signal a distance from mainstream practices, to alternative views, and often encompasses a progressive or radical critique of the status quo" (Burnett and Merchant, 2011: 43). In education, the notion of "critical pedagogy" (Freire, 1985) has been used to describe ways of working that aim to raise awareness of how everyday lives and actions are constructed and constrained through the apparatus of power. The goal of critical pedagogy from this point of view, can be described in terms of emancipation, participation and creating new spaces for dialogue. According to Giroux quoted by Burnett and Merchant, 2011:43) "the act of criticality involves finding "spaces" where meanings can be "re-written, produced and constructed rather than merely asserted". Critical approaches are

important to Social Media within the educational context; a critical perspective could be used by this researcher to interrogate the competing discourses which surrounds Social Media which has been linked to higher levels of motivation, affective learning, and a more positive classroom environment for students.

It is critical thinking that Paulo Freire seeks when he called for the deconstruction of the Banking System of education. In the Freirean pedagogy there is no room for teaching "two plus two equals to four," Freire describes such as rote pedagogy which is an uncritical form of learning. He believes that it is dehumanizing as it views learners, both children and adults, as empty receptacles to be filled with expert knowledge, criticizing this as the "banking" mode of education, in which "deposits" are made by experts" (Freire, 1973:56). He therefore advocates problem posing as a means to represent to people what they know and think, not as a lecture but as an inclusive problem-solving process. Paulo Freire also emphasizes that the theme underlying dialogic pedagogy should resonate with people's experiences and issues that are salient to them, as opposed to well-meaning but alienating rhetoric.

This leads the researcher to the theory of Participatory Communication as the theoretical framework of this research. Scholars such as (Chambers 1992, Burkey 1993, Dagron 2001, Melkote 1991) have argued that Participatory Communication theory is a step ahead of other learning theories. What then is Participatory Communication theory?

2.2.3 Participatory Communication Theory

Arguments that Social Media offer some new and exciting possibilities for educators have previously been stated in chapter two of this study. Scholars like Livingstone (2007), Davies and Merchant (2009), Boyd and Ellision, (2008) LaRose (2010), and Greenhow (2009), have emphasized this point. Burnett and Merchant (2011:1) further broaden this discourse when they assert that;

> Clearly, the potential for Social Media to support new and extended forms of participation and collaboration that could promote learning is attractive to those who embrace student-centered ideologies, and those who believe that traditional structures of knowledge and power are loosening.

In media education, scholars like Jenkins et al. (2006) explore the notion that new technologies can help to support new kinds of participation. Jenkins et al (2006) uses the term "participatory culture" to capture this theme, underscoring the importance of active participation and collective intelligence in youth engagement with what he called "popular media". In a paper written for MacArthur Foundation, Jenkins et al (2006) describes a participatory culture as one in which members "believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another" (Jenkins et al. 2006:3).

The paper written by Jenkins (2006) is based on the argument that new communications technology has transformed the lives of many, and that new skills and understandings are necessary for full participation in the digital world. Jenkins et al (2006) further argue that, because of what they call "the participation gap" these skills should be incorporated in the school curriculum. This argument gives further support for the necessity of a study such as this.

Hitherto, a host of scholars (Chambers 1992, Burkey 1993, Dagron 2001, Melkote 1991) have tried to articulate the problems inherent in the top-down approach to development and communication and have responded by providing people's participation as an effective alternative to the conventional, horizontal models of communication and development. For Nair and White (1993:12), development communication needs to be human-centred rather than media-centred. This implies the abandonment of the persuasion bias that development communication has inherited from modernist theories, and the adoption of a different understanding of communication based on participation. It is therefore important to elaborate on the concept of participatory Communication approach.

It embodies multiple levels of entry regarding intervention and communication in order to involve all stakeholders in the social change process. This approach starts from the bottom-up and establishes open forms of communication on the basis of trust in order to mobilize and organize participants based on common goals for change (Butney 2005:11). The application of Participatory Communication opens up the debate on participation and what it means to achieve genuine participation. According to White (1999:14), participation involves facilitating the active involvement of different individuals, community groups, together with other stakeholders and the many development and research agents such as NGOs and CBOs working with the community and decision makers.

Participation is further defined as the full realization of the right of people to self-determination. Participation means all stakeholders, women, youths, children and even the poor and the less privileged should have an active role in

the development process (White, 1999:34). Burkey (1996:50), commenting on participation, also explains that,

> The essence of participation in the development process is the need for "the poor", "the powerless", the "dispossessed", and the "dependents" to become self-reliant. Self reliance means doing things for one's self, maintaining one's own self confidence, making independent decisions either as an individual or within the context of a collective group to which each member voluntarily aligns him or herself.

Participation is further defined by the United Nations Human Development Report, (UNDP, 1993:27) as people being closely involved in the economic, social, cultural and political processes, which influence their lives. This provides new opportunities for citizens to influence the processes that affect their lives and also presents new challenges (UNDP, 1993:28). However, the road to participation is and has always been complex, just like the way in which the concept generates a lot of scholarly contestations (Cornwall cited by Okwori, 2004:1). In this regard, Kumar (2002:23) argues that while there is a virtual unanimity on the need for people's participation in development, there is a wide spectrum of views on the concept of participation, its models, approaches and the ways of achieving it. The issue surrounding participation is that, while some scholars clamour for a clear definition of participation, others claim that participation, as espoused by its theorists, is not inclusive of all categories of people.

The participation-as-an-**end** approach has a wide appeal among scholars and researchers alike. They argue that participation must be recognized as a basic human right that should be accepted and supported as an end in itself and not just for its results (Melkote, 1991:237). Diaz-Bordenave (1977) advanced this thinking further when he argues that participation is not a fringe benefit that

authorities may grant as a concession, but every human being's birth-right that no authority can take away, deny or prevent.

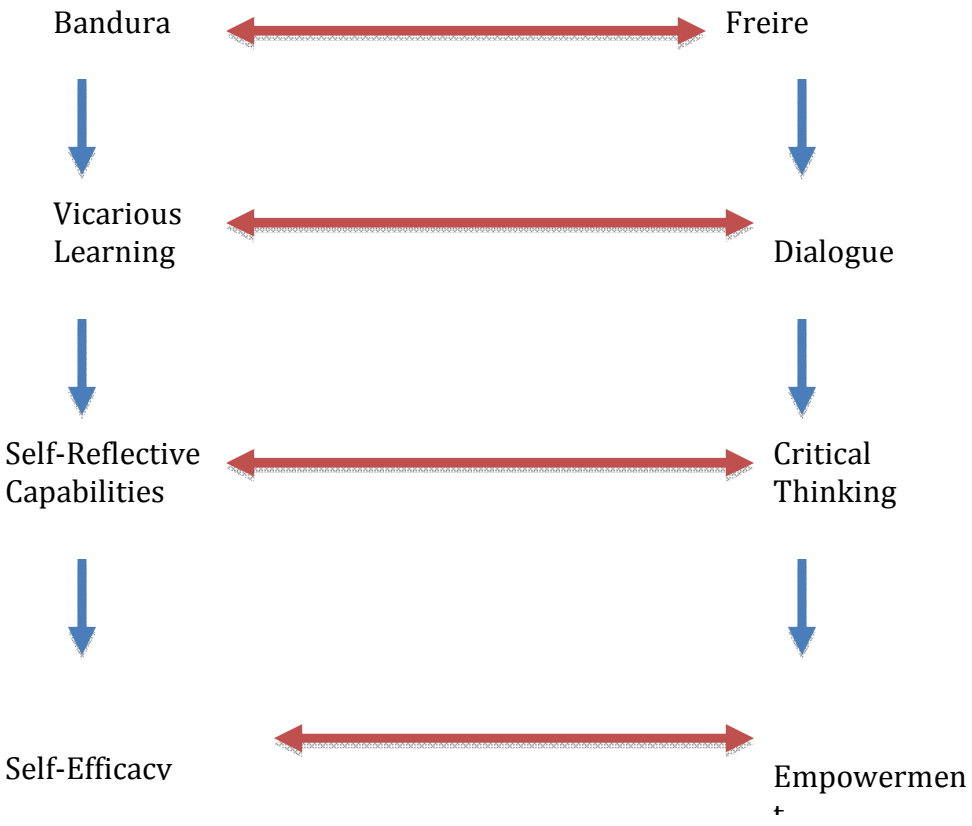
Nair and White (1993:29) oppose the notion of participation as a *means*. They believe that participation as a means is an approach through which the people may not be expected to participate in identifying the problems or designing a development programme, thereby denying the involvement of people in the development process and, furthermore, reducing it to a process whereby people are externally manipulated to serve the ends of authorities in charge of such programmes.

On the contrary, Oakley et al. (1991:34) argue that there is strength in the two positions. The state that, "as a means, participation enables people to be involved and helps people to reach certain goals in objectives of development. Whereas as an end, participation develops the capacity of people to take decisions that affect their lives." For Oakley et al, the emphasis is to get people to have the ability and capacity rather than the achievement of predetermined projects. Despite the seeming resolution of the differences between the two positions by Oakley et al., Okwori (2004:2) still argues that participation, as an end is the ideal destination.

Scholars and practitioners have also realized that there are various levels of participation. The many ways that development organizations interpret and use the term "participation" can, according to Pretty et al. (1995:53), be categorized into seven clear types. These range from manipulation, passive participation, participation for material incentives and participation by consultation. These processes, for Rahnema (1992:58), are superficial and fragmented and have no lasting impact on peoples' lives. Other levels of participation are self-

mobilization, functional participation and interactive participation. Pretty et al. (1995:60) argue that the latter, i.e. interactive participation is the ideal since, according to them, "it allows for groups to take control over decisions that affect them". Interactive participation is indeed central to the principles of genuine participation and Social Media is said to be important for enhancing participation and learner interaction, allowing for networks and friendships to be developed, which are important aspects of classroom learning.

Theoretical Framework



Participatory Communication theory essentially encapsulates the concerns of all other related theories that have been discussed earlier, it can serve the purpose of a conceptual guide because it blends very well with theoretical postulations and arguments across both Social Media and education discourses.

The similarities of views, perspectives and approaches are clearly articulated in instances where the two fields share a common ground in terms of the need for young people to explore their environment in a creative, interactive and participatory manner.

Finally, Participatory Communication theory applies appropriately as a theoretical framework for this research, on the basis of this study's concerns to understand the potentials of Social Media use among young people within the context of education.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research methodology adopted for this study is a multi-method design that allows for the combination of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches. The motivation for adopting a mixed approach stems from the researcher's observation that these combination can allow the researcher to thoroughly investigate and understand people within their social and cultural context using both numerical and in-depth approaches. While there are various philosophical perspectives that often inform the choice of qualitative or quantitative research, there are also various perspectives and argument for and against these methods.

However, Bryman (1988:7) has argued for the 'best of both worlds' approach and suggested that qualitative and quantitative approaches should be combined in order to achieve a more thorough research. This research subscribes to the idea of combining more than one research method because multiple techniques in the gathering of data can easily strengthen the study by providing opportunities for triangulation during the analytical phase of the study.

3.1 Research Design

This study utilizes a mixed research approach to collect data that can be applied to solve a problem within the institution of study. According to Glesne (2006:4), "qualitative research is focused on understanding and interpreting the information requested, requiring multiple perspectives from the participants". According to Creswell (2003), in his book titled *Research Design: Qualitative,*

Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches "a qualitative approach uses a participatory perspective to collect open-ended data for the purpose of developing themes from the data collected". Creswell described eight characteristics of qualitative research, which is used to guide this study.

The first characteristic described by Creswell is that the research takes place on site in a natural setting, letting the researcher become involved. This study takes place on Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria, Samaru campus where the research participants are. Creswell's second characteristic is the use of multiple methods of data collection. This study used three types of instruments to collect data. These are questionnaire, focus group discussion and on-line forum. The third characteristic described by Creswell is the use of humanistic and interactive methods. Creswell's fourth characteristic is active participation by the participant in the research, where the participants have a role in identifying a solution to the research problem. This characteristic is adequately taken care of by the effective participation of the Focus group participants within the study.

The fifth characteristic described by Creswell is that the data collection method can change as the research evolves. Creswell's sixth characteristic is that the researcher interprets data through their personal perspective, which they need to state. The personal perspective of the researcher is somewhat neutral on the use of Social Media in higher institution. The researcher believes that it is an enjoyable and engaging way to connect with people and it also appears to have a promising future with a number of potential valuable applications for education.

The seventh characteristic described by Creswell is that the researcher should be introspective, acknowledging their biases, values, and interests. For this

study, the researcher is a student and employee of the institution being studied and has some knowledge of the use of Social Media.

The researcher believes that Social Media has a promising potential in education, but it will require significant infrastructural development in order to achieve this potential in Nigeria. Creswell's eight and final characteristic of qualitative research is to describe the role of the researcher. For this particular study, the role of the researcher can best be described as a learner and facilitator.

-Population and Sampling

According to Pagano (2007) quoted by Lenartz (2012:52) "a population is the complete set of individuals, objects, or scores that the investigator is interested in studying". The target population for this study is the undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria. The Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U) has 12 Faculties and 78 Departments excluding research centers and institutes. A.B.U is one of the largest providers of higher education in Nigeria. As at the 2012/2013 academic session, it has 30,657 registered undergraduate students only, with 9,540 female students and 21,117 male students (Management Information System, (MIS) Unit A.B.U Zaria, 2013). Lenartz (2012:53) described a sample as a subset of the population. For reasons of time and economy, it is often not feasible to study an entire population, thus the researcher will make use of the simple random sampling for this research.

In using the Simple Random Sample (SRS), the sample population is given an equal probability chance. The accuracy of the data collected using simple random sampling can easily be checked through the variance in the overall population. "The objective is to take a sample from the population, measure some

characteristics on each of the sampled units, and use this information to estimate (infer) the characteristics in the entire population (Garton, 2013:3).

There are a number of reasons for limiting the population and sample to Ahmadu Bello University undergraduates. A.B.U students are more readily accessible and they constitute a large enough population. The researcher has chosen to limit it, rather than include students from other institutions because generalization about the data could more easily be done. The sample would be limited to undergraduates because this also limits the age range of respondents to young adults. More so, there is a strong correlation between age and use of social networking sites (Harris, 2008, Lenartz, 2012, Ellison, 2011). It therefore, makes more sense to look solely at a particular segment of the population that has some of the highest rate of Social Media use.

3.2 Research Instrumentation

The researcher has read and reviewed some of the most salient works written about the chosen field of study. This process is based on content analysis of relevant information from textbooks, Internet materials, journals, magazines, interviews and newspapers. This approach is important because it provides the researcher with the opportunity of understanding different perspectives on New Media, Social Media in education and young people. More so, the researcher seeks to discover the meanings that participants attach to their behaviour, how they interpret situations, and what their perspectives are on the use of Social Media.

Some students may see the Internet and social media as a place for learning while others may see it more as an arena for socializing. Other students might perceive their suaveness and participation in social networking sites as

functional because they can earn popularity and status within their peer group. In order to investigate the participants' views concerning Social Media use in the context of education, the researcher carried out this study in three phases; questionnaire method, focus group discussion method and on-line forum.

- The Questionnaire Method

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2009), questionnaire is used to acquire information by asking questions and tabulating the responses. Questionnaires are "used to report the perspective of one group of people at a particular period of time." (Leedy and Ormrod, 2009:4) This makes questionnaire, which is a quantitative approach ideal for this study, where the intention is to obtain the perspective of a large population. Moreover, questionnaire is a means of collecting information from a wider sample that cannot be reached by individual or focus group discussion.

However, scholars like Wood (2006), have argued that the questionnaire method is not among the most in-depth methods because it commonly requires subjects to respond to stimulus (structured and sometimes restricting questions). This, he argues may hinder the respondent from responding correctly. It is true that the information gathered through the questionnaire method can sometimes be limited because of the structure of the questions. However, given the large number of students that will be involved in this research, the researcher feels that the questionnaire method will be valuable. Moreover, open-ended questions will also be asked within the questionnaire. It will also be useful in this research for triangulating some of the information gathered via focus group and on-line forum discussions. Five hundred (500) copies of the questionnaires were administered randomly to undergraduate students in 10 faculties of the Ahmadu Bello

University Main Campus. A total number of 400 copies were retrieved and analysed.

- The Focus Group Discussion Method

A focus group is a type of interview that allows participants to describe their experiences and share their perspectives with a group of peers, as well as the researcher (Stringer 2007). The purpose of the focus group is to delve more deeply into the topic of Social Media in higher education and to obtain an understanding of the participants' perspective that may not be possible through the use of questionnaire. After the questionnaire method has been administered and data is collated and analysed, focus group discussions was then carried out with the students.

The participants for the focus groups were invited via e-mail messages. These are primarily students who have earlier indicated interest in participating in a focus group by supplying their e-mail address while filling the questionnaire. Some specific guidelines for the facilitation of a focus group, according to David and Richard (1998) are as follows;

- Set ground rules,
- Explain procedures clearly,
- Set time,
- Ensure everyone has an opportunity to participate,
- Record information received,
- Record outcomes, and
- Identify an action plan for what will happen next.

Each of the guidelines provided by David and Richard (1998) were followed during the focus group discussion.

- On-line Group Forum

Another important form of data collection that was done in this research is an on-line group forum. The on-line medium has the potential of freeing

participants from undue influences commonly associated with a face-to-face group (Creswell, 2003). A group titled *SM&E=Social Media & Education* was specifically created on Facebook on July 25th to September 2013 and was hosted by this researcher with 163 members (See appendix D). Participants were majorly Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria students. Although an on-line group could be opened, closed or secret, this researcher prefers an open group because it gives room for more students who may not be within the researchers friend list to also participate.

Additionally, the "share" tab was active, so that participants can invite others into the conversation. While the disadvantage of an open group is the danger of losing track of the focus of discussion, the researcher served as the moderator during the on-line forum, which was hosted for three months from July to September 2013. Contributions that were completely unrelated to the group discourse were filtered at the end of the data collection before analysis.

As the goal is to generate further discussion and probe issues on Social Media use for higher education, the host/moderator pose questions which was directly related to the research questions of the study (See appendix D). These questions were intended to generate more substantive discussion and to encourage different views that further the study. This cost-effective means of data collection is said to enhance data quality, "as participants provided checks and balances with one another and reflect upon and refine their own posts (Patton, 2002:4). Again this type of multiple-method in gathering data within a research helps to strengthen the study by providing opportunities for triangulation during the analytical phase.

3.3 Methods of Data Analysis

Glesne (2006) quoted by Lenartz (2012:60) stated that data analysis involves "organizing what you have seen, heard and read so you can make sense of what you have learned." This means that data analysis requires organizing and summarising the results of your research in such a manner that you can identify what the data has contributed towards answering your research question, so that you can report the results to others. This study used the concurrent convergent mixed method research design for data analysis, as described by Creswell (2003). According Creswell (2003:16)

> Concurrent procedure is a method in which the researcher converges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, the investigator collects both forms of data at the interpretation of the overall results. Also, in the design, the researcher nests one form of data within another larger data collection procedure in order to analyze different questions or levels of units in an organization.

Following this method, collected data is first analysed separately and then combined to establish key themes, which is discussed further in relation to the research questions, which are;

1. What is the map of Social media usage by undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria?
2. What is the influence of New Media on knowledge, attitudes and practices of students of Ahmadu Bello University?
3. What are the prospects and challenges of Social Media as multi-method way of communication within the context of higher education in Nigeria?
5. Can Social Media create negative consequences such as educational and moral decadence amongst students?

For Phase 1, which is the questionnaire, descriptive statistics is used to analyse and summarise the data and responses are described using graphical formats and tables. For the phase 2, Focus group and Phase 3, On-line forum,

results are analysed using the summary narrative method. The researcher identified key themes from the research with relevant quotes, which pertain to answering the research questions. Specifically, analysis of the data obtained through the Focus group and on-line forum was analysed using the steps outlined by Creswell (2003) for qualitative data analysis.

This researcher examined the stated objectives, research questions and theoretical framework and weighed these in the light of the actual outcome of the research. The aim is to see whether the questions posed are answered and to see whether the stated objectives were achieved and also to note the levels of achievement. In terms of ensuring reliability and validity of the data gathered, the researcher employed external validity. External validity refers to the generalization of the results of a study across populations, settings and time. Cook and Campbell (1979) identified three procedures that can be used to increase external validity of a research: 1. Random sampling that are representative of the population under study. 2. Heterogeneous sampling and replication of study.

In line with Cook and Campbell's guideline, the researcher adopted the recommended principle in this study to ensure external validity. The respondent and participants of the study were randomly selected and they were selected from both male and female sections of the sample population. More so, this methodology enables the researcher to make assertions and suggestions for further research activity, so that other researchers in similar fields of study can apply these techniques to determine whether similar or different findings would occur using a different context. Data gathering exercise involves a random sampling of Ahmadu Bello University undergraduate students from 10 faculties within

Samaru Main Campus. In order to achieve this, 500 questionnaires were distributed randomly and 400 were retrieved and analyzed, focus group discussion was carried out and an On-line forum was hosted with undergraduate students. The major reason for limiting the research to undergraduate students is because this limits the age range of respondents to young people who are said to have the highest use of Social Media (Harris, 2008, Lenartz, 2012, Ellison, 2011).

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION

This study used a concurrent convergent mixed method research design for data analysis, as described by Creswell (2003). The data was collected during the same year (2013), following the format of the concurrent design method. The quantitative and qualitative data were given equal priority; the quantitative data collected through questionnaire were analyzed first, with the qualitative data (On-line group and Focus groups) used to support or refute the findings of the quantitative data. This triangulation of data follows the convergent design method.

In phase 1, the questionnaire was divided into four sections. A basic demographic section, which collected information about respondents' age, gender, year in school, department, among other things; a section, which asked questions related to respondents' use of various New Media communication methods, including the time spent using the Internet and Social Media for a variety of purposes; a third section was for those respondents with Social Networking accounts. This section, included questions related to respondents' perceived reasons for having the accounts. The fourth section focuses on Social Media and education, including academic interaction with fellow students and lecturers. A copy of the questionnaire is included in this research as Appendix A.

For the Phase 1 of this study, descriptive statistics were deemed to be the most appropriate procedure to utilize for data analysis. The purpose of the questionnaire was to collect a significant number of responses in order to identify

overall trends and measure specific research goals with regards to the population of study. The questions included in the questionnaire were developed through the background research conducted for the study. Ideas were gotten from previously conducted researches in addition to several consultations with Professor Robert LaRose of Michigan State University and fellow PhD research students during the researcher's Fulbright experience in the United States of America.

Over the course of thirty-two (32) days in February and March 2013, 500 copies of the questionnaires were distributed and a total number of 400 were completed and returned by undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. After the collection period, data were coded and checked for error before being imported into SPSS, a statistical software program. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the responses and the information was presented as a numeric total displaying a summary of respondents. The results are displayed in charts and tables and a summary of the data collected was done for each table.

For phase 2 of this research, an On-line group titled Social Media & Education (SM&E*)* was created on Facebook on the 20th of July 2013. Active discussions ran for 3 months. Results were analyzed using the summary narrative method. The researcher identified key themes from the research with relevant quotes and identified information that pertains to answering the research questions by pulling key themes from the data collected. The concurrent convergent method of analysis as described by Creswell (2003) was employed. See Appendix D for the On-line forum.

For the phase 3, most of the respondents that initially listed their emails on the questionnaire and were willing to participate in the Focus group discussion later declined due to the industrial action by the national union for all academic

staff in Nigeria - Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU). Due to the ASUU strike action, Ahmadu Bello University students like their colleagues in all Nigerian Universities left their campuses for their various homes. This situation necessitated the researcher to develop an alternative method of getting participants for the Focus group. Using 10 research assistants, a letter of invitation was distributed to some of the students that were still on campus (See Appendix B). This was coupled with some of the earlier invitees who came from their various homes to attend the discussion despite the then on going strike.

Data collected from participants during the Focus group was recorded via video (voice and visual) and was transcribed and analyzed in order to identify key themes that emerged from the discussion (See Appendix C). Specifically, analysis of the data obtained through the Focus group was done as stated earlier in chapter three using the steps outlined by David, L and Richard A (1998) in their six series book titled *The Focus Group Kit.* Additionally, the literature review for this study described issues resulting from Social Media and the uses of Social Media in education as reported using a number of different sources. Comparing these existing evidences with the results of this research assisted in establishing a greater level of confidence in the research results.

4.1 Data Analysis

Table 1: Age of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-20	108	29.7	29.7	29.7
	21-25	180	49.5	49.5	79.13
	26-30	60	16.5	16.5	95.18
	31-35	10	2.7	2.7	97.25
	36-40	4	1.1	1.1	96.26
	41-47	1	0.28	0.28	96.54
	Total	363	90.8	100.0	
Missing	System	37	9.3		
	Total	400	100.0		

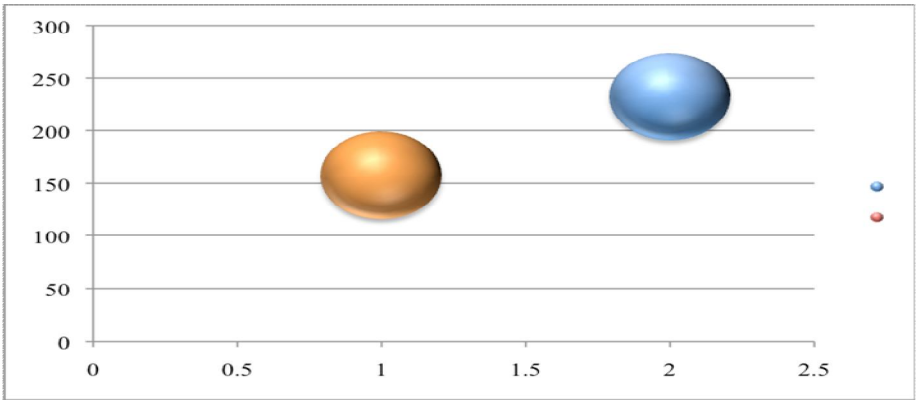
Source: SPSS

The distribution above shows that the age of respondents range from 15years to 47years. The highest respondent age was 21-25 years with 180 (49.5%) and the lowest were the age range of 41-47years, which represents 1(0.28%). 37(9.3%) of the respondents declined to respond to this question. However, 15-30 years reflects an appropriate age range of respondents since the target population was undergraduate students.

Table 2: Sex of Respondents

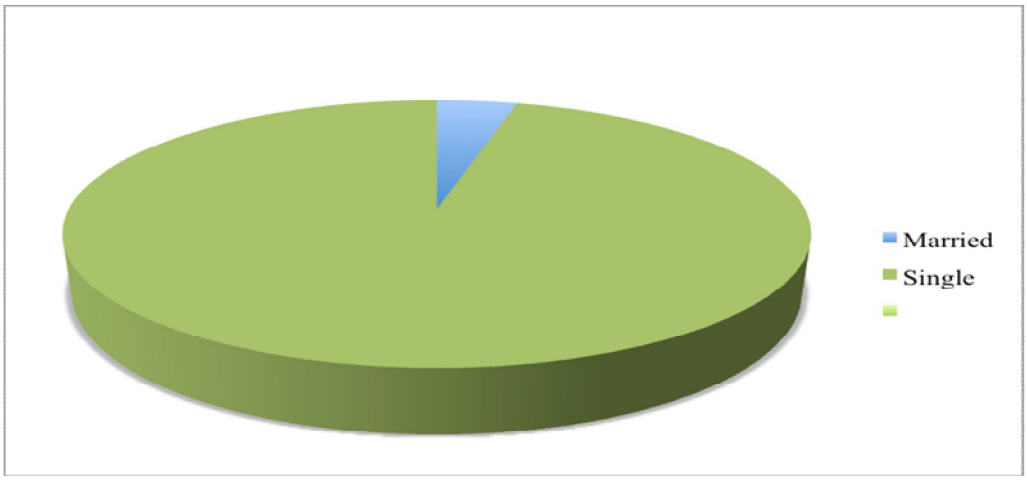
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		11	2.8	2.8	2.8
	FEMALE	157	39.3	39.3	42.0
	MALE	232	58.0	58.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS



The ratio of the questionnaire data relatively corresponds to Ahmadu Bello University's overall undergraduate male to female ratio. The table shows that 157(39.3%) of respondents were female students while 232(58.0%) were male students. This implied that while both male and female students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria were involved in answering the questionnaire, majority of the respondents were male students. The random distribution of the questionnaire reflects a fair percentage of the respondents' gender, (going by the gender data of the 2012/2013 registered students in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria). The University's Management Information System (MIS) (2013) student's population data reflects a total number of 30,657 registered students, 21,117 are male students while 9,540 are female students.

Figure 3:



The distribution on figure 3 shows that 16(4.0%) of respondents were married while 372(93.0%) were single. The data reflected 12(3.8%) as invalid data because these respondents may have declined to state their marital status. Over all, this data implied that majority of the respondents in the study were single students.

Table 4: Faculties of the Respondents

FACULTY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGRICULTURE	2	.5	.5	.5
	ARTS	150	39.6	39.6	40.1
	EDUCATION	27	7.1	7.1	47.2
	ENGINEERING	23	6.1	6.1	53.3
	ENV. DESIGN	10	2.6	2.6	55.9
	MEDICINE	8	2.1	2.1	58.0
	PHARMACY	2	.5	.5	58.6
	SCIENCE	64	16.9	16.9	75.5
	SOCIAL SCIENCE	91	24.0	24.0	99.5
	VET MEDICINE	2	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	379	100.0	100.0	

Source: SPSS

Table 4 above shows the respondents Faculties in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Samaru Campus. From the distribution, Faculty of Arts, Social Science and Science have the highest number of respondents with Arts, 150(39.6%), followed by Faculty of Social Science 91(24.0%) and Science has 64(16.9%).

Table 5: Department of Respondents

		Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	ANIMAL SCIENCE	.5	.5	.5
	ARABIC	1.8	1.8	2.4
	ARCHEOLOGY	4.2	4.2	6.6
	ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION	1.6	1.6	8.2
	BIOCHEMISTRY	1.3	1.3	9.5
	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	1.8	1.8	11.3
	BUILDING	.8	.8	12.1
	CHEMICAL ENGINEERING	2.1	2.1	14.2
	CHEMISTRY	2.9	2.9	17.2
	CIVIL ENGINEERING	1.1	1.1	18.2
	COMPUTER SCIENCE	.3	.3	18.5
	ECONOMICS	6.3	6.3	24.8
	ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING	2.1	2.1	26.9
	ENGLISH	14.8	14.8	41.7
	FINE ART	.5	.5	42.2
	GEOGRAPHY	3.4	3.4	45.6
	GUIDIANCE & CONSELLING	.8	.8	46.4
	HAUSA	.3	.3	46.7
	HISTORY	4.2	4.2	50.9
	HUMAN ANATOMY	.5	.5	51.5

	INTERNATIONAL STUDIES	1.1	1.1	52.5
	LITERATURE	3.2	3.2	55.7
	MASS COMMUNICATION	10.0	10.0	65.7
	MATHEMATICS	3.7	3.7	69.4
	MECHANICAL ENGINEERING	.3	.3	69.7
	MEDICINE	.8	.8	70.4
	METALLUGICAL ENGNEERING	.5	.5	71.0
	MICROBIOLOGY	1.3	1.3	72.3
	NURSING	.5	.5	72.8
	PHARMACY	.5	.5	73.4
	PHYSICS	1.3	1.3	74.7
	PHYSIOLOGY	.3	.3	74.9
	POLITICAL SCIENCE	5.5	5.5	80.5
	QUANTITY SURVEYING	.3	.3	80.7
	SCIENCE/MATHS EDUCATION	4.7	4.7	85.5
	SOCIOLOGY	1.1	1.1	86.5
	TEXTILE SCIENCE	.8	.8	87.3
	THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS	11.1	11.1	98.4
	URBAN & REGIONAL PLANNING	1.1	1.1	99.5
	VET. MEDICINE	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	100.0	100.0	

Available data on the total number of Departments in Ahmadu Bello University shows a total number of 78 Departments. Participants were asked to list their departments in the questionnaire and the questionnaire reflected respondents from 40 departments. English Department had the highest number of respondents with14.8%, followed by Theatre and Performing Arts, 11.1%, Mass Communication, 10.0%, Economics had 6.3%

respondents, Political Science 5.5%, Archeology with 4.2%, Mathematics has 3.7%, Chemistry 10(2.5%) etc. Departments like Computer Science, Mechanical Engineering, Physiology and Quantity Survey had the lowest respondents.

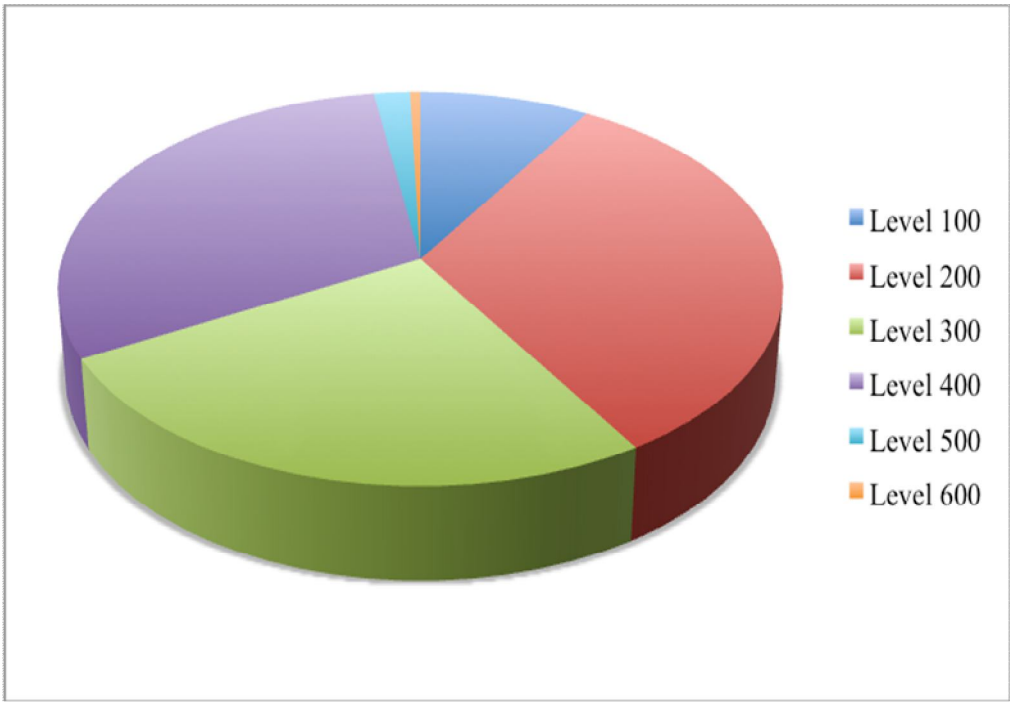
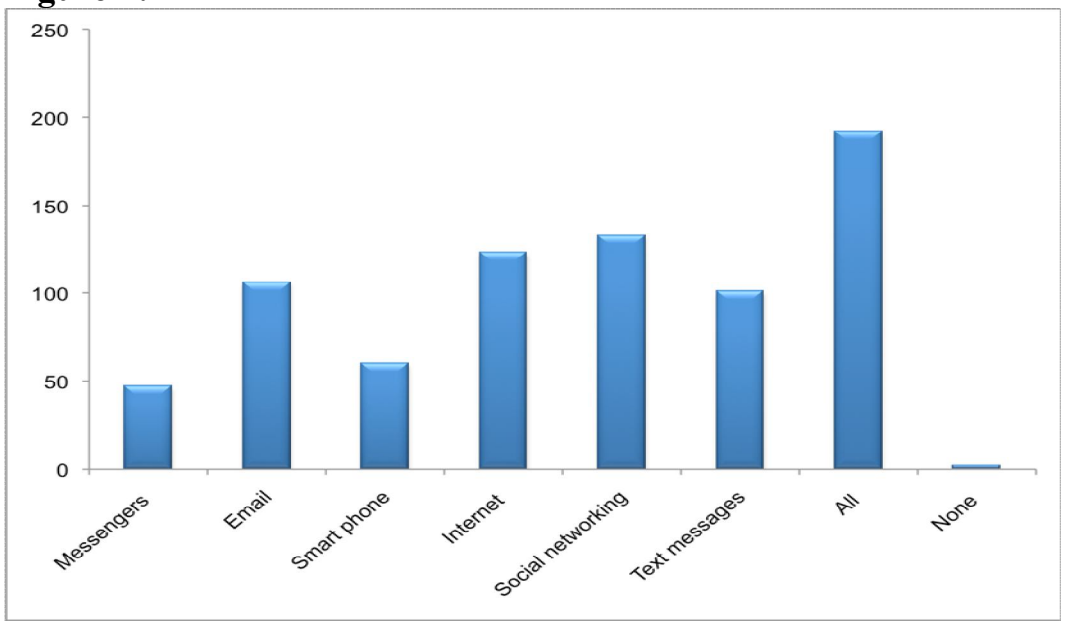


Figure 6 above shows that 36(9.0%) of the respondents were 100 levels students, 123(30.8%) were in 200 level, 97(24.3%) were 300 level students and 115(28.8%) of the respondents were 400 level students. The table furthers shows 7(1.8%) were 500 level students, 2(0.5%) were in 600 level.

Q1: Which of these New Media forms are you familiar with?

Figure 1:

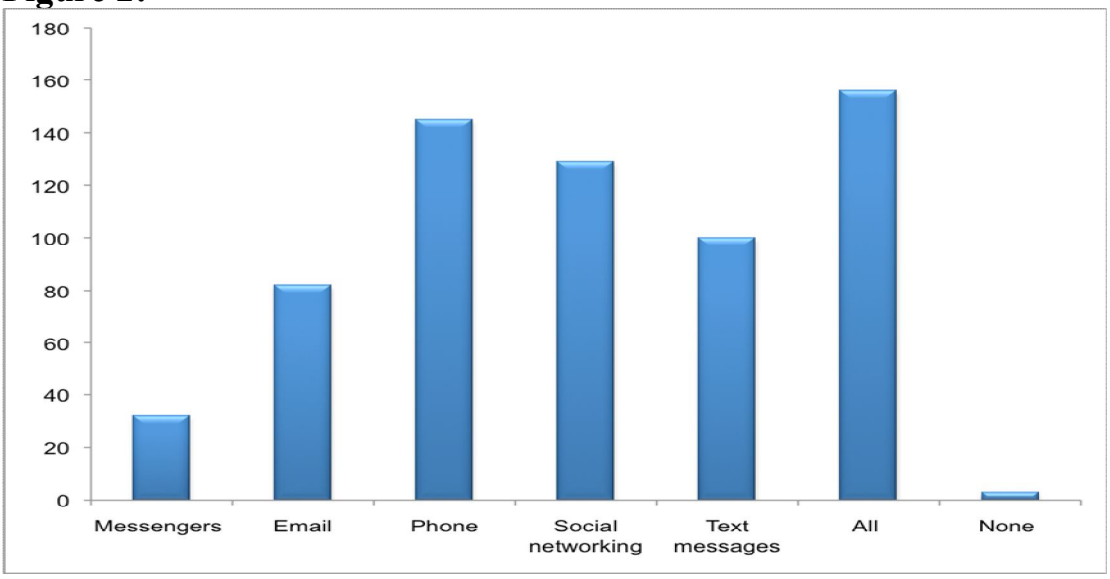


The first question in the questionnaire asked the participants to state which of the New Media forms they are familiar with. Of those who responded, 47(11.8%) students said they are familiar with Messengers, 106(26.5%) indicated E-mail, 60(15.0%) of the respondents chose Smart Phone and 123(30.8) students said Internet; 133(33.3%) indicated that they are familiar with Social Networking sites as New Media forms, 101(25.3%) indicated Text Messaging, 192(48.0) of the respondents said they are familiar with all of the options listed, while 2 out of the 400 respondents said they are familiar with none of the New Media forms listed. The data shows that majority of the students respondents are familiar with New Media forms, the data is graphically represented above. Both the focus group discussion and the On-line forum, where all the participants said they were familiar with New Media and Social Media, confirmed the questionnaire data result. One of the On-line participants, Emeka Loveday went even

further to provide a definition of Social Media. He started that "Social Media refers to the means of interaction among people in which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and network" (See Appendix D).

Q2: Which of these New Media forms do you use?

Figure 2:



The distribution of the graph above shows the New Media forms used by students. 32(8.0%) of the respondents reported using messengers; 82(20.5%) said E-mail; 145(36.3%) of the students said phone; 129(32.3%) said Social Networking; 100(25.0) students said text messages and 156(39.0%) students said they normally use all of the Media forms. while only 3(.8%) indicated none. The smart phone was indicated as the most frequently used Media form with 32.3%. Although the data also implied that there was high level of New Media awareness and use among the respondents because the highest percentage (39%) indicated that they normally use all of the Media forms listed. This question was not put to the On-line forum participants but the focus group participant were asked about the New Media forms they use. Majority of the participant

indicated that they use all the New Media forms, while others specifically mentioned smart Phone and Social Networking sites.

Q3: How frequent do you use your favorite media?

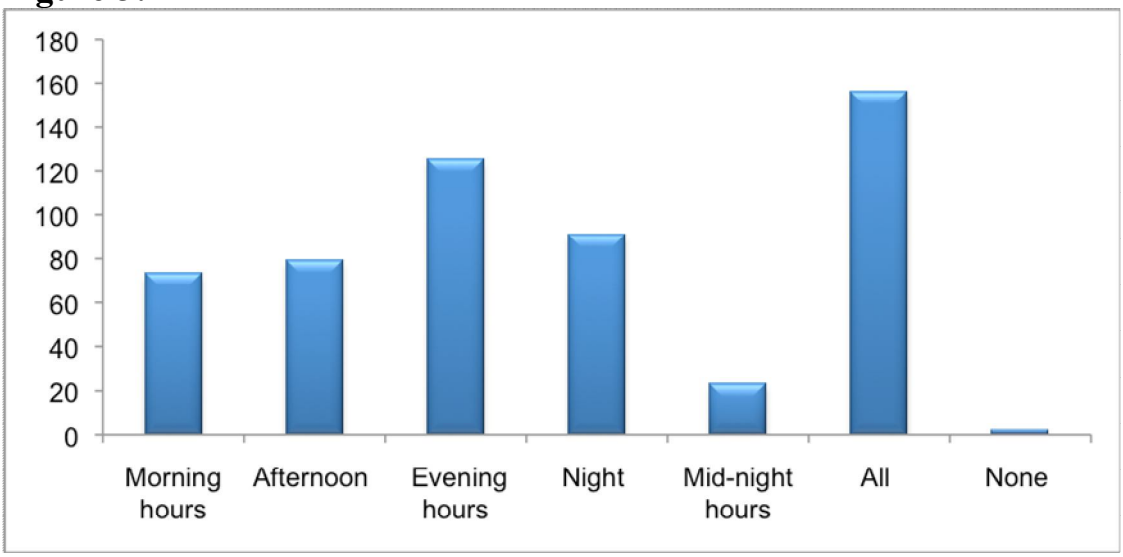
Table: 7:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	EVERYDAY	320	80.0	80.6	80.6
	FOUR TIMES / WEEK	30	7.5	7.6	88.2
	TWICE / WEEK	16	4.0	4.0	92.2
	ONCE / WEEK	27	6.8	6.8	99.0
	NONE	4	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	397	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

The questionnaire respondents were asked how frequently they used their favorite media. As shown by the table above, 320(80.0%) responded “everyday” 30(7.5%) indicated “four times a week”, 16(4.0%) said “twice a week”; and 27(6.8%) responded “once a week”, while 4(1.0%) said “none”. 3(0.8%) of the respondents declined to answer this question. This implied that majority of the student respondents use their favorite media everyday. The frequency of the use of Social Media within the On-line forum was slightly different from the result of the questionnaire. Majority of the participants within the focus group indicated “everyday” while the On-line forum participants indicated that it depends on the availability of the Internet. The answer of the On-line participants can be understood given the fact that some of the participants may not be within the University Campus and most communities in Nigeria still do not have regular access to the Internet.

Q4: At what hours of the day do you use your handset?

Figure 3:



The distribution above revealed that 73(18.3%) students said morning hours; 79(19.8%) students said afternoon; 125(31.3) students said evening hours; 91(22.8%) students said night; and 23(5.8%) students said mid-night hours and 156(39.0) students said all hours, while 2(0.5%) said none. This implied that majority of the students use their handset at all times. Rationally, one would expect the highest number of respondents to indicate the evening hours for using their handset. But the number of respondents who indicated all hours is higher yet not surprising, giving the fact that students normally use their smart phones for numerous functions throughout the day, even during classes. Participants of the Focus group and On-line forum also revealed that the usage of their smart phone is not restricted to certain hours, although a small number said during the evening hours.

Q5: Do you switch off your handset in the classroom during lectures?

Table 8:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	208	52.0	52.0	52.0
	YES	192	48.0	48.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

The table revealed that 208(52.0%) do not switch off their handset while in the classroom. While 192(48.0%) said they normally switch off their handset in the classroom. This implied that majority of the students do not care to switch off their handset in the classroom. When the Focus group participants were asked if they switch off their handsets in the classroom, majority of them said "no but we try to keep it on silence." Since "switching off" and "silencing" is not the same, the researcher should have considered including "silencing" in the options in order to broaden the options.

Q6: Do you use your handset in the classroom during lectures?

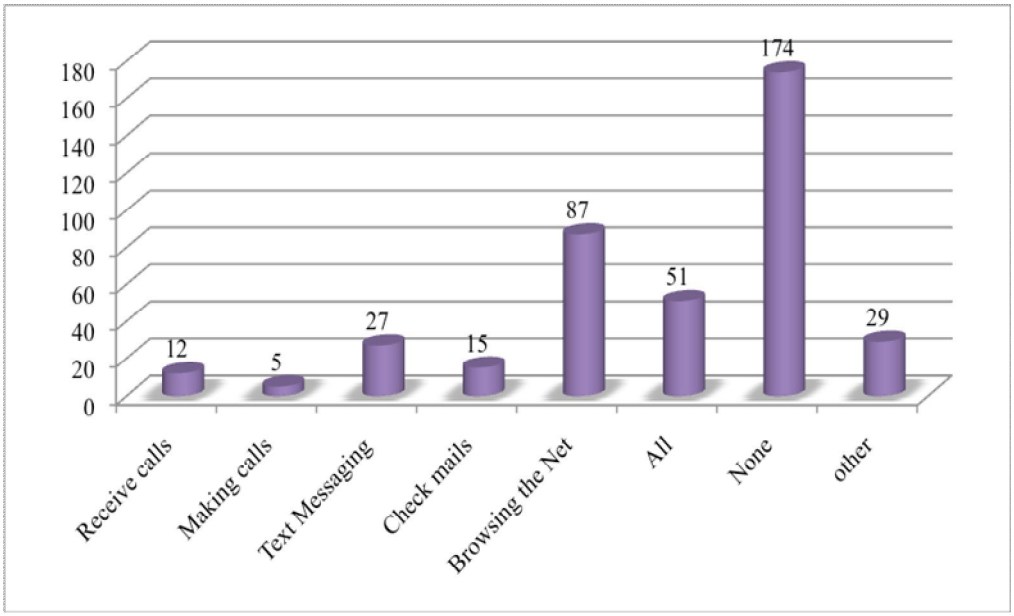
Table 9:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	308	77.0	77.0	77.0
	YES	92	23.0	23.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows that 308(77.0%) said they don't use their handset in the classroom while 92(23.0%) said they use it. This implied that most of the respondents do not use their handset while in the lecture room. The response of all the focus group participants concurred with those of the questionnaire respondents.

Q7: What do you use your handset for in the classroom?

Figure 4:



The above chart shows the different purposes for which handsets are used in the class. The distribution indicates 13(3.3%) of the respondents used their handset for "receiving calls" while in the classroom, 6(1.5%) said for "making calls", 29(7.3%) admitted to "text messaging". "Checking of mails" was indicated by 15(3.8) of the respondents, 87(23%) said they used their handset in the class room for "browsing the net", 61(15.3%), 54(13.5%) said "all" while the highest percentage of 185(46.3%) said none. 8(2.0%) of the respondents did not respond to this question. Of the 29 of respondents who choose "others" their reasons were for "dictionary search", "calculator", "check time" and "to see missed calls". These particular data validates and confirms the data in table number 8 and 9.

Since none of the focus group participants admitted to using their handsets in the classroom, Q7 was not asked.

Q8: How often do you browse the Internet?

Table 10:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	EVERYDAY	203	50.8	51.8	51.8
	FOUR TIMES / WEEK	31	7.8	7.9	59.7
	TWICE / WEEK	15	3.8	3.8	63.5
	ONCE / WEEK	5	1.3	1.3	64.8
	OCCASIONALLY	108	27.0	27.6	92.3
	ALL the Time	29	7.3	7.4	99.7
	NONE	1	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	392	98.0	100.0	
Missing	System	8	2.0		
	Total	400	100.0		

From the above table 203(50.8%) of the respondents said they visit the Internet "everyday", 31(7.8%) said "four times a week", 15(3.8%) said "twice a week" and 5(1.3%) said "once a week" and 108(27.0%) said "occasionally". 29(7.3%) said "all the time" while 1(0.3%) said none. 8(2.0%) of the respondents declined to respond. Both the focus group and On-line participants described computer ownership, Internet access and digital literacy as key hindrances to Internet use for education amongst students. They said for students to succeed, technology literacy is a part of that process and that Internet access and literacy are the responsibility of both the University and the federal government. According to one participant,

> There are certain observations I would like to make concerning the social media as it relates to academics. I have personally perceived it to be something that should run side by side with printed text. But in the Nigerian context we find the issue of network access is a disadvantage. Often times when you need access to the net you often cannot access it either on the phone or on wireless like the Ahmadu Bello University wireless system. So it is a handicap until that and other issues are addressed, Nigerians may not fully reap the benefit of social media because social media is not just about making friends. It is also suppose to profit us in area of academics (Focus group Participant).

Another participant believed that some of the problems highlighted may be solved if, "higher institutions should make the ownership of laptops compulsory. Students can be given the opportunity to make the payment installmentally. In all the countries where education is taken seriously, every student is entitled to a laptop and there is 24 hours Internet facilities … you will never hear issues like no network etc" (See appendix D). However, another participant contradicted the above view by stating that,

> The issue is not about ownership of a laptop or a computer, in fact, ownership of the machines has become a status thing! An average undergraduate student owns a phone (may be smart phone), which to some extent are more sophisticated than the Laptops that we see around. There are also outlets at the departmental and university-wide levels for access to the computers. It is also true that an average student in ABU has access to the Internet in the ABU environment moderately. I also know (I cannot quantify here anyway) that an average ABU student is signed-in to one social network or the other. In the aggregate, it is not the lack of computers or laptops or Ipad but perhaps we should look for other reasons why the students are allergic to using the social network to academic advantage.

Q9: Do you have a Social Networking account?

Table 11:

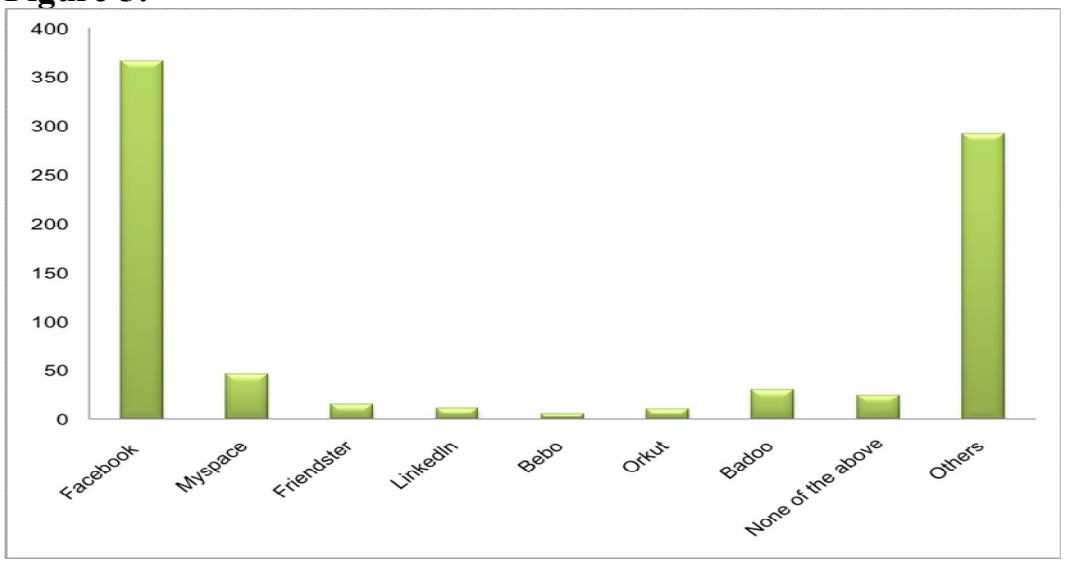
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	38	9.5	9.5	9.5
	YES	361	90.3	90.5	100.0
	Total	399	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.3		
	Total	400	100.0		

The distribution shows that majority of the respondents said they have social networking account with 361(90.3%), while 38(9.5%) said they do not have Social networking account. Only 1(0.3%) of the respondents declined this question. This means that majority of the student respondents that filled the questionnaire have account on Social Networking sites. The same question was posed to the focus group participants and all of them said they have at least one social networking account, except one participant, Umar Ahmadu who said he does not have any social media account. According to him,

> I feel it isn't important to be on any social networking site. Going back before the advent of the Internet people survived. Lecturers and professors back then in their days in the Universities didn't have any social networking sites but that didn't stop them from doing what they had to do. I am a kind of person that socializes a lot. Is it that if you are not on any Social Media or networking site you will be seen as a person who cannot socialize? I can talk to anybody that doesn't mean I have to go on any social networking site. I am not saying that people on it are bad but it's my choice not to be on it.

Q10: Which Social Networking sites do you have account with?

Figure 5:



The above chart implied that majority of the respondents have Facebook account with the highest number of 365(91.3%). MySpace got 45(11.35%), 15(3.8%) of the respondents choose Friendster etc. while some have other accounts that are not listed. 31(8.3%) listed 2Go under "others", while 35(9.3%) said Twitter. 1(0.3%) have declined to give any response. One may argue that the data reflects or validates the assertion within the literature that Facebook is the most popular social networking site. This can also be attributed to the fact that you can send more than 120 megabits of data on Facebook while others like twitter can only accommodate 140 character letters. Some of the respondents choose multiple accounts. The highest multiple social networking accounts indicated by the respondents were Facebook, Twitter and 2Go, closely followed by Facebook, Whatsapp, 2Go and then Facebook, BBM and Whatsapp. When asked this same question, a majority of the focus group participants also said Facebook, while about 10% of them said Twitter and Whatsapp.

Q11: How often do you log in social networking sites?

Table 12:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MULTIPLE TIMES / DAY	191	47.8	49.2	49.2
	ONCE / DAY	60	15.0	15.5	64.7
	FEW TIMES / WEEK	68	17.0	17.5	82.2
	FEW TIMES / MONTH	22	5.5	5.7	87.9
	VERY RARELY	47	11.8	12.1	100.0
	Total	388	97.0	100.0	
Missing	System	12	3.0		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table revealed that 191(47.8%) of the student respondents used social networking sites multiple times a day; 60(15.0%) use it once a day; 68(17.0%) said they used it "few times a week", 22(5.5%) used it "few times a month", while 47(11.8%) said they "very rarely" used it. 12(3.0%) declined the question 11. This implied that many students access social networking site numerous times a day.

Q12: How much time, on average do you spend on the website each time you log in?

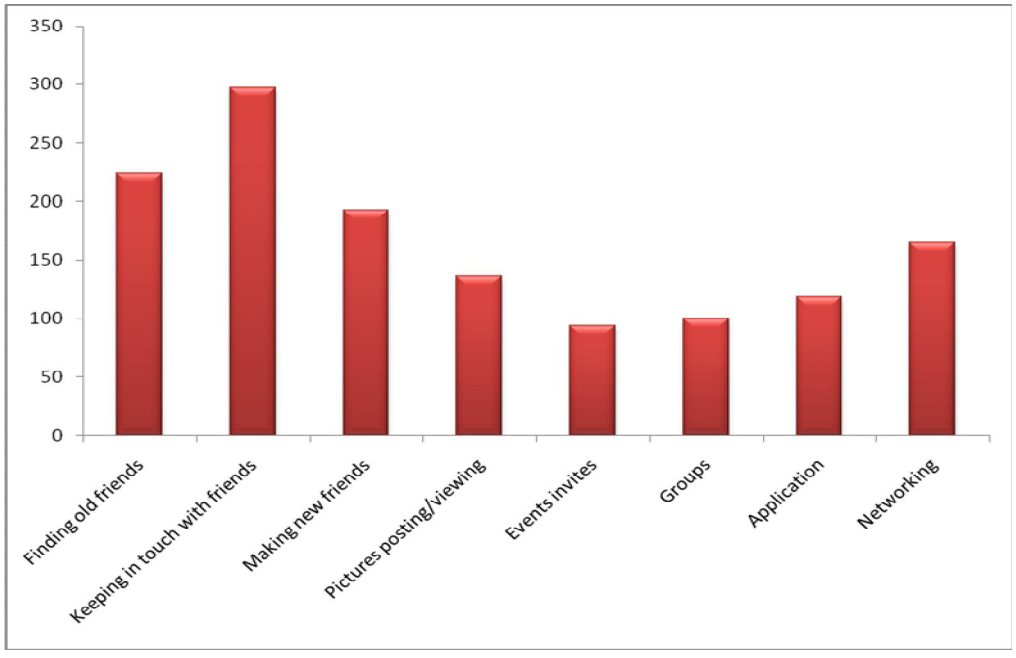
Table 13:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10 - 30 MINS	152	38.0	38.7	38.7
	1 - 2 HOURS	161	40.3	41.0	79.6
	MORE THAN 2 HOURS	53	13.3	13.5	93.1
	OTHERS	27	6.8	6.9	100.0
	Total	393	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	7	1.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

The distribution shows that 152(38.0%) spend 10-30minutes; 161(40.3%) spend 1-2hour and 53(13.3%) spend more than 2 hours while 27(6.8%)said "others" time. The three highest average time indicated by the respondents that choose "other," were 3-4hours, 6-7hours and 7-10hours. While 3(0.9%) of the respondents said "It depends on the amount of leisure time I have." Majority of both the On-line group and the Focus group participants also attributed the amount of time they spend on-line to the amount of time they have to spear, while others said "having access to the Internet".

Q13: What do you use social networking site for?

Figure 6:



As indicated by the above chart, the most common uses of Social networking sites amongst Ahmadu Bello University undergraduate students were "keeping in touch with friends", "finding old friends" was indicated with the second highest number, while "picture posting and viewing" came in third. The graph above

shows that 224(56.0%) said that they use it to find old friends; 297(74.3%) said to keep in touch with friends; 193(48.3%) said for making new friend, 136(34.0%) said for picture posting/viewing; 94(23.5%) said for events invites; 100(25.0%) said for groups, 118(29.5%) said for application; 165(41.3%) said for networking, 24(6.2%) said academic while 25(6.5%) said "others". Only 1(0.3) declined to answer this question. It is not surprising to see the use of social media for academics ranked very low amongst the respondents. This show that social media use for educational purposes is still very low. This can also be attributed to the fact that it is actually a very new phenomenon, particularly in a developing country like Nigeria. Both the focus group and On-line participants also supported this result. According to Thompson Akpabio, one of the On-line participants

> "Classroom setting does not allow room for free self expression, the way Social Media permits. You may talk, learn in a formal setting but you will be conscious of where you are and what you are saying, how you say what you are saying etc. The learning that we get from Social Media is voluntary and it allows room for choice, you can choose what to learn and what not to learn. In a formal setting, learning is attached to discipline, either of punishment… unconsciously or consciously, people show some sense of the awareness of their environment. The limits at which "comments" can happen in a formal setting is limited because of the code "formal", which is not the same as that of the "social environment" where learning is free, choice based, spontaneous, unguided, optional, you see the real colour of people. The code of conduct in a social setting is "self-discipline, while the code of conduct in a formal setting is "civil discipline i.e. discipline that has some unconscious attachment of force because of the punishment or reward attached to it.

Other participants of the On-line forum such as Abubakar Aliyu Liman also supported Akpabio's view by saying

> I uphold a very broad notion of education which clearly encompasses learning experiences outside the classroom (which therefore implies that education is an enlightenment process happening beyond the four corners of the classroom), methinks, on the basis of this broad notion of education, SM&E (Social Media in Education) can be used productively outside the disciplinary spaces and of course the drudgery of formal learning structures of our schools, colleges and universities. However, SM&E in formal

learning situations, in my opinion, is going to be intractable and unwieldy because of the enormous freedom and latitude Social Media confers on its users.

Q14: What is the most important reason for your use of social networking site?

Table 14:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH FRIENDS	230	57.5	59.3	59.3
	MAKING NEW FRIENDS	25	6.3	6.4	65.7
	POSTING/VIEWING PICTURES	10	2.5	2.6	68.3
	GROUPS	5	1.3	1.3	69.6
	APPLICATIONS	23	5.8	5.9	75.5
	ACADEMIC	75	18.8	19.3	94.8
	OTHERS	20	5.0	5.2	100.0
	Total	388	97.0	100.0	
Missing	System	12	3.0		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table above shows that 230(57.5%) said keeping in touch with friends is the most important reason for their use of social networking sites; 25(6.3%) said making new friends; 5(1.3%) said for groups; 23(5.8%) said for applications; and 75(18.8%) said for academic while 20(5.0%) said others. 12(3.0%) of the respondents declined to answer this question. This implied that one of the major reasons for using social networking site is for keeping in touch with friends. However, there seems to be a bit of discrepancy between figure 6 and table 14 when it comes to using social media for academics. When asked, "what do the respondents use Social Media for? Academic uses were quite low with only 6.2% indication from respondent but when asked, "what is your most important reason for using social networking sites? The same academics was indicated by 18.8% of the respondents. This discrepancy may be attributed to the framing of the question.

Where the word "most important" may have redirected the respondents towards academics.

One of the participants of the On-line forum Thompson Akpabio when asked about the low usage of Social Media for education by students simply said, "because it is social media, not formal media. Formalism in the sense of the word "formal" connotes some sense of decorum---- But socialism, in the sense of the word "social", allows space for comments or actions that will not be tolerated in a formal space." However, another on-line participant disagrees with Akpabio's view. According to Martins Ayegba,

> On the average, at any given hour, I see not less than 50 students from my Faculty online using the facebook facilities. The question we are asking therefore is that, what are the content of their chat and other activities here? I always look forward to a discussion that will help me understand issues and gain new knowledge and ideas anywhere at all. I think also that there is an attitude problem and a cliché: Social Network is all about fun, romance, jokes, nudity, pictures, gossips, abuses, blackmail, etc. This position has indeed been facilitated by the extent to which students engage with this media. The same way and manner that students have avoided the physical traditional library space for research is the same way they now avoid academic content on the New Media even when the Library has literarily relocated to their palms physically. You do not need a whip to force them and their lecturers alike to avail themselves of the expansive advantage of the New Media (See Appendix D).

Q15: **Do your lecturers post course work materials on social media?**

Table 15:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NEVER	233	58.3	59.1	59.1
	RARELY	71	17.8	18.0	77.2
	SOMETIMES	68	17.0	17.3	94.4
	OFTEN	13	3.3	3.3	97.7
	FREQUENTLY	9	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	394	98.5	100.0	
Missing	System	6	1.5		
	Total	400	100.0		

Table 15 shows that 233(58.3%) said "never" when asked if lecturers post course work materials on Social Media; 71(17.8%) said rarely; 68(17.0%) said sometimes; and 13(3.3%) said often while 9(2.3%) said frequently. 6(1.5%) of the respondents declined this question. This implied that some lecturers in Ahmadu Bello University occasionally post educational materials on social media. Further evidence can be found where lecturers make announcements about class activities (See appendix E).

Q16: How often do you use Social Media to do the following?
a. Communicate with your lecturers to ask academic questions?

Table 16a:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NEVER	286	71.5	74.3	74.3
	RARELY	30	7.5	7.8	82.1
	SOMETIMES	52	13.0	13.5	95.6
	FREQUENTLY	17	4.3	4.4	100.0
	Total	385	96.3	100.0	
Missing	System	15	3.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

The distribution shows that majority of the student respondents, 286(71.5) never communicate with their lecturers to ask academic questions. 30(7.5%) indicated "rarely", 52(13.3%) said sometimes, while 17(4.3%) said frequently. This information can be attributed to the fact that most of the students do not have their lecturers on their friend list in the first place.

b. Communicate with classmates and ask academic questions?

Table 16b

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NEVER	47	11.8	12.3	12.3
	RARELY	48	12.0	12.6	24.9
	SOMETIMES	177	44.3	46.3	71.2
	FREQUENTLY	110	27.5	28.8	100.0
	Total	382	95.5	100.0	
Missing	System	18	4.5		
	Total	400	100.0		

This distribution shows that 47 (11.8%) said "never", 48 (12.0%) "rarely" and 177 (44.3%) said "sometimes" while 110(27.5%) said "frequently". This implied that majority of students sometimes ask academic questions from their classmates. This information may be attributed to the fact that many of the respondents already have their class mates on their social media friend list, thus it is easier to continue class discussions on-line.

c. Exchange online academic materials with students in your Department.

Table 16c

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NEVER	119	29.8	31.3	31.3
	RARELY	86	21.5	22.6	53.9
	SOMETIMES	128	32.0	33.7	87.6
	FREQUENTLY	47	11.8	12.4	100.0
	Total	380	95.0	100.0	
Missing	System	20	5.0		
	Total	400	100.0		

This table shows that a large percentage of the respondents 128(32.0%) indicated that they "sometimes" exchange online academic materials with their fellow students in their department, while 47(11.8%) said "frequently", 119(29.8%) said "never" and 86(21.5%) indicated "rarely". Even though the total percentage of respondents that responded to this question answered in the negative, the positive response was also quite high. So the exchange rate of academic material on Social Media among the students of Ahmadu Bello University is quite considerable.

d. Learn about campus activities within or outside your department?

Table 16d:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NEVER	67	16.8	17.8	17.8
	RARELY	57	14.3	15.1	32.9
	SOMETIMES	170	42.5	45.1	78.0
	FREQUENTLY	83	20.8	22.0	100.0
	Total	377	94.3	100.0	
Missing	System	23	5.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 67(16.8%) said never, 57(14.3%) said rarely and 170(42.5%) said sometimes, while 83(20.8%) said frequently. This implied that majority of the students sometimes learn about campus activities in their department through Social Media.

e. Find out what social activities your classmates or students within your department are doing?

Table 16e:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NEVER	72	18.0	19.2	19.2
	RARELY	64	16.0	17.1	36.3
	SOMETIMES	170	42.5	45.3	81.6
	FREQUENTLY	69	17.3	18.4	100.0
	Total	375	93.8	100.0	
Missing	System	25	6.3		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 72(18.0%) said never, 64(16.0%) said rarely and 170(42.5%) while 69(17.3%) said frequently. This implied that majority of the students know about social activities on Social Media among their classmates in their departments.

Q17: Did you belong to a social network site before your admission into Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?

Table 17:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	97	24.3	24.4	24.4
	YES	300	75.0	75.6	100.0
	Total	397	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

Table 17 shows that 97(24.3%) of the respondents said "no", while 300(75.0%) said "yes." 3(0.3%) of the respondents declined to answer this question. This implied that a large majority of the students belong to a social network site before securing admission into Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This data result is actually not surprising, given that most secondary school students in Nigeria are already conversant with Social Media and quite a number are active on Social Media before coming into the University.

Q18: As a student of Ahmadu Bello University, do you belong to any social network?

Table 18:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	42	10.5	10.6	10.6
	YES	356	89.0	89.4	100.0
	Total	398	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.5		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 42(10.5%) said "no" while 356(89.0%) of the student respondents said "yes". 2(0.5%) did not respond. This implied that majority of the students of Ahmadu Bello University use at least one Social networking site.

Q19: How concerned are you about the image you present to others through your social network profile?

Table 19:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NOT CONCERNED	25	6.3	6.4	6.4
	A LITTLE CONCERNED	34	8.5	8.7	15.2
	CONCERENED	104	26.0	26.7	41.9
	VERY CONCERNED	226	56.5	58.1	100.0
	Total	389	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	11	2.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 25(6.3%) said not concerned; 34(8.5%) said "a little concerned" and 104(26.0%) said they are "concerned", while a relatively large percentage of the respondents, 226(56.5%) said they are "very concerned". 11(2.8%) declined the question. This implied that majority of the students are very concerned about the image they present to others through their social Media accounts.

Q20: What do you think are the most important benefits of using new media technologies in academic settings?

a. Gives students more access to educational and reference resource?

Table 20a:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	106	26.5	26.6	26.6
	YES	293	73.3	73.4	100.0
	Total	399	99.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.3		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 106(26.5%) said "no", while 293(73.3%) said yes. This implied that a large majority of the students agree that New Media technologies help provide students with more access to educational and reference resources. This data is further supported by the findings from the Focus group discussion. According to one participant,

> I feel Social Media has helped in terms of project. For instance you have a new project topic that cannot be found in school libraries and books but when you go to the Social Media like Google you would see a lot of ideas that has been deposited on the net that would help. A case study is my project about hairstyle as a communicative make-up in the theatre. I couldn't find it in any book in the library but I discovered a lot of information through the use of the Internet.

b. Offers another channel for different learning styles

Table 20b:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	244	61.0	61.3	61.3
	YES	154	38.5	38.7	100.0
	Total	398	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.5		
	Total	400	100.0		

From the distribution in table 20b, 154(38.5%) said yes while 244(61.0%) said no. This implied that majority does not believe it offers another channel for different learning styles.

c. Enable greater collaboration with fellow students?

Table 20c:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	303	75.8	76.1	76.1
	YES	95	23.8	23.9	100.0
	Total	398	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.5		
	Total	400	100.0		

The distribution in table 20c shows that 303(75.8%) said no while 95(23.3%) said yes. This implied that majority of the respondents do not agree that the most important benefit of New Media technologies in academic setting is to collaborate with fellow friends. However, the focus group participants seem to disagree with this result. Majority of the focus group participants responded positively to this question. According to one participant whose name is Sharon, "We have to sieve the information we get on line. When that is done I think it will help us educationally. In those days when I was in school, we used to do rehearsals on 2go. We use the chatting medium to get our lines for performance. Well, social media is good for our education and I believe everybody should begin to key in because it broadens our scope and makes us know the way different people around the globe think (See appendix C)

d. Create room for interactive discussion and creativity?

Table 20d:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	206	51.5	51.8	51.8
	YES	192	48.0	48.2	100.0
	Total	398	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.5		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 206(51.5%) said no while 192(48.0%) said yes. This implied that while majority of the students respondents said new media technologies in academic setting is not for interactive discussion, a fairly large percentage agree that it is a creativity platform. Some of the on-line forum participants agree largely to this point. According to one of the on-line participants;

> The New Media platform may look free but I must say that it can be as well quite rigorous and engaging. What it does is the fact that it democratizes learning and offers the entire Universe a space to share knowledge, ideas and information. What people do with the information they get from the sources available is left to them to discern. The point for students and lecturers alike is the ability to connect with the advantages that the platform avails them and see the extent to which they can actually get support to enhance productivity and delivery.

e. Opinions of students on "others"?

Table 20e:

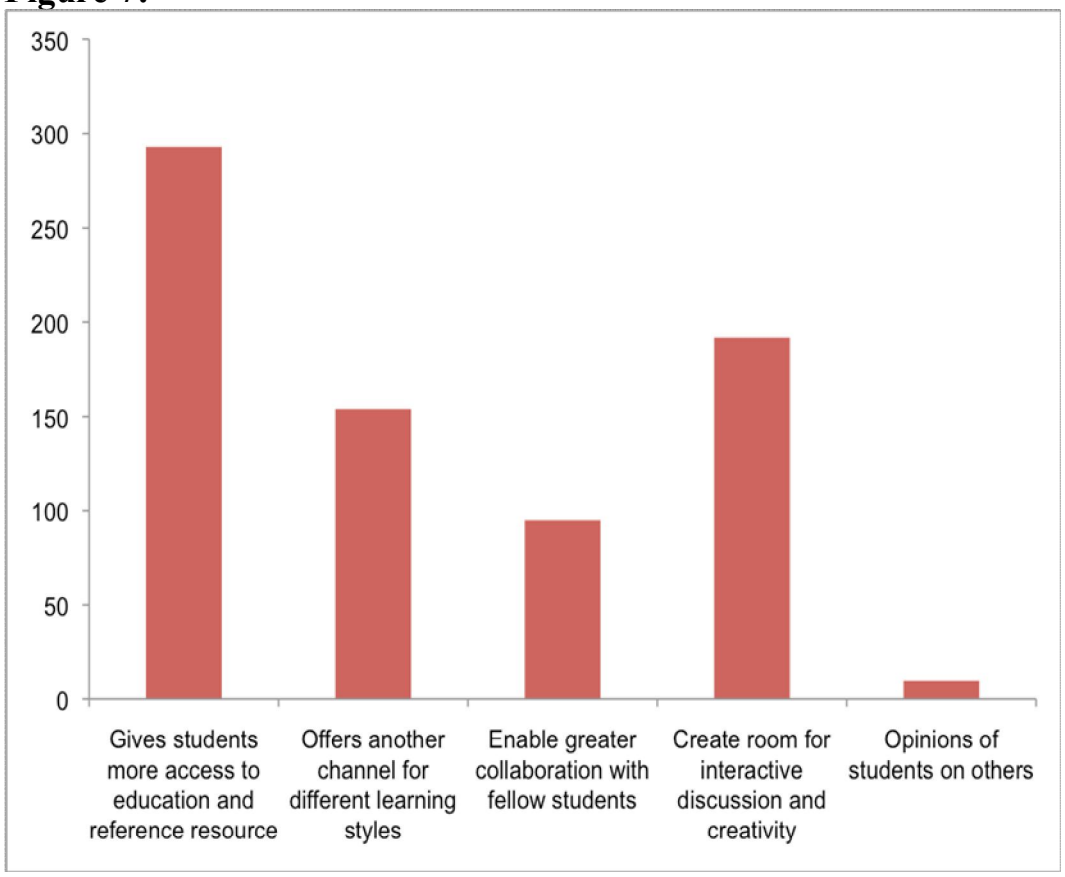
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		390	97.5	97.5	97.5
	ALL OF THE ABOVE	1	.3	.3	97.8
	FUN PURPOSE	1	.3	.3	98.0
	DISCOVERING OLD FRIENDS	1	.3	.3	98.3
	IMMORALITY	1	.3	.3	98.5
	KEEP STUDENT CONNECTED TO EACH OTHER	1	.3	.3	98.8
	KEEPING IN TOUCH	1	.3	.3	99.0
	KEEPS STUDENT IN TOUCH WITH NEWS AND HAPPENING AROUND THE WORLD,THE VERSATILE KNOWLEDGE	1	.3	.3	99.3
	mal practices	1	.3	.3	99.5
	TEACH ON HOW TO OPERATE N.M.T	1	.3	.3	99.8
	TO MAKES ONE HAS WIDER KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OUR WORLD	1	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	100.0	

From the table it shows that many of the students see New Media technologies in academic setting as to get more knowledge, keep in touch with friends and to know what is happening around the world. Table 20e is further summarized with a table and a chart.

Table 20: Summary table for question 20.

Gives students more access to education and reference resource	Offers another channel for different learning styles	Enable greater collaboration with fellow students	Create room for interactive discussion and creativity	Opinions of students on others
293	154	95	192	10

Figure 7:



Q21: On the average, how much time do you spend each day using the Internet for the following activities?

a. The time spent on education/school work

Table 21a:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 - 60 MINS	160	40.0	42.4	42.4
	1 – 2 HOURS	120	30.0	31.8	74.3
	MORE THAN 2 HOURS	67	16.8	17.8	92.0
	DONT USE FOR THAT PURPOSE	30	7.5	8.0	100.0
	Total	377	94.3	100.0	
Missing	System	23	5.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

The distribution shows that 160(40.0%) said 30-60minutes, 120(30.0%) said 1-2hours and 67(16.8%) said more than 2hours while 30(7.5%) said do not use for that purpose. A total number of 23(5.8%) of the respondents declined to answer the question.

b. Amount of time spent on discussion?

Table 21b:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 - 60 MINS	181	45.3	50.1	50.1
	1 - 2 HOURS	96	24.0	26.6	76.7
	MORE THAN 2 HOURS	61	15.3	16.9	93.6
	DONT USE FOR THAT PURPOSE	23	5.8	6.4	100.0
	Total	361	90.3	100.0	
Missing	System	39	9.8		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 181(45.3%) said 30-60minutes, 96(24.0%) said 1-2hours and 61(15.3%) said more than 2 hours while 23(5.8%) said don't use internet for discussion purpose.

c. Amount of time spent on films or leisure programs

Table 21c:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 - 60 MINS	136	34.0	38.2	38.2
	1 - 2 HOURS	76	19.0	21.3	59.6
	MORE THAN 2 HOURS	60	15.0	16.9	76.4
	DONT USE FOR THAT PURPOSE	84	21.0	23.6	100.0
	Total	356	89.0	100.0	
Missing	System	44	11.0		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 136(34.0%) said 30-60minutes, 76(19.0%) said 1-2hours and 60(15.0%) said more than 2 hours while 84(21.0%) said don't use for that purpose.

d. Amount of time spent watching news

Table 21d:

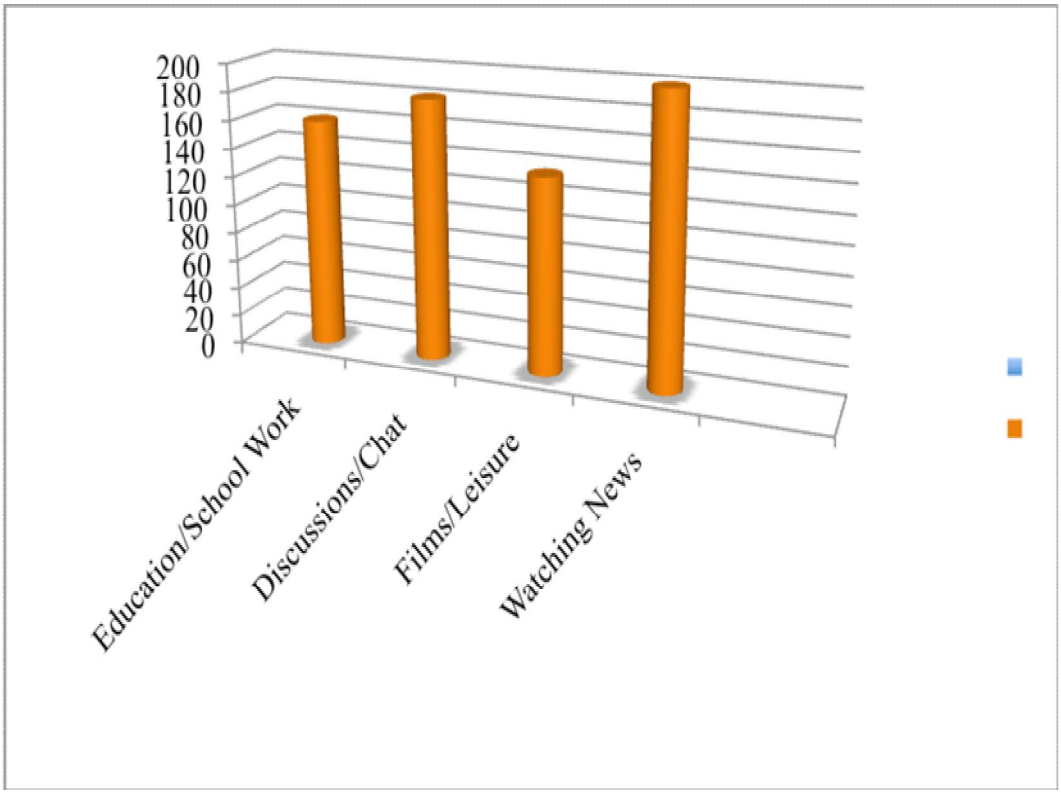
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	30 - 60 MINS	200	50.0	55.7	55.7
	1 - 2 HOURS	78	19.5	21.7	77.4
	MORE THAN 2 HOURS	29	7.3	8.1	85.5
	DONT USE FOR THAT PURPOSE	52	13.0	14.5	100.0
	Total	359	89.8	100.0	
Missing	System	41	10.3		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 200(50.0%) said 30-60 minutes, 78(19.5%) said 1-2hours and 29(7.3%) said more than 2 hours while 52(13.0%) said don't use for that purpose. This implied that majority of the students spent 30-60minutes on the Internet on news. Respondents' answers to question 21 are further summarized on the table 22 and figure 9 below.

Table 22:

Education/School work	Discussions/Chat	Films/Leisure Programs	Watching News
160	181	136	200

Figure 9



Q22: How has the Internet impacted on your academic and social development?

Table 23:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	POSITIVELY	231	57.8	59.5	59.5
	NEGATIVELY	9	2.3	2.3	61.9
	POSITIVELY AND NEGATIVELY	143	35.8	36.9	98.7
	OTHER WAYS	5	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	388	97.0	100.0	
Missing	System	12	3.0		
	Total	400	100.0		

The distribution of the table shows that 231(57.8%) said positively, 9(2.3%) said negatively, and 143(35.8%) said positively and negatively while 5(1.3%) said others ways. 12(0.3%) of the respondents declined this question. This implied that majority of the students have been impacted positively by the Internet for their academic and social development. Majority of the focus and on-line participants supported this view. According to one focus group participant,

> There is no doubt that the social media has really impacted the educational system. Today the media most especially the social media gives a lot of information. The Wikipedia is a way through which people can get information in relation to their research work but in our education system especially in Ahmadu Bello University, information from Wikipedia gets turned downed because the site is not trusted. But if the information is restricted and regulated then it could be useful for the educational system.

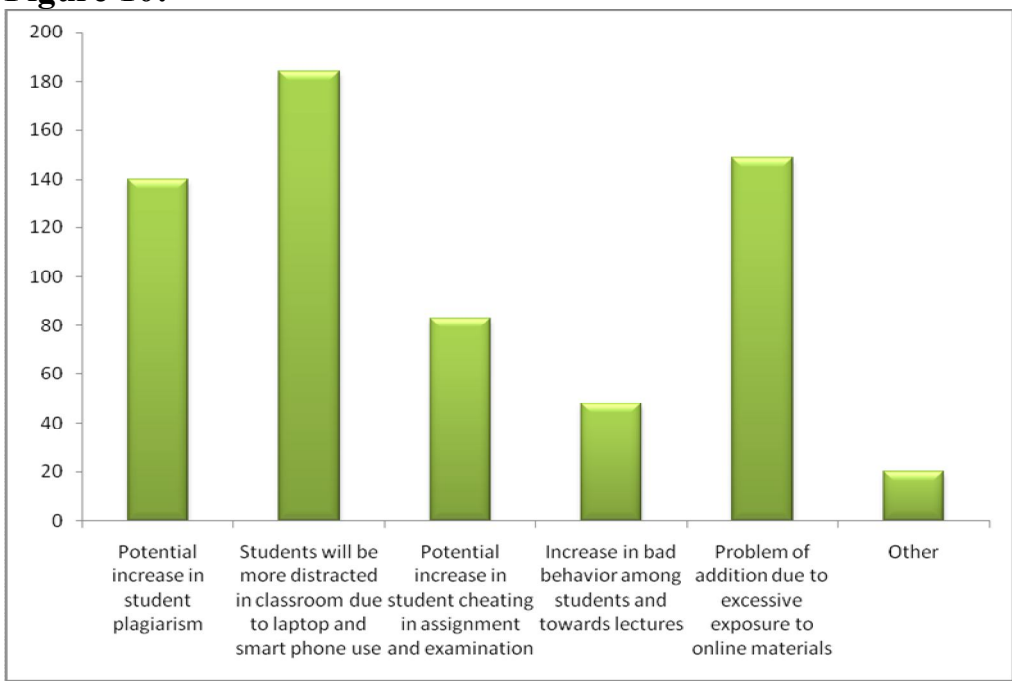
Another participant, Godwin is of the view that,

> Using the social media for academic purposes entice students to do the work. An example was when an assignment was given to me in my 300level where we were asked to open an email address and send the answers to the questions to the lecturers email address. It was easier for me because I simply sat down in my bedroom and used my smart phone to

send the assignment to him. Reading culture and the use of the conventional library is declining because everything changes with time. The Internet and social media easies our researches and the New Media has introduced distant learning

Q23: As a youth and university student, what are the possible challenges posed by the new media to students' academic development?

Figure 10:



Questionnaire data, illustrated in figure 10 above shows that 184(46.0%) of the respondents are of the opinion that potential increase in student plagiarism, is one of the challenges posed by New Media to students. Second with 140(35.0%), is that students will be more distracted in classroom due to laptop and smart phone use, 83(20.8%) said potential increase in student cheating in assignment and examination, 48(12.0%) said increase in bad behavior among students and towards lecturers and 149(37.3%) said problem of addiction due to excessive exposure to online materials while 9(2.7%) said other problems. Some of the "other" problems indicated are exposure to pornography, use of vulgar language and laziness in studying. 17(4.3%) of the respondents indicated, "don't know".

Within the On-line forum and focus groups, the responses to this question were threaded throughout the discussion to other questions. For example, during the Focus group a participant reacts to the question of Internet abuse and the effect of New Media thus,

> …You even see teenagers learning how to ask girls out referring to the secondary school students on social media. So we in Nigeria and I believe other countries too are misusing and abusing the social site. I feel the act of your research, I recommend a way of blocking some sites. You find out that sometimes if you want to Google a latest research or discovery, you will see some links of porn sites and if you are not a Godly person, you might be tempted to check. The site you don't even go to will be coming up. So I don't know if there can be a way of blocking these kinds of sites. And again our writing and reading skills have been destroyed especially our writing skills. A lot of us here are really involved in the culture of copy and paste. Because of this many of us have bad handwritings. We just go copy, paste and adjust or rearrange and at the end of the day you bring out a "new thing".

There were three significant factors that came out clearly from the discussions. 1. Abuse of Social Media in Education. 2. Positive usage and skills are not being taught throughout the university and 3. The issues of privacy (See Appendix C).

Q24: Do you think authorities should restrict/censor some activities on the Internet and social networking sites?

Table 24:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	NO	140	35.0	35.4	35.4
	YES	223	55.8	56.5	91.9
	DONT KNOW	32	8.0	8.1	100.0
	Total	395	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	5	1.3		
	Total	400	100.0		

The table shows that 140(35.0%) said no and 223(55.8%) said yes while 32(8.0%) said don't know. One of the participants, Samuel Arera believes that Social Media needs to be approached in a cautious manner. He asked,

> What is the ideology behind most of these social networking thing that are happening? As far as I am concerned the world is heading towards destruction. We should take precaution and be careful how we use this social media because we might be heading towards destruction if we don't have control over them because in as much as the social network is benefiting our lives it's also destroying us. I am in support of the notion that you don't need to be on social media before you would be known." (See appendix C)

Fifty percent of the On-line and focus group participants equally shared concern for users security while using social media and discipline for misuse of the tools. These concerns was further express by a focus group participant who said,

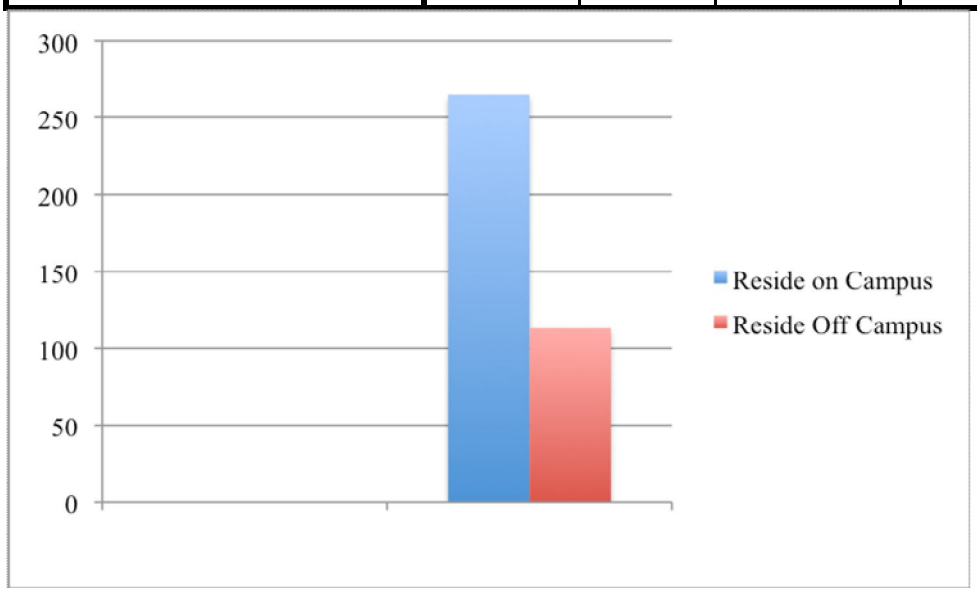
> The disadvantages of the social media are over shadowing the advantages. The rate of immorality has increased compared to like 10 years ago when there was no wide spread of mobile phone, the Internet, Facebook or other social networking sites. Now you can find a boy of eleven already knows how to kiss. Teenagers in secondary school students are asking girls out on social media. So I believe most people are misusing and abusing the social sites. And again our writing and reading skills have been destroyed especially our writing skills. A lot of us here are really involved in the culture of copy and paste. Because of this many of us have bad handwritings. We just go copy, paste and adjust or rearrange and at the end of the day you bring out a "new thing."

This implied that most of the respondents believes that authorities of the school should censor the activities on the Internet and social networking sites in other to reduce the negative impact of new media on students.

Q25: Where do you currently reside?

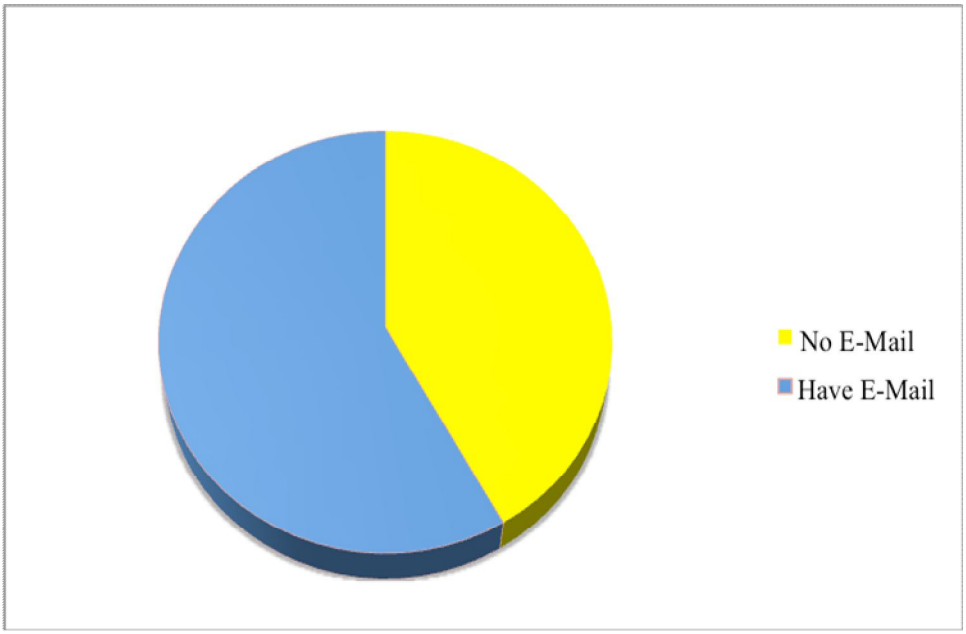
Table 25:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	RESIDE ON CAMPUS	265	66.3	70.1	70.1
	RESIDE OFF CAMPUS	113	28.3	29.9	100.0
	Total	378	94.5	100.0	
Missing	System	22	5.5		
	Total	400	100.0		



The table shows that 265(66.3%) of the respondents said they reside on campus, while 113(28.3%) said they reside off campus. This implied that majority of the students reside on campus.

Q26: If you would like to participate in a focus group discussion on New Media, please include your email address and I will be in contact with you. Thank you for your time.



The figure above shows that 167(41.8%) of the respondents did not list their email addresses, which indicated that they are probably not interested in further discussion for the focus group discussion. More than half of the respondents however, 232(58.0%) agreed to be contacted via email for the focus group discussion by listing their email addresses on the questionnaire. However, due the strike action embarked upon by the Association of Senior Staff of Universities (ASUU) most of the students were in their various homes and the researchers had to depend on those who voluntarily came to join the focus group from their homes, those who were still on campus and those who received the written request for a focus group (See appendix B).

4.2 .1 Further Analysis and Re-Examination of the Research Questions

The first section of the questionnaire revealed that 83.2% of the respondents are between the ages of 18-28. This reflects the normal age range of undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University who are the major focus of this study. Literature also indicates that students within these age ranges are the highest users of Social Media. The male gender constitutes 58%(232) of the respondents, while female respondent were 39.3%(157). This ratio is not surprising going by the fact that the total number of male undergraduate students in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria as at the year of this research was 21,117 compared to 9540 female students.

On marital status, 93%(N372) of the respondents were single while 4% (N16) indicated that they were married. The data revealed that 200 level (second year) students are more amongst the respondents with 30.8%, followed by 400level students with 28.8%. 300level students were 24.3% of the respondents while 9.0% were 100level students. Respondents in this questionnaire represented most of the faculties and departments in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Faculty of Arts, Education, Engineering, Environmental Design, Medicine, Science and Social Science had the highest percentages of respondents with over 10% each and departments such as Political Science, Archeology, Chemistry, Economic, Theatre and Performing Arts, Mathematics, Geography, Mass Communication, and History had over 10% of the respondents each.

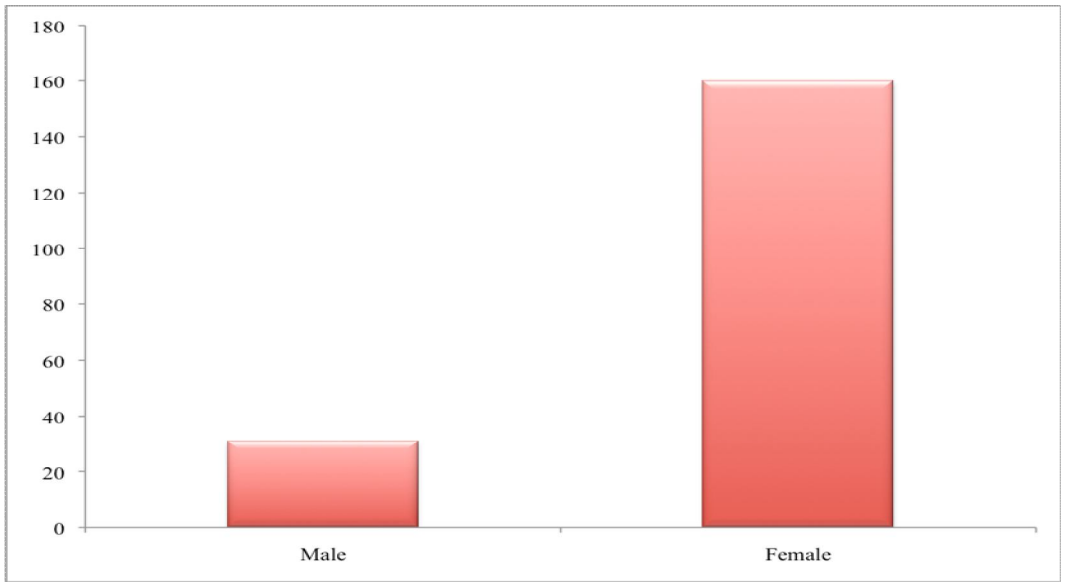
4.2.2 Use of New Media Communication

Ahmadu Bello University students use a number of New Media methods to stay connected on a daily basis. The vast majority of the respondents use at least two of the six major New Media communication methods included in the questionnaire- messengers, email, social networking, phone, Internet and text messaging. On a typical day an average use for all methods falls into four times a week, 30-one hour per day range. By a large margin, respondents report spending the most time per day communicating using all of the listed New Media forms, in this order; phone, social networking, text message, email and messengers, respectively (see Figure 2 above). 75.0% (N300) said they belonged to Social Networking sites before their admission into Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, while 24.3% said "no". See table 17. This finding actually supports research question 1 and 3 because websites like Facebook does allow students to stay up-to date on information concerning school events, relationship with fellow students and class activities with their lecturers. These can be done through viewing of profiles, pokes, private messages, wall posting and photo comments. By offering multiple methods of communication and interaction, Social Media can enable, and create a massive social network between students, lecturers and school management. At the same time, this can enhance student educational and social need since there is a viable channel of participation and interaction.

When considering respondents' usage of these New Media forms according to their year in school, the data reveals some noteworthy findings. As should be expected, phone remain the most used method across all the levels of

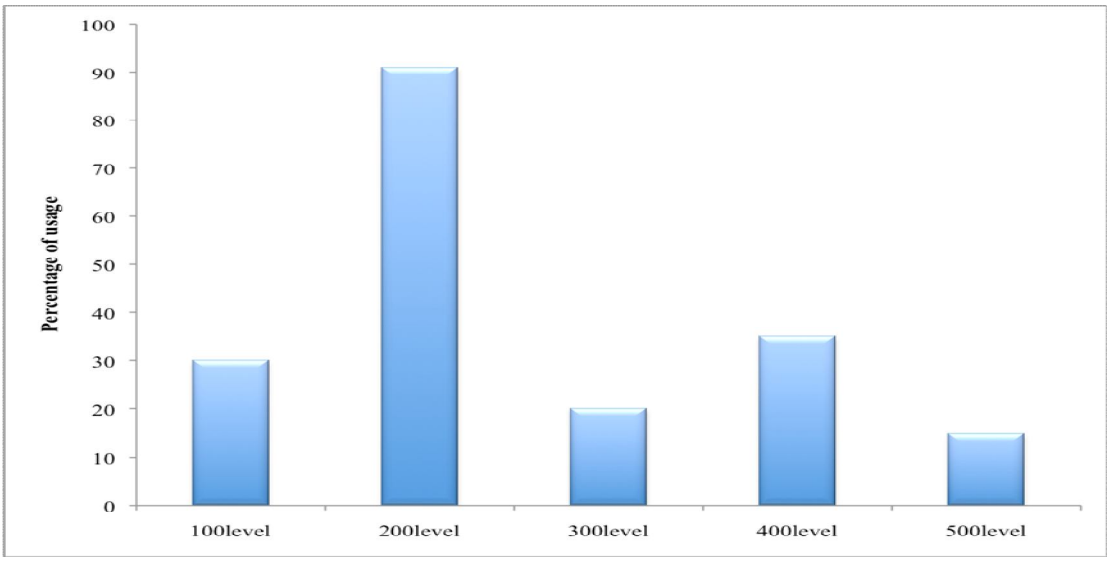
the students because of issues of affordability, portability and multiple tasks that smart phones can carry out. However, there appears to be a relationship between respondents' year in school and the amount of time spent using these methods. The data revealed that 200level students of Ahmadu Bello University spend a significant amount of time each day using these New Media forms than 100level students who are assumed to be more likely to be spending much more time on Social Media. This low usage of New Media forms by 100level students is most likely due to the fact that they are busy concentrating on their studies and trying to adjust to the academic environment.

4.2.3 How Ahmadu Bello University Students Use Social Media/Social Networking Sites.



The primary audience that many Social Networking sites target is young adults and the primary audience of Facebook, indeed, the site's only intended audience when it was launched in 2004 is college students. Ahmadu Bello University students overwhelmingly pick Facebook as their Social Networking

site of choice, with 365(91.3%) of respondents confirming an active account on the website. See figure 5. Looking specifically at how often students use social networking sites, 47% of the respondents report logging into these websites multiple times a day. When considering this percentage in relation to the respondents' gender, 41% of female respondents said they use Social Media multiple times a day, compared to 6% of male respondents. See Figure 11 above.



This data suggesting that younger students spend more time communicating via text messaging and social networking sites is further supported by Lenhart et al. (2007) which found that more students ages 17-21 talk to their friends on an average day via these methods than via email. In addition to logging in multiple times, 40.3%(N161) of respondents report spending 1-2 hours, with 38.0%(N152) spending 10-30 minutes each time. See table 13.

While the respondents in this research seems to take advantage of the features on social networking sites, "keeping in touch with friends" remains the

top priority with 74.3%(N297) reporting so. As might be expected from the results, 57.5%(N230) further said keeping in touch with friends is the most important reason for using social networking sites, with academics trailing in second place at 18.8%(N75), 6.3%(N25) said making new friends and 2.5%(N10) indicated posting/viewing pictures. While these results were consistent across gender, a slight variation can be seen across respondents' year in school, with 100 and 200 students ranking keeping in touch with friends as the most important reason for using the site than 300, 400 and 500 level students.

Within the University environment, one can safely say that all students need to use the Internet for a variety of educational purposes like sharing and asking academic questions with lecturers, classmates and colleagues, in addition to their personal uses. Both the On-line forum and the Focus group participants said New Media technologies in academic settings gives students more access to education and reference resources, according to one Focus group participant,

> There is no doubt that the social media has really impacted the educational system. Today the media most especially the social media gives a lot of information. The Wikipedia is a way through people can get information in relation to their research work but in our education system especially in Ahmadu Bello University, information from Wikipedia gets turned downed because the site is not trusted. But if the information is restricted and regulated then it could be useful for the educational system.

The respondents in the questionnaire supported this statement, see Figure 7. This finding also supports research question 3, which looks to the possible synergy between formal class activity and social media. If social media actually provides more access to educational material for students, then the possibility of educators actually appropriating social media tools into classroom setting is plausible. However, when asked how often they use Social Media to

communicate with their lecturers, friends and classmates on academic questions, a large percentage (71.5%) said "Never", 13.0% said "sometimes" while only 4.5% said "Frequently". In the questionnaire also, respondents were asked how much time they spend on a typical day accessing the Internet for the following purposes; Education, Communication, Entertainment and News. Use of each method scored highly but News occupied the highest percentage, communication comes in closely and Education third. Entertainment occupied the smallest amount of time according to the respondents. See figure 9.

The On-line forum participants and the Focus group participants were largely positive on the impact of Social Media on their academic and social development. This finding supports research question 4. The questionnaire respondents also indicated this with 57.8% indicating "positively", only 2.5% said Social Media impacted them "Negatively" while 35.8% of the respondents choose "positively and negatively". For instance, Martin Ayegba another member of the on line forum, reacts to the discussion thus,

> To start with, I have a strong believe and personal conviction that the New Media is a very indispensable platform for learning in this age if only we know what 'learning' means and can differentiate it from 'schooling' be it formal or informal as people have argued earlier. The problem with most of us arises from the nature of schooling imposed on us from the time we started acquiring 'Western education' and this is actually not peculiar because the formal schooling system has been critiqued severally by authors like Everett Reimer and Ivan D. Illich in their "School is Dead" and "De-schooling Society". There are allusions to these positions already from the discussions so far. I think there are misconceptions where people mention 'freedom' as if it were just there and given always. Learning comes from discipline and commitment and the desire to learn. The New Media platform may look free but I must say that it can be as well quite rigorous and engaging. What it does is the fact that it democratizes learning and offers the entire Universe a space to share knowledge, ideas and information.

When asked what are the possible challenges posed by the New Media to students' academic development? A large percentage of respondents said "students will be more distracted in classroom due to laptops and smart phone use, See Figure 10. In this regard, 55.8% of the respondents said authorities should restrict/censor some activities on the Internet and Social Networking sites. 35.0% disagreed while 8.0% said they "do not know".

When asked where respondents reside, 66.3% said they reside on campus while 28.3% said off campus. Staying on campus may be an indication of greater access to the Internet since Ahmadu Bello University offers students several locations to access the Internet. The campus maintains approximately 100 computers with Internet access in the University's main library coupled with the ones available in the various computer centers around the campus. The 28.3% of the respondents who indicated staying off campus may not have constant access to the Internet due to inadequate electricity and Internet connectivity but may still be able to access the Internet anywhere via electronic gadgets like smart phones using prepaid Internet services. Finally, 58.0% of the respondents agreed to participate in the Focus group discussion by listing their e-mail address while 41.8% declined. This development did not affect the focus group discussion in terms of the number of participants since the total number of the respondents that were willing to participate was high. So far, the preceding analysis has synergized the data collected from the questionnaire respondents, the focus group and the on-line forum discussion.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0 Study Summary

This chapter includes a summary of the research findings, areas for future research, conclusion and recommendations.

Students have generally been using Social Media to connect with friends. The increased use of Social Media has in turn led to the utilization of Social Media inside and outside the classroom. This is based on the real and theoretical potential benefits to institutions that can be obtained through the use of Social Media. The potential benefits include enhancing the overall college experience (Banaria, 2004), expanding educational opportunities (LaRose 2010), library services (Kaplan, 2010). In conjunction with the rapid increase in the use of Social Media by students of higher education, problems resulting from the use of Social Media are becoming increasingly apparent, such as plagiarism and the posting of inappropriate materials. This study helped to provide further clarification to these previously identified themes, by exploring what is obtainable in the context of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria Nigeria and its undergraduate students.

As a relatively new field, research which looks into Social Media use in higher education in Nigeria, defines how Social Media is being used among undergraduate students and examine the potential negative and positive issues that could result from the use of Social, are comparatively few. Chapter one of this

study described the growth in the use of Social Media in higher education, described the purpose of the study, and explained the significance of the research. Chapter one also generally set the foundation for the research to be expanded upon in later chapters. The literature review in chapter two presented an overview of research, which has been conducted in the area of Social Media.

Chapter two provided an overview of Web 2.0 and the Internet. It discussed the historical link between higher education and the use of technology. Chapter two also described some of the uses and benefits of Social Media which have been identified and some of the challenges that have been identified from the use of Social Media, again with a particular emphasis on higher education. Chapter two also presented a preliminary study on Social Media use in Nigeria and amongst students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria.

Chapter three described the methodology that was used for the research and the theoretical framework employed to ground the study. The chapter described how a mixed approach of both qualitative and quantitative method is more suitable for the research and described the research design, which consisted of three phases. The three phases were a questionnaire design, an on-line forum and a focus group discussion. Chapter three describes the population sample and the methods of data analysis utilized for the phases. Chapter three also identified and discussed some relevant theoretical frames but emphasis was laid on Participatory Communication, as a theory, which best suits, the research.

The results of the research are presented in chapter four. There were charts, tables, descriptions and explanations on the data collected from all the phases of the research. The researcher took time to explain the data from the questionnaire, relevant quotations from both the on-line forum and focus group sessions were

also included in the chapter four, with a description of the implications of the quotations from both the focus group and on-line forum.

5.1 Summary of Findings:

The key finding, which emerged from the data analysis are as follows:

5.1.1 Personal Choice

As with many technologies, adoption of the Internet and Social Media has seen its highest levels of usage among younger users. In samples such as the one used for this research, where 91.3% of respondents had a Facebook account, non-users are very few and are almost certainly at a disadvantage and may find themselves excluded during social exchanges among their classmates and colleagues. Based on the data collected, it appears that the use of Social Media in higher education in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria will increase in the future. While the use of Social Media among respondents and participant in this research show the larger use is for socialization, the percentage for academic use is however gradually increasing.

5.1.2 Positive Opinion

Overall, participants expressed a positive opinion of Social Media in this study, with a smaller group with a negative opinion regarding the use of Social Media. 57.8% of the respondents in this research reported having a “positive” opinion, with 0nly 2.3% reporting having a “negative opinion, while 35.8% reported having a “positive and negative”. The focus group and on-line forum

confirmed this, with the majority of the participants expressing a positive opinion of Social Media and a small group strongly and vocally expressing an opposition to the use of Social Media. This indicates that more participants have a positive perception of social media than a negative perception. Combined with the levels of Social Media awareness, this seems to indicate a high level of interest in Social Media among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

5.1.3 Need for Boundaries

The blurring of boundaries between social and academic life was mentioned as one of the negative issues occurring from the use of Social Media amongst students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. This is based in part on the challenge of defining whether Social Media is a private or public activity. Participants in this research explained that sites like Facebook is intended for personal use only and that lecturers are only supposed to be their 'Friends' on Facebook, so discussing academic issues on Facebook may mean that the boundaries would have to be redefined in relation to formal classroom settings.

5.1.4 Digital Literacy

Participants stated that it is the duty of educators to understand Social Media, and part of their obligation is to teach students about digital literacy. This issue is a recurring decimal amongst both the On-line forum and focus group participants. The issue also touches upon the role of educators and the need for a form of media/digital education for students. The argument for digital literacy is essentially an argument for making the curriculum in Ahmadu Bello University,

Zaria more relevant to students outside school environment and to the wider society.

5.1.5 Bridging the Digital Divide through Infrastructure

The benefits of computers, Internet access and digital literacy in bridging the digital divide between nations and within nations are widely documented. The respondents and participants in this research strongly believed that the key to bringing out the best in students is ensuring that Internet is accessible and other relevant infrastructure are put in place to aid students in their learning. The on-line participants were quite adamant and they believe bridging the digital divide is a key facilitator and accelerator in educational development in Nigeria. Both the focus group and on-line participants suggested that Ahamdu Bello University could aid students by providing a personal computer or laptop to every registered student of the University and also ensure that students have uninterrupted access to the Internet.

5.1.6 Barriers to Educational Use

The On-line forum and focus group discussions provided some valuable information regarding this theme. Participants felt the main barriers preventing them from using Social Media to a greater extent for education was inadequate infrastructure, lack of time and discouragement from teachers. A participant who said some lecturers do not have interest in using Social Media academically clarified the last barrier during the focus group session, because sites like Wikipedia and YouTube are not permissible for academic reference. In addition

to the issues of blurred boundaries, the most significant challenges presented by the use of social Media identified by this research among Ahamdu Bello University undergraduate students are on, plagiarism, Social Media as a distraction and posting of inappropriate materials.

Plagiarism is a significant challenge identified from the use of New Media in education and in turn Social Media. Participant in this research talked about student's act of "copy and paste", a situation were on-line academic materials are simply copied without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing. Social Media as a distraction was another challenge identified. The technology is purposely intended to be engaging, but some participants in this research felt it could be sometimes too engaging. They reported both themselves and others getting distracted by the numbers of options and amount of material available in Social Media, which prevented them from staying focused on academic task.

5.1.7 The Fear of Social Media Policy

A large percentage of the respondents in this research believe that it is important to restrict/censor certain contents on Social Media. The implementation of Social Media policy has also raised concern from other respondents and participants in this research who believe that schools through media policy would prevent access to Social Media sites like Facebook, MySpace, YouTube and others. This they argue can in turn hinder students' social and educational experience. Although this point of view is cogent, it should also be noted that there is no requirement that students must be allowed access, or provided access without any form of safeguards. However, the suggestions from respondents and participants in this study can serve as useful resources for

consideration in future plans to design and implement a Social Media policy in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in particular and Nigeria in general.

5.2 Future Research

An important area for future research is looking into the widening gap between Internet-savvy students and their schools, as represented by teachers. This is because Social Media integration into the formal learning environment is directly dependent upon the classroom teacher, it is therefore incumbent for researchers to discover how best teachers and lecturers can utilize Social Media to facilitate delivery of content. The ubiquitous use of Social Media by young people have been studied but what is most often missing is how these learning experiences can be synergized with the processes of formal learning environment in schools and higher institutions.

Understanding how effective teachers use social Media tools and the impact of Social Media on productivity in the workplace would also be a helpful future study. In addition, further research should be carried out using Theatre for Development (TfD) and Community Radio as strategies to address the seeming negative issues associated with the Social Media use by the students of tertiary institutions.

5.3 Conclusion

The aim of this research was to explore the usefulness of Social Media in education in Nigeria. The researcher sought to identify Social Media use amongst the undergraduate students in Ahmadu Bello University. In the process, the study

examines observable positive and negative impact, which results from Social Media use. The research has achieved its set objectives, which is purposely to bridge the existing gap in studies and literature on the potentials and promise of Social Media use for education in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. Media technology has indeed become a quintessential aid to higher education everywhere in the world and it has played a critical role in changing the notion of education and learning. Social Media is one important dimension among the various paths New Media has taken, and from the findings of this research, it is a tool that will continue to impact education in the foreseeable future. It is therefore crucial that these media play a positive role in higher education and educators should be concerned about encouraging students to selectively use Social Media in more informed ways. The development of New Media technologies has apparently resulted in a more heterogeneous environment of culture and knowledge and the notion of Social Media as bearer of a single set of ideologies and beliefs or as uniformly harmful can no longer be sustained or justified. As such, educators should necessarily aim to develop young people's understanding and positive attitude in the area of utilization and participation in the media culture that surrounds them.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Academic use

There is an immediate need for institutions of higher education to address social media in education. If universities include Social Media technology and tools in designing curriculum and course contents, students are more likely to

learn its best and positive uses, especially by using them towards the outlined goals and objectives of learning. Presently, many institutions of higher learning in Nigeria have not structured their educational goals, taking cognizance of the opportunities provided by Social Media tools. Educators therefore should start thinking in the direction of establishing the needed synergy between Social Media tools and technologies and structured system of learning in tertiary institutions. It is essential to have a focused curriculum that harness the potentials of Social Media to enhance access, engagement, communication, and learning in a way that benefits students. In this regard, it will also give both students and teachers opportunities to understand and practice ethical uses of Social Media.

5.4.2 Establishing Awareness Forum on Campus

Awareness forum should be created on university campuses by the university management and student bodies to educate students on what Social Media are, their potentialities and promise for education and learning. This must also address, safety and privacy concerns; possible misuses and their consequences. Awareness forum are important because they can empower all stakeholders (Students, teachers and administrators) and make them responsible for their own actions. If education is stressed, it would encourage students to focus on learning and positive collaboration.

5.4.3 Making a Generational connection

There is an urgent need to bridge the widening digital disconnect between students and teachers and connecting informal and formal learning experiences in

the age of participatory communication. Digital literacy should be part of the training of all teachers and lecturers. As more safety-friendly, Social Media software are being designed, educators should be encouraged to use these Social Media technologies for classroom instruction. If schools fail to engage with the changing orientations of students toward learning, there may be significant danger in the educational development. This situation is particularly detrimental for students who are particularly high confident users of New Media technology but who are increasingly perceived as unserious or failures in the context of school learning. If the generational and digital gap between student and lecturers remain wide, there is the likelihood of the dwindling motivation and interest in learning. Consequently, general atmosphere of dissatisfaction may simply become widespread.

5.4.4 Social Media Policy

This study also recommends social media policy in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. Education authorities are, as a matter of necessity, called upon to come up with a coherent Social Media Policy in order to guide proper use and applications in academic institutions. A Social Media Policy that promotes education and learning which contains practical and realistic mechanisms of monitoring and feedback for the sole purpose of the academic needs of students is highly recommended for tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria.

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Appendix A

Social Media Questionnaire

Dear Student

This questionnaire contains series of questions that are designed to test your knowledge of the New Media and their day-to-day uses as well as their impact on you. In particular, the questions are centered on Internet applications and social networking sites that you use as a student. The purpose of this exercise is mainly to generate data for my PhD research in the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello Universtiy, Zaria.

Thank you.

Instructions: Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible. All information will be confidentially treated and your identity will be concealed.

Age: ____Sex: Male: ___ Female____ Marital Status_____

Faculty: _____ Department: _____ Level_____

1. Which of these New Media forms are you familiar with?
   - a. Messengers ☐
   - b. Email ☐
   - c. Smart Phone ☐
   - d. Internet ☐
   - e. Social networking ☐
   - f. Text messaging ☐
   - g. All ☐
   - h. None ☐

2 Which ones do you use?

a. Messengers ☐
b. Email ☐
c. Phone ☐
d. Social networking ☐
e. Text messaging ☐
f. All ☐
g. None ☐

3. How frequent do you use your favorite media?

a. Every Day
b. Four times a week
c. Twice a week
d. Once a week
e. Non

4. At what hours of the day do you use your handset?

a. Morning Hours
b. Afternoon
c. Evening Hours
d. Night
e. Mid-night hours
f. All
g. Non

5. Do you switch off your Handset in the Classroom? Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Do you use your handset in the classroom? Yes ☐ No ☐

7. What do you use your handset for the in Classroom?

a. Receiving calls
b. Making calls
c. Text messaging
d. Checking mails
e. Browsing the Net
f. Google Search
g. All
h. Non
i. Others (Please Specify)----------

8. How often do you visit Internet?

a. Everyday
b. Four times a week
c. Twice a week
d. Once a week
e. Occasionally
f. All
g. Non

9. Do you have a Social networking account? Yes ☐ No ☐

10. Which social networking sites do you have accounts with? Please check ALL that apply.

a. Facebook ☐
b. MySpace ☐
c. Friendster ☐
d. LinkedIn ☐
e. Bebo ☐
f. Orkut ☐
g. Badoo ☐
h. None of the above ☐
i. Other (Please list: _____

11. How often do you log in to Social networking sites

a. Multiple times a day ☐
b. Once a day ☐
c. A few times a week ☐
d. A few times a month ☐
e. Very rarely ever ☐

12. How much time, on average, do you spend on the website each time you log in?

a. 10-30 minutes ☐
b. One hour-Two hours ☐
c. More than Two hours ☐
Others (Please Specify)_____

13. What do you use Social Networking sites for? Please check **ALL** that apply.

a. Finding old friends ☐
b. Keeping in touch with friends ☐
c. Making new friends ☐
d. Pictures posting/viewing ☐
e. Event invites ☐
f. Groups ☐
g. Applications ☐
h. Networking ☐
i. Academic ☐
Others (please specify: _____

14. What is the most important reason for your use of social Networking site?

a. Keeping in touch with friends ☐
b. Making new friends ☐
c. Pictures posting/viewing ☐
d. Groups ☐
e. Applications ☐
f. Academic ☐
Others (please specify: _____

15. Do your Lecturers post course work materials on social Media?

a. Frequently ☐
b. Often ☐
c. Sometimes ☐
d. Rarely ☐
e. Never ☐
☐

16. How often do you use social Media to do the following?

a. Communicate with your lecturers to ask academic questions

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

b. Communicate with Classmates and ask academic questions

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

c. Exchange online academic materials with students in your department

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

d. Learn about campus activities within or outside your Department

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

e. Find out what social activities your classmates or students within your Department are doing?

Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐

17. Did you belong to a social network site before your admission into Ahmadu Bello University?

Zaria? Yes ☐ No ☐

18. As a student of Ahmadu Bello University, do you belong to any social network?

Yes ☐ No ☐

19. How concerned are you about the image you present to others through your social network profile?

Very concerned ☐

Concerned ☐
A little concerned ☐
Not concerned ☐

20. What do you think are the most important benefits of using New Media technologies in academic setting? (You can select up to two items)
    a. Gives students more access to education and reference resource ☐
    b. Offers another channel for different learning styles ☐
    c. Enable greater collaboration with fellow students ☐
    d. Create room for interactive discussion and creativity ☐
    e. Other (Please specify) ---------- ☐
    f. Don't Know ☐

21. On the average, how much time do you spend each day using the Internet for the following activities?

    a. Education/school work: 30-60 minutes ☐ One-two hours ☐ More than two hours ☐ I don't use the Inte ☐ for this purpose

    b. Communication: 30-60 minutes ☐ One-two hours ☐ More than two hours ☐ I don't use the Inte ☐ for this purpose

    c. Entertainment: 30-60 minutes ☐ One-two hours ☐ More than two hours ☐ I don't use the Internet for this purpose ☐

    d. News: 30-60 minutes ☐ One-two hours ☐ More than Two hours ☐ I don't use the Internet for this purpose ☐

22. How has the Internet impacted on your academic and social development?
    a. Positively ☐
    b. Negatively ☐
    c. Both positively and negatively ☐
    d. Other ways (specify)_____
    e. I don't know ☐

23. As a youth and University student what are the possible challenges posed by the New Media to students' academic development?
    a. Potential increase in student plagiarism. ☐

b. Students will be more distracted in classroom due to laptop and smart phone use. ☐
c. Potential increase in student cheating in assignment and examination ☐
d. Increase in bad behavior among students and towards lecturers ☐
e. Problem of addiction due to excessive exposure to online materials ☐
f. Others (Please specify) _____
g. Don't Know ☐

24. Do you think authorities should restrict/censor some activities on the Internet and social networking sites?
Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐

25. Where do you currently reside
Off Campus ☐ On Campus ☐

26. If you would like to participate in a focus group discussion on New Media and Social Media in Education. Please include your email address and I will be in contact with you. Thank you for your time.

Email: _____

Thank you for your time

Appendix B

GREATEST ABUSITE!!!

Invitation as a Discussant on Social Media in Education

Is it true that Social Media has redefined the notion of friendship, community and learning? What role can social media play in higher education? If Social Media is really responsible for the global paradigm shift in communication and knowledge dissemination, why do you think higher institutions, particularly in Nigeria, are not employing Social Media in formal classroom setting? These are some of the questions we will be discussing. We envisage an interesting and robust discussion.

Venue= Center of Excellence on Development Communication
(Beside Senate Building)

Date= Monday, 2nd September 2013

Time= 11:00am prompt

Please indicate your willingness to participate by giving us the following information.
We will send you a reminder.

Name: ----------

Department: ----------

Phone Number: ----------

Thank You

APPENDIX C

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Introduction By OLUSHOLA BENJAMIN

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. The aim of this Focus group is to know our thoughts and perception about the Social Media and its positive or negative impact in our lives as students and as a whole. We are also here to discuss what we as students have achieved from technology either negatively or positively, where its headed to; a place where we can say we have achieved something from technology or a mere platform to keep us socialized. I think this is where we will draw our debate from but before then we have a very short play to get our minds set on the discussion. So please enjoy yourselves and pay attention to the playlet.

Scene one

Two boys (supposed friends) are walking to the library.

Boy 1: Shey be I tell you say everything wey that lecturer be tell us for class dey out dated.

Boy 2: How you take know that one now?

Boy 1: I checked the Internet and discovered he was teaching us outdated stuffs.

Boy 2: You see my problem with you be say you no dey gree learn. The thing wey you suppose dey learn you no go gree learn. Wetin no concern you, you go dey chuk your mouth chuchuchu. Who send you? Lecturer do am well or e no do am well wetin concern you.

Boy 1: You are not serious; you think everything about Internet is Badoo, Facebook, Twitter YouTube? (*Boy 2 busy on his Ipad and Iphone Interrupts him excitedly!)*

Boy 2: O boy! You don hear the latest jam? "Skelewu" O boy ye… I love this song. The song is the bomb!

Enters Belinder. She is seen carrying heavy books on her way to the library. She sings a gospel song and dances to it. She greets everybody and almost bump into Boy 3.

Boy 3: What's your problem na? Can't you see?

Belinder: Don't you have eyes too? Can't you see? *(Belinder starts to pray).*

Belinder: I cast every spirit of distraction as am going to the library today to read and understand, I destroy every spirit of distraction in the mighty name of.…

Librarian: (*Irritated*) Eh! Please reduce your voice.

Belinder: No vex ma. Sorry ma.

Boy 2 starts to sing aloud despite having earpiece in his ear.

Boy 1: You dey shout na.

Boy 2: Wetin be dis na? I dey feel the rhythm which level.

Girl: A beg tell am.

Boy 2: Hold your own for there.

Librarian: I will send you out of this library!

Boy 1: (*excitedly showing boy 2 something on his phone*) Guy! Guy! Guy! Guess what?
Boy 2: Wetin

Boy 1: Professor Shiro just discovered the cure to sleeping sickness disease!

Belinda: (*Irritated)*You people are still making noise!

Boy 2: How that one take concern you? Tse-Tse fly bite you?

Boy 1: Make we down load am read so we go fit know how Professor Shiro take do am.

Boy 2: Go sit down! Wetin no correct na wetin you go dey do. I say Tse tse fly bite you wey you go dey concern yourself with stupid inventions. I beg join me sing this latest *Skelewu* and *Caro* song. This WizKid na baba! (*He starts to whistle as he sings)*

Belinda: You people are making noise! Whats your problem

Girl: Please your voice is too loud!

Librarian: I want you boys to leave since you are obviously not here to read!

(Boy 1 leaves)

Boy 2: (Walking toward Belinder) Beli, Beli Beli!

Belinda: Wetin happen?

Boy 2: You know you are wonderfully and marvelously made and e don tey wey I want make you and I relate but the problem be say you no gree up grade. You dey on BBM or Facebook? Abi na Whatsapp or 2Go.

Belinda: As you can see I want to concentrate and I have something to do by 12pm so I don't want distraction.

Boy 2: How I take com dey distract you? Na common thing wey I ask you.

Belinda: (Shouts) I want to concentrate I have assignment. I don't know anything about Facebook because I am busy facing my books in this library as you can see. So what is your problem?

Boy 2: My problem with you be say you no won gree up grade. Facebook, 2Go, Whatsapp, you no dey. Which one you dey? Are you in this world?

Belinda: (*Turning to the Librarian*) Excuse me ma! He is disturbing me.

Librarian: (*Angrily*) Please leave this library before I call the security.

Boy 2: Madam sorry but them no dey pay you neh! (*addressing Belinder*) , nawa o, Beli see reason with wetin I tell you e go help you o. (*He leaves)*

Belinda: (*After some few minutes*) Its almost 12pm and I have prayer meetings with brother Solomon. But my assignments na? (*Hisses*) let me run so I wouldn't be late for the prayer meeting. Bye bye ma. (*She leaves*).

Scene 2:

(Enters Boy 2 singing)

Boy 1: You don start you don start. One day moto go jam you for road with all these your gadgets wey you dey put for eye, ear and head.

Boy 2: Before e jam me, trailer go kill you!

Boy 1: See you.

Boy 2: (*Excited*) Ooo boy make I tell you something. You know I be tell you about that girl wey I jam for Badoo wey I just connect with. You know something about me? My flows they trip them unlimited and the chicks they trip personally.

Boy 1: You too dey disappoint me. You are in theatre and performing arts, you are suppose to use the Social Media to read in order to brighten your horizon. Have you read about Aristotle? What about Soyinka or Olarotimi? But you know everything about Badoo, 2face, Sango, Twitter everything. As you take short na him your brain take short.

Boy 2: You know your problem? You are still in the world of Aristotle and you no go gree wise. Man the truth na him I dey tell you. Make I connect you, you go say you no get girl friend: this girl dey dull you, that girl dey dull you, I dey give you the shortest code…

Boy 1: And by the time I read become famous and make a lot of money na them go pursue me. (*Belinder is seen walking by carrying her huge and heavy books*).

Boy 2: (Laughs) Belinder the lord is good on you o!

Boy 1: Where you carry all these book come from?

Belinder: I dey commot from church I want to go library.

Boy 1: You carried all these books go church?

Boy 2: Carry all these books go greet God?

Belinda: I wan do T.D.B I no fit go back to hostel con dey come back.

Boy 1: I have always told you, you don't need all this books. With your phone you can just access E-books on the net, instead of carrying all these heavy things.

Belinder: Eh eh! You wan make dem talk I say I do plagiarism? Abeg I no dey, no vex. My parents no send me make I con dey do Face booking, chatting, pornography, and the others. My parents send me make I con read (she walks away).

Boy 1: Why this girl local

Boy 2: Na your problem be dat?

Boy 1: She is too local

Boy 2: No be today I dey tell you say make you up grade, you no go gree.

Boy 1: No use style take dey insult me!

Boy 2: I tell you the truth because if you are connected, that girl no go dey tell you any kind rubbish. You no go they even look her side self, you see say I send her?

Scene 3

Belinder is seen crying and complaining bitterly about her inability to perform well as expected despite her prayers and reading.

Boy 1: (*Speaking on the phone*) Yes dad I got the scholarship. (sees Belinder crying) Dad please can I call you later? Okay dad, bye. (*Addressing Belinder*) Belinder wetin dey happen na?.

Belinda: With all the reading that I did. Despite all my prayers, even brother Solomon gives me tutorials after prayer meeting. I still no make the result and na my final year be this. Wetin I wan go tell my parents.

Boy 1: I tell you say book book book, no be only book you suppose combine books with on-line information and materials. (*Looking suspicious*) And which kind tutorials you dey do with brother Sunday?

[Boy 2 comes in crying, crying bitterly and lamenting]

Boy 2: 2Go, Badoo, Whatsapp, Facebook them don finish me ooooo!!!! Na nine carry over them nack me.

Boy 1: (*laughing and almost rolling on the floor*)

Belinder: (*Laughing and wiping her tears*) My own even better, I dey go! We go see later.

Boy 2: How you go they laugh me like this.

Boy 1: Nine carry over! Didn't I warn you? You over did Social Media now… (He continues to laughs as he walks out)

Boy 2: (*Crying)* Ipad, blackberry, Techno, see my ogbonge earphone! Badoo don Badoo me! 2Go don 2Go me! ahhhhh……

The End.

Rasheedah : Welcome ladies and gentlemen, although someone has spoken earlier, but it better for me to also contribute by saying I want to appreciate all of you for coming. I'm sure the information came maybe late or not but we are

happy most of you can make it here. The presentation is just to kick the ball rolling so that at least we can have a feel of what the discussion is going to be about. There are some faces I have seen here so far and I know we are going to have an interesting discussion. Let me pick up from the performance we have just seen. The performance may give us a wrong message or a right message. I don't know what it may has done so far depending on the individual, but what we try to pass across is the fact that we cannot run away from Social Media. It is here to stay whether you are students, or working. What we are trying to discuss today is how Social Media affects us as student. Is there any body here that doesn't belong to any social networking site? Please if you are not let me just see your hands up.

Umaru: Raises up his hand

Ladies and gentlemen we have a case study. Umar here says he is not on Facebook, Twitter, Badoo or even 2Go so he is our first case study. You are very important to this discussion. So we will be focusing on you as a group as we go along. So the title of this focus group is Social Media in Education. We are not going to restrict ourselves to education only, but we will discuss how it affects us students socially educational and may be psychologically because as we know some students now are being taken to rehab in Africa countries like Kenya, Zimbabwe etc. its called Internet rehab. I am sure we don't have it in Nigeria, at least not yet. Just like people suffer drugs and alcoholism we heard that they are now people suffering from over dose of the Internet and that includes Social Media, and social networking sites. So people I am going to make it open and we

will start the discussion from anybody that wants to start. Please feel free, no body is grading anybody we are to discuss like we are in our bedrooms or sitting rooms and as you all know its voluntary. Speak up as much as you want. It's your ideas that I need to hear. I am in Theatre and Performing Arts, a PhD student and this focus group is part of an on going research that I am doing. So please help to contribute. Is there anybody that wants to start?

Omadachi: Good morning all! I am Omadachi Fredric. There are certain observations I would like to make concerning the Social Media as it relates to academics. I have personally perceived it to be something that should run side by side with printed text. But in the Nigerian context we find the issue of network is a disadvantage. Often times when you need access to the net by reasons of network you cant access it. Either on the phone or on wireless like the A.B.U wireless system, so it is an handicap until that and other issues are addressed, Nigerians may not fully reap the benefit of Social Media because Social Media is not just about making friends, its also suppose to profit us in area of our academics. Then on the issue or at the level of making friends, I have witness complain from somebody, a married man whose wife relocated from the bedroom to another bedroom because of her attachment to Social Media. It does have disadvantages and its advantages but I hope we don't use it at the level of wrecking our homes. Thank you.

Amaru: Good morning ladies and gentle men, my name us Amaru Uze, from the department of mass communication. Talking about New Media or Social Media in education, I think we cannot completely talk about New Media

without mentioning Marshal McLuhan because the whole talk about the New Media started in the 1960's when Marshal made a speech that one day the world will become a global village and looking at the new invention of the modern day today we can see that the world is a global village and talking about New Media in education, if you look at our contemporary society, the youth of this generation so to say have actually deviated from the main motive behind the New Media. It was eventually invented for our education purpose, but we tend to use it for our normal Internet chatting, some pornography so to say. Luckily enough my BSC project is the effect of the New Media on the use of books in library and I had the opportunity of interviewing some librarians in A.B.U and the responds is that the use of library is declining day by day and that the books you think you can have access to by consulting and stressing librarians and yourself, you can easily now type the book on the net and within a blink of an eye, it gives it to you. So I think its actually helping in terms of our education but its quite unfortunate that to a certain extent we have deviated from the main motive.

Kelvin: My name is Kelvin and am very happy to be here as a matter of fact we all know that evil always over shadow good. The disadvantages of the Social Media are quite enormous and they have and are over shadowing the advantages. Yesterday I was discussing with someone on the rate of the spread of immoralities in this generation compared to then. I was telling that friend of mine that then when I was doing my IJMB, a lot of things I was very naïve of, then there was no mobile phone, Internet was just starting not to talk of facebook and other social sites. That was about year

2000 and I was a little bit above 15 then. But you find out that a boy of eleven now has known some deadly stunts and even children of eight learning how to kiss. Another starting point which is the home video in those days barely showed nutty things but today senior brother get films, without checking viewers digression, we play these films in front of our younger ones and they will start learning all of these things. You even see teenagers learning how to ask girls out referring to the secondary school students on social media. So we in Nigeria and I believe other countries to are misusing and abusing the social site. I feel the act of your research, I will suggest, I recommend a way of blocking some sites. You find out that sometimes if you want to Google a latest research or discovery, you will see some links of porn sites and if you are not a Godly person, you might be tempted to check. The site you don't even go to will be coming up. So I don't know if there can be a way of blocking these kind of sites. And again our writing and reading skills have been destroyed especially our writing skills. A lot of us here are really involved in the culture of copy and paste. Because of this many of us have bad handwritings. We just go copy, paste and adjust or rearrange and at the end of the day you bring out a "new thing".

Emmanuel: Social Media is like the market you go to buy whatever you want to buy and it depends on your intention in the market. Social Media itself is not a crime or evil. What ever programme has been loaded in the Social Media has been up loaded for a specific purpose. Who ever is going to any of this web sites to up load anything does that at his or her own advantage or disadvantage. The question you asked earlier on lingered in my mind. You

are able to communicate with some one who you have not seen for years through the Social Media as though you are sitting face to face with the person. The same Social Media can be used to see naked women and men. It depends on your choice so for someone to say the disadvantages has over shadowed the advantages is not true. Every one of us have benefited from the Social Media. Many of us spend hours in library reading research or doing a work through social media. Every one goes to café's and walks around with phones what are you doing with the phone? Connecting, chatting, if you are not connected you are dead. So Social Media is of greater advantage compared to the disadvantage. In fact what we are doing now is one of the advantages of social media. Thank you.

Adeola: What we understand as Social Media are sites like 2go, face book, twitter etc. but to me it goes beyond that. Even the google, there are other online sites you find on the net that is purely based on research where you can get text books journals to carryout one research or the other. In the advanced countries today there are institutions where teachers are being encouraged to open twitter accounts where they post their homework question so students don't need to necessarily go to class and copy the questions. There was a time I knew about a computer institution based in America and they made it an open exam for the people. The questions where set and post on their wall, which requires you to just answer them for the pending scholarship. To me it can be achieved but the main question is how objective is the media? Can we really trust it? Especially in African society; sometimes in 2007, a research was made in Ghana and they find out that majority of the divorce was as a result of the man or the woman

cheating via Social Media. Married women were engaged in infidelity using the Social Media. There is no doubt that social media effects us all, only an alien can resist being independence of the social media. Just like somebody here who says he doesn't have a social media, it is possible he doesn't, but he must have used it before, because it affects us all but the truth is that it is not a trusted source that you can base your judgment on. It is a place you can loose your culture and possible for academics coming down to our own society, the usage is abused beyond consideration. So what is the guarantee that when you use it in the academic system. Can you use it to derive the objects set if the agenda is to benefit students in the academic setting?

Rasheedah: I would like to clarify something before we continue. There is a difference between Social Media and Social networking sites. Social Media is a broader term just like an umbrella which encompasses the Internets, Wikipedia, blogs, Google etc. but when we say social networking site we refer to sites like Facebook for instance, MySpace, YouTube and so on. It's important for us to be able to distinguish the difference between the media and the sites. And as we have said before its here to stay and its our choice if we go on-line nobody can stop you from going to sites you would not want your sister to see and sites your parents wouldn't be happy with. But as adults it's our choice to do what we want to do. Another thing we should be talking about is education. The corner stone of this discussion is "social media in education" I'm trying to see how we can use social media to broaden our academic standing and help us in our studies.

Abdulazeez: Let us take Social Media as any place we can meet. When you go online there is some body on the other side and that means you are already on the social media. You can interact with somebody, and that defines the idea that I am on Facebook or twitter. When you go online and you have a simple question, somebody who has the answer will respond and immediately you are interacting, that forms the idea of social media, so going online shouldn't be tagged evil because you have a purpose for going. An example was a day I was trying to do an assignment, I didn't see the answer to my proposed question but I kept looking online, somebody else did the same thing and got the answer. So let us not see from a negative aspect. In fact, one of the richest people in the world is the owner of facebook and he is making money from it. But from our side, the youths spend the whole day on Facebook. What are we gaining? We are making more money for him seeing the bad side and not seeing the good side. Sometimes you see people saying I make N40, 000 a day online, because they are seeing it from a positive aspect. Sometimes information might be important to share and one can just rebroadcast to your friend and within minutes the message will spread. Its just that where we are, we are not seeing it from the broader side and our educational system doesn't permit student to explore the nets and YouTube. They expect us to give them what they gave us exactly. Let our lecturers start having a positive perception of the media.

Omadachi: Somebody earlier on raised the issue of objectively what you see at site at the level of academics is somebody's view concerning an issue. It might not be entirely correct. I know of somebody in my class who takes

assignment question to twitter and often times what comes out is at variance to printed text. Think they should be a standard set to ascertain what should be set on the net so it doesn't go on to confuse people.

Aguele Idirabge: Considering a plethora of definitions of the Social Media, I believe we are abandoning the key issue here education. Education is a long life complex process of learning and teaching. It involves enquiring skills, techniques, norms value etc. where I want to anchor my debate on is the learning aspect. When using the Social Media, there is nobody here that would say he or she hasn't learned anything from the Social media. So when we refer to Social Media in education, we can say everybody here has learnt one or two things from media either negatively or positively. But the question is, are Nigerian schools ready to use the Social Media as a means of education because there is an adage that says 'I go face book before I face my book. The truth of the matter is the addiction, which I will also tag anti-Christ that the media gives. When you go on-line the first thing that gets to your mind is let me go Facebook, Twitter and so on. I was discussing with some of my friends yesterday while watching a film. Then I asked if we are not receiving ourselves? because we were all on BBM chatting. I believe the culture of the Social Media in Nigeria and Africa, as a whole is something we have taken to a negative or extreme side. Even folks abroad hardly use the Social Media. They don't have time. They are busy, there is work and everything to do that they don't have time to remember their Blackberries but in our country it's vice versa. I think it's because of the joblessness and situation of the country that makes us get addicted, spending the whole morning till night doing

nothing apart from chatting. An example is this strike. Sincerely speaking let me give a confession I was given a report to write in my 400level course and as I am talking I have not finished the work. The report that I was given over three months I haven't finished because of 2Go, Facebook and the rest. And the effect of that would be reflecting when one is caught unawares to submit. The other of the day would be plagiarism and mal practice. The problem at large is that the use for positive knowledge is very minimal. So if it comes to education as a concept, the social media has educated people but it is the content of the education that matters.

Samuel Aicra: I was given an assignment to do and the lecturer told me to go to the Wikipedia and when I got there, what I saw was different. I headed to the library and what I saw was also different. When I contacted him, he said don't you know that I have the ability to edit and put some things that I like there? So for somebody to put things on the net that isn't right gives or encourages others to do the same. Making a reference to our modern secondary school kids. I was privilege to undergo a research on the positive and negative effects on Social Media on our secondary school children and one of the kids said she stays on the media for 8-12 hours. When I asked what she does, she said she derives a lot of pleasure. And I discovered that their academic performances are nothing to write home about. We can't control or stop this from happening but we can think of ways to arrest the situation on ground. It is our responsibility to make them know the negative and positive effect to them as students.

Yohanna: I want to say that the Social Media has spoilt some aspect of the educational system. It's a place where people go correspondent. Social media is a medium whereby I have something to share or ask and throw it to a particular site. e.g. Like Wikipedia, if you post a comment someone who knows better than you will reply you. But social networking is broad.

Rasheedah: I think I tried to clarify that earlier and like the Wikipedia you are talking about people upload material, delete or add materials etc. Somebody can try to communicate or pass across a message and people can interact even on Wikipedia. Like I said social media is different from social networking site so it's a broad umbrella that covers the Internet itself.

Amaru: I think we are stressing Social Media and not social network. We are not talking about the main topic itself. What about the roles the social media play on education? There is no doubt that the Social Media has really impacted the educational system. Today the media most especially the Social Media gives a lot of information. The Wikipedia is a way through people can get information in relation to their research work but in our education system especially in Ahmadu Bello University, information from Wikipedia gets turn down. I was with my lecturer and he said it wasn't at trusted site. If there would be a restriction where people can regulate the amount of information that comes into the Social Media, then it would be useful for the educational system. There is a popular saying that the educational standard in Nigeria has declined and there is no doubt that the Social Media contributed to that decline because a lot of people will go into the media to do some other things. Most students are not really being critical in their studies. Once an assignment is being

given, they don't think over it. You run to Google and whatever comes out of it is being written down. But we are supposed to get this information from Google sieve it through then bring out the critical ones and throw the others away but this day we don't it. We do the copy and paste style. With that we are not really learning any thing from that. To a great extent the social media is very valuable in our educational system but our usage of it matters.

Abdullahi: Any Social Media should be interactive and not just like Wikipedia where there is no immediate response or dialogue, where people just edit.

Rasheedah: The notion of interactivity is central. Even in Wikipedia. The moment you can edit something there is interaction because somebody knows he was uploaded something and the information can be changed. Interaction even though it's not personal, must not necessarily be physically.

Kelvin: I would prefers if we use the word electronic media because of the confusion of the word social may be if we use the word "electronic media" it would be better.

Amara: But when we say electronic media some people might think we are referring to the broadcast media like the radio, television and so on.

Kelvin: Making reference to the e-books, and e-publications.

Rosemary: I think personally I have achieved more on Facebook than any other site for the past three months. Most of the friends I made in the United States are on Facebook and they post materials. They write on blogs then post the websites on Facebook, and some of the materials are really useful to me. I can go to YouTube, for instance, and if something get spoilt, somebody on YouTube can tell me how to fix it and so many other things. You can go there to find like prices of materials, how to fix electronics, solve

mathematical problems and so on. I was told about a website academia. org e.g it's a site where graduate student- masters and PhD student discuss research and thesis.

Hannah: So much has been said about the negative role Social Media has played but if we can do away with that attitude of taking everything hook line and sinker, and take the one beneficial us, I think the Social Media will play a very positive role educationally. I could remember in biology classes where we were taught about fossils. We saw them in black and white pictures and didn't really have a clear understanding of how they really are but with Social Media we could look for science institutions that have the picture of those real fossils and that will give the students a greater understanding of what is being taught. Another example is the engineering department, so many things they are being taught about but have never seen it probably because of inadequate funds to purchase them but through the Internet and Social Media, they can go to institutions on net that have them. We produce graduates who don't have ideas of what is being taught. If it is properly harnessed the social media will make our educational system better.

Jonathan: I think we are used to lecturers standing in front of us but with Social Media; we can be here and receive lecturers from abroad. You can also run a masters or PhD from here and your school is abroad.

Ibukun: I feel Social Media has helped in terms of project. For instance you have a new project topic that cannot be found in school libraries and books but when you go to the Social Media like Google you would see a lot of ideas that has been deposited on the net that would help. A case study is my project about hairstyle as a communicative make-up in the theatre. I couldn't find it in any

book in the library but I discovered a lot of information through the use of the Internet.

Jamil: If the youth or the people of Nigeria can be taught on the usage of social media in education, it will do more good than harm because if there is no mass literary, people will tend to use it for something else.

Rasheedah: I think that idea is something I would like us to discuss further. The idea of harnessing Social Media for education Do you have a social networking sites.

Yohanna: Yes!

Rasheedah: Please mention them.

Yohanna: Twitter, Facebook, BBM, Whatsapp

Mrs. Liman: The same question

Kachi: Facebook, Whatsapp and 2go.

Rasheedah: What do you use them for?

Kachi: To get information and chat with friends.

Rasheedah: Do you use social media for education?

Joseph: Yes, I use it for my project because in my department we need a lot of literature review. I remember I asked my friend on Facebook in Ilorin who got the information I needed.

Rasheedah: We have a case study here. Umar please tell us why you are not on any social networking site.

Umar: I feel it isn't important to be on any social networking site. Going back before the advent of the Internet people survived. Lecturers (professor) back then in their days when they were in university didn't have any social networking sites but that didn't stop them from doing what they had to do.

Rasheedah: I want to find out how you get along with friends? Or is there a problem with your social life?

Umar: I'm a kind of person that socializes a lot. It's okay by me. Is it that if you are not on any Social Media or networking site that you are not seen like a person who can't socialize? I can talk to anybody that doesn't mean I have to go on any social networking site. I am not saying that people on it are bad but it's my choice not to be on it.

Sharon: People have said a lot about the Social Media, but I want us to know that everything in life has the makers design. It's just that people choose to abuse some things. So many of us have benefited from social media like those writing project and researches but it is how you harness your information to give the answer to what you are looking for is a thing of your choice some of us just get things and feel whatever it is I get on line is okay and you just dish it out and you think the person you are giving it to will just collect it like that. You have to sieve the information you get on line when that can be done, and then I think it will help us with our educational system. In those days when I was in school, we do rehearsals on 2Go. We use the chatting medium to get our lines. Well social media is good to our educational sector and I believe everybody should begin to key in because it will broadens our scope and makes us know the way different people around the globe think.

Patrick: Having a flash back on the occupy Nigeria project that took place in Lagos and Abuja we can see that many Nigerians participated through the social media. We all saw the Aluu killing of under graduates we got the information through social networking. The time the previous president was out of the country before he died many people got to know through

social media / net working. So we tie our ideas basically to the negative aspect more than advantage of it. And apart from getting information, there are other sites that are for professionals such as LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a place personally I have learnt alot. It's a site that provides opportunity for you to market your skills and learn more about different field of studies. Apart from a professional site, there are sites that help look for job like jobbaman.com. Social networking is not basically Facebook but Facebook is where we gain a lot. Education is not all about biology, physics or chemistry. Education is very broad as a terminology and social media in education will help.

Rasheedah: From my experience in the United States, Facebook is being used in classroom situations and activities. Facebook is not just used for fun or connecting with friends. It's used in discussing assignment, classroom work and the rest. We are not referring to the use of facebook or social networking site just for fun, using it to our own advantage is what is important especially in academics. In Ahmadu Bello University for instance we can talk about the entire problem we have like Internet connections.

Samuel Arera: What is the ideology behind most of this social networking thing that are happening? As far as am concerned the world is going heading towards destruction. A day will come where each and every one of us will use one currency with a mark on your hand giving you the freedom to redraw money. We should take precaution and be careful how we use this social media because we might be heading towards destruction if we don't have control over them because in as much as

the social network is benefiting your life its also destroying you. Am in support with the notion that you don't need to be on social media before you would be known.

Rasheedah: I believe whatever we do we need to create a balance. I am not against neither, nor am I completely for the use of the social media but my question is how can we make it beneficial to us. I am interested in students taking maximum advantage of the social media in education.

Rabi: From my own point of view I think most of us can't use this networking sites because we feel it's about going in like to chat while there are several things attached to it that we don't know. I feel they should be an educational setting where people are taught to use networking sites for their own benefit.

Samuel: In additional to that I was taught that when a child is born, his mind is as pure as anything and his character and attitude is controlled by what he hears and what he see in his environment. I believe for us to be sitting and having this discussion then we can make use of social media in our academics.

Amaru: The reading culture and the use of the conventional library is declining because everything move with time. The social network easies out researches and the New Media has introduced distant learning.

Kelvin: The world is growing from analogue to e-libraries and being a professor then was more difficult than our present day.

Godwin Elias: Using the social media for academic purposes helps students to do the work. An example was an assignment given to me in my 300level where we were asked to open e-mail addresses and send the answers to the lecturer's e-mail. It was easier for me because I sat down using my phone to send the assignment.

Bello: There are courses that basically you take online. You don't have to go to the four walls of a classroom. You can see it anywhere, which requires you to just login. In fact I think 40% of learning in developed countries are done on line like in the US or the UK especially for students who don't have time. You just take your online classes and submit your assignment online. But the problem for us here might be connectivity.

Aguele Isiragbe: I believe the reason why most of us like the media is because it is very cheap compare to the conventional buying of books and as we presently speak a large number of people have the facilities to get this e-books. In additional to that some books have in the long run stopped being published and you can only see them on the net.

Joseph: I don't think the Social Media is cheaper because it cost money to buy the equipments and the facilities.

Omachach: It is true that the Social Media makes learning a lot cheaper but there is a hazard that comes with it. Like in my department we faced a problem for months; our results didn't come out because the system crashed what happens in that event?

Rasheedah: It is basically important for people to upgrade themselves with technology. You can have backups that enable you save your works either in hard disks or on the Internet using drawbox, e-mail, cloud etc.

Julia: The issue here is to understand the act of timing. Students should have a balance or a timetable to be on line.

Rasheedah: I carried out an experiment, which was encouraged by my supervisors. If you go online in Ahmadu Bello University certain sites get blocked. Sites that are not good or relates to security risk gets blocked. And then the issue of timing, it is true that

the Social Media takes too much of one's time. But if you are not in Nigeria the easiest way to know what is happening is through Facebook. For example, I was in the United States when the "Oga at the Top" saga happened but the issue is how do we balance our time and harness Social Media to our own advantage. Maybe in the future lecturers and school administrations will start using the Social Media within the context of the classroom because it is happening already. People are using YouTube in classes already, while I was in the US, lecturer upload lecture on YouTube or Facebook, others communicate and give their students lectures via Skype. And as I said, there are some classes that make it mandatory for you to be on Facebook. It could be experimentation but it's happening.

Kelvin: I think since Nigeria has decided to join other countries on Social Media, we should boost our power supply, upgrade our network facilities and our curriculum should be revisited. The way we are being taught how to use the computers with the advent of computers should also include the use of social media to get information. I also urge everyone in this place to not rely on one source. But we should get information from different sources. We need to be careful what we use. If we are given assignments we should ensure the sites are traceable. Don't go and write anything because the person might go and trace it and if it wrong it means you are involved in a crime known as plagiarism.

Rasheedah: Ladies and gentlemen thank you so much, I am sure we benefited one way or the other from this discussion. I want to thank you all for coming. I have been enriched by your generous contribution and I hope you have too.

Name and Department of Some of the Participants

Dauda Basheera	Theatre and Performing Arts
Salawu Sandra	Theatre and Performing Arts
Tina Sunda	Theatre and Performing Arts
Eniola Orekoya	Cisco Network Academy
Odofin Ibukun Grace	Theatre and Performing Arts
Jonathan	Physics
Oiza Mercy Ehinkuye	Theatre and Performing Arts
Steven Olusho La	Theatre and Performing Arts
Jemil Daja	Chemical engineering
Abdulahi Mohammed Bida	Electrical Engineering
Umar Aliyu Ahmadu	Computer Science
Auguster Okolie	Sociology
Maria Suko	Industrial design
Hannah	Theatre and Performing Arts
Elias Godwin Danjuwa	Theatre and Performing Arts
Winifred Bira	Chemistry
Waziri Amar Haruna	Mass Communication
Samuel Brerack	American Football Captain ABU
Abdulrahim Suleiman	Building
Abdulmumi Abdulkaseem	Electrical Engineering
Kelvin Anold	Animal Science
Etrol Diamond	CISCO
Musa	CISCO

Shuaibu Saminu	Computer Science
Ibo Ibrahim Sani	Mathematic
Buhari	Computer Science
Yohanna	Sociology
John Agbo	Theatre and Performing Arts
Kingsley Ajeagbo	Business Admin
Ekoja Anthony	Theatre and Performing Arts
Patrick Okolo	Medicine
Perpetual Kokja	Theatre and Performing Arts
Jameel Danja	Chemistry
Ajodeji Desiaremo	Theatre and Performing Arts
Rabi Dalhatu	Veterinary Medicine
Joy Nwadileke	Theatre and performing Arts
Habila Shaton	Former Student of Theatre and performing Arts
Geoy Esi	Theatre and Performing Arts
Mohammed Abdullahi	Engineering
Kuyet Kajit	Theatre and Performing Arts
Julia Elechi	Mass Communication
Aguele Isragbe	Theatre and Performing Arts
Kadi Veronica Iveren	Theatre and Performing Arts
Umar Ahmadu	Computer Science
Rosemary Afolabi	Political Science