

**USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG MASS
COMMUNICATION STUDENTS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA AND
UNIVERSITY OF JOS**

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation titled “Uses and Gratifications of Social Media Among Mass Communication Students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and University of Jos” has been carried out by me in the Department of Mass Communication. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree or diploma at any institution.

Signature: _____

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Date

CERTIFICATION

This study is titled : “Uses And Gratifications of Social Media Among Mass Communication Students Of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria And University of Jos” by Felicia B. ALHASSAN meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Masters of Science of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literal presentation.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to KADOSH. KADOSH, who is mighty on His throne, the owner and sustainer of my Life, you are my everything and to my Beloved gracious mother Late Mrs. Grace Ramatu Alhassan (nee Rumala) for teaching me on how not just to catch a fish but to own a sea, with the fishes inside rather than giving me a fish. LOVE you so much even in death you still remain my Hero and role model.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the uses and gratifications of social media among mass communication students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and University of Jos, with the following six objectives To find out social media engagement by students in the two universities, to ascertain the preference of social networking sites among students, to determine the amount of time spent on Social Networking Sites (SNS), to ascertain the gratification derived from use of Social Network sites. To reveal the differences and similarities between students of the two universities in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media and to reveal the differences and similarities between the male and female students in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media. Survey method was used with questionnaire as the instrument for gather data collection. Drawing it sample size from the Mass Communication Departments of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and University of Jos, the study used purposive sampling method to choose two universities in the study area and stratified sampling method was employed to select 307 respondents from the two universities. The researcher used the rank weighted mean to reveal the similarities and differences in the uses and gratification students in both universities derive from social media interactions. The analysis revealed that for students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 5 reasons form their major uses of social media, while students of University of Jos had only 3 reasons as their major uses of social media. These uses include “keeping in touch with family and friends, getting news, and reconnecting with old friends and to be informed.” For students of A.B.U Zaria, convenience is a major gratification obtained from the use of social media, but for the students of University of Jos, affiliation is their major gratification obtained. Students of both universities agree to get gratifications in form of information seeking, pass-time, entertainment and relieve of stress. The study also revealed that WhatsApp is the most preferred social media among the respondents. Meanwhile students in both universities did not use social media majorly for academic purposes. The study therefore, recommends among others, that students should investigate how they can incorporate social media to aid their academic pursuit as a way of striking a balance with social aspects of social media usage. Also, institutions of higher learning should find a way of developing social media curriculum as a course that will help students derive more benefits from the usage of social media.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

It is not an understatement that social networking has enormously influenced and changed today's society. Relationships in the society, the workplace, as well as in educational institutions have been re-defined and shaped so much that individuals can even share their everyday life with whomever they wish with the simple click of the computer key. If social networking is used properly, it is greatly productive in helping an individual and business grow and become successful (Kweena, 2011). Social media has revolutionized the way people interact, the way they communicate, and even the way they think (Weisgerber and Butler, 2010). It has become a mainstream activity and a major mode of communication especially for youths who form about 50% of the world population on Facebook (internet world stats, 2015). Social media has moved from being just an interactive platform to a form of mass movement in the media. It has been predicted as a strong force in shaping public opinion especially on issues of politics, socialization, sexuality and professionalism (Idakwo, 2011: 23).

With the advent of the Internet, people are now enjoying the benefits of high technology-driven mass media, which is not only faster than the conventional mass media, but also has a wide range. Mobile phones, computers, and Internet are often referred to as the "new-age media" (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). The Internet has opened up several new opportunities for mass communication which include e-mail, websites, podcasts, e-forums, e-books, blogging, Internet TV, and many others which are becoming the rave of the moment. The Internet has also enabled social networking sites which have redefined mass communication altogether. Sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have made communication with the masses all the more entertaining, interesting, and easier (Manohar, 2010). The rise of social media sites on

the internet has gained popularity over the last decades. The sites have attracted millions of users worldwide (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Social media is about a configuration of individuals, brought together often by interpersonal means, such as friendship, common interest, or ideas (Coyle and Vanghu, 2008). It builds strong foundations for relationships and creates unity amongst people in every aspect of human endeavours. Advancement in the internet technology with particular reference to the evolution of social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, 2go, Whatsapp and Myspace have aided this social advantage. Social networking sites (SNSs) have entered people's daily life with amazing rapidity to become an important social platform for computer-mediated communication (Correa *et al.*, 2010).

The social network approach holds that the behaviour of an individual is affected by the kinds of relations or technical ties, more than by the norms and attributes which an individual possesses. The social, informational or material resources that two individuals exchange characterize their ties. Because of the increasing use of social media, individual social interaction with friends, families, and professional contacts have transformed from offline realm into online entity.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Use of technology for social purposes has become the mainstream communication method for many people in recent years (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Due to the increasing popularity of social media networking, personal-social interactions with friends and families, and professionally-related contacts have transformed itself majorly from the offline situation i.e. face-to-face contacts into an online realm (Gallion, 2010). Nigeria, with the population of 167 million people (2006 Census), 125 million mobile telephone subscribers and 56 million internet users, has been described as the biggest internet and mobile market in Africa (NCC,

2013). This mass appeal of social media on the internet could be a cause for concern, particularly considering the increasing amount of time youths spend on social networking sites. A study conducted by Edward (2009) reveal that an average teenager in Zaria Metropolis spends between 1 and 2 hours online per day, while a study by Onyeka *et al.* (2013) reveal that youths in Adamawa State spend an average of four hours per day on social networking sites.

Dau (2015)in a study show that an average student in northern Nigeria spends 3-5 hours out of 7 hours per day on social media. With these facts of number of hours spent by youths on social networking sites in Nigeria, it becomes academically and socially imperative to find out what gratification or rather, gains these youths achieve from the number of hours spent online. This is what this study sets out to empirically examine using students of the Department of Mass Communication at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and the University of Jos, Plateau State. By this, the study will reveal the differences and similarities of the uses and gratifications derived from social media by students of the two universities,.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Research

The aim of this study is to find out the uses and kinds of gratifications users obtain from the Social Networking Site (SNS). Specifically, the objectives are:

1. To find out social media engagement by students in the two universities.
2. To ascertain the preference of social networking sites among students.
3. To determine the amount of time spent on Social Networking Sites (SNS)
4. To ascertain the gratification derived from use of Social Network sites.
5. To reveal the differences and similarities between students of the two universities in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media.

6. To reveal the differences and similarities between the male and female students in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. What are the uses of social media by students of the two universities?
2. Which social networking site is the predominant preference of the students?
3. What is the duration of time spent on social networking sites by the students daily?
4. What gratification do the students get from engaging in social networking?
5. What are the differences and similarities between students of the two universities in the uses and gratifications obtained from the Social Media?
6. What are the differences and similarities between the male and female students in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be found in the knowledge gaps it fill by first revealing the uses and gratifications derived by the students of the two universities under study. The result of this will be of immense benefits to the students themselves who will be better informed of their activities online and the consequences and implications, which will serve as a check that will help, remove the negatives and strengthen the positives that will emanate from the result of the study. Secondly, the result of this study will help the management of the two universities to have concrete evidence of their student's online behaviour which will help determine the type of guidance intervention needed to help their students concentrate more on their studies which forms the basic reason of their academic quests. It will also be of help to other students who are not of these two universities.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study investigates the uses and gratification of undergraduate students of the Departments of Mass Communication in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and the University of Jos. The reason for this is because of time constrain and financial implications.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The population for this work consist of mass communication students of the two universities which cannot be generalized for the entire students of the two universities.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

The following are key terms used in the research work:

Gratification: in the context of this study gratification is the satisfactions derive from the use of social media.

Social Media: In relation to this study, social media means forms of electronic communication which facilitate interaction based on certain interests. Social media include web and mobile technology.

Social Networking Sites (SNS): The use of internet to send messages and make information about yourself available to other people especially people you share an interest with (social media).

Usage or Engagement: In this study, means the frequency of going in to social media, length of time spent in social media, and the activities the social media is put into.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter review relevant works of different scholars on social media. The chapter consist of 14 sections. These are the concept of social media, mobile social media and types of social media users , distinction of social media from other media, list of social media sites, Nigeria oriented sites etc

2.2 The Concept of Social Media

The increased use of Social Networking Websites has become an international phenomenon in the past several years. What started out as a hobby for some computer literate people has become a social norm and way of life for people from all over the world (Boyd, 2007). Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and showcase their social lives (Boyd, 2007).

Social media are technologies tlahat facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation by stakeholders across boundaries, time and space. These technologies include: blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Facebook), and virtual worlds (Bryer and Zavattaro, 2011).

Social media is that means that employs mobile and web based technology to create highly interactive platforms which individuals and community share, co-create, discuss and modifies user's generated content (Kietzmannn,Silvestre, McCarthy, and Pitt, 2012). Social media is a website that does not just give information but allows interaction between people at different locations. It is a group of internet based applications that allows the creation and exchange of users generated content. Some social media website includes; social book marking is also referred to as Tags. Unlike storing bookmarks in folder on your computer, Tag pages are

stored and can be retrieve or access from any computer (Rouse, 2006) Social News – interact by voting for articles and commenting on them (Digg, propello). Social Networking – interact by adding friends, commenting on photo and profiles, sharing groups for discussions (Face book, 2go, BB chat), Social Photo and Video, Sharing – interact by sharing photos or videos and commenting on the user submission. (U-tube and fliki).Wikis – interact by adding articles and editing existing articles. Social media refers to the means of interaction among people in which they create, share, exchange and comment among themselves in different networks. Andreas and Michael (2000) are of the opinion that social media is a group of internet based application that builds on the ideological foundation and allows the creation and exchange of users – generated content. Social media has become one of the major channels of chatting through platforms such as 2go, BB chat, blogger and wiki.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified social media into six different classes as follows;

1. Collaborative Project (Wikipedia),
2. Blogs and Micro blogs (Twitter),
3. Content Communities (U – tube),
4. Social Networking Site (Facebook, 2go, BB chat),
5. Virtual Game World (World of war craft),
6. Virtual Second World (Second life),

Technology includes the blogs, picture sharing, music sharing, crowd sourcing, e-mail, instant messaging and voice over. These services could be integrated via social network aggregation platforms. Also, Abubakar (2011), state that social media, which include blogs (political Blog), networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), video sharing (YouTube) audio sharing (Podcast), mobile sites (2go, etc.), image or picture sharing (flicker), etc. have the capacity of boosting participation because of their open, conversational nature, connectedness and textual and audio-visual characteristic appeals. The social media by their nature have the capabilities of educating, informing, entertaining and inflaming the audience. Above all, they possess a

contagious and outreaching influence which the conventional media lack. This potential is most likely to be what Osahenye (2012) refers to as “unstoppable power of the social media”. Social media has been popular since the year 2002 and has attracted and fascinated millions of users worldwide (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Though only some of them gained worldwide publicity and attention, the Federal Bureau of Investigation estimated that there are over 200 different sites that are used for social networking (Duven and Timm, 2008). Most of the people who are members of these sites, such as Facebook (over 1.3 billion users) and MySpace (over 100 million users) actively participate in them on a daily basis (statistic brain 2015). Each person who becomes a member of SNS has the opportunity to create his or her own webpage or “profile” which is supposed to be seen as a reflection of that person’s personality (Tufekci, 2008). A personal profile is the way users present themselves; they can include as much information as desired about themselves, including posting pictures. By using this personal profile, one can build an entire social network based on his or her own personal preferences (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

Social media sites empower users to take an active role in their own socialization process and in constructing their own self-identity (Urista, Dong and Day, 2009). These social media sites let those who use them create personal profiles, while connecting with other users of the sites. Users can upload photographs and post what they are doing at any given time (Pempek, Yermolayeva, , and Calvert, 2009). The idea behind most of this phenomenon, as with many websites, is to help people feel socially connected and part of a community, even though they may be sitting home alone at their computer (Coyle and Vaughn, 2008). Participants may connect with other people they know through school, work, or an organization, or they may meet complete strangers from all over the world (Coyle and Vaughn, 2008). They do this by searching for people and adding them as “friends” so that they may share information with them and other networks that those people may be a part of (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Being

“friends” in the SNS world simply means that two profiles have been linked together (Tufekci, 2008). This, in turn, expands a person’s network greatly, so that they may meet and share information with even more members (Coyle and Vaughn, 2008).

In addition, being “friends” with someone on a SNS allows a person to communicate in a variety of ways such as sending private and public messages, participating in on-line games, commenting on photos that have been posted, sharing music or movie preferences, responding to journal entries, and much more (Livingstone, 2008). In one author’s opinion, “Creating and networking online content is becoming an integral means of managing one’s identity, lifestyle and social relations” (Livingstone, 2008). A click at a button may mean the loss or gain of a friendship, and a friendship on a SNS may be with someone who is not a friend in “real life” (Livingstone, 2008). Though there are several options for “privacy” on these sites, research has shown that the public aspect of sharing information is what draws many to join and participate (Duven and Timm, 2008).

Privacy has a new definition when referring to Social networking sites, since just becoming a member requires a person to give certain personal information (Duven and Timm, 2008). Some sites, like Facebook, started as a way for college students to connect and having an “edu” email address was required for signing up (Tufekci, 2008). Now, this site is open for all users, which also increases the amount of people who may have two accounts: One for private use, and one for business or school use (Tufekci, 2008). When conceptualizing why these sites appeal to so many people, it is significant to note that each SNS focuses on the presentation of self and social status (Tufekci, 2008). Any person who joins an SNS had to choose a picture to post on their personal profile, and that picture will be used as a representation of the person (Barker, 2009). Many people use their recent pictures or a photo of a group of friends, while others choose different images, to represent them (Barker, 2009).

In any way, this picture is significant when looking at a SNS because it shows how each individual would like to be seen by others (Barker, 2009). Social status is also a very important part of SNSs because it plays a role in how each individual is viewed on their profile by others (Tufekci, 2008). Most SNSs will show how many “friends” a person has and, because of this, many SNS members will seek out people to connect with, even though they may not personally want to be linked with specific people (Tufekci, 2008). Adolescents and college-aged individuals are especially interested in having a lot of friends, because many worry what others will think that they do not have as many friends as their peers (Barker, 2009). Not only does joining a social media help gain and preserve popularity but selecting the perfect pictures to post are also very important aspects of the experience (Siibak, 2009).

Siibaks, (2009) study on visual impression management and social networking sites reveals that approximately 60% of adolescents will spend more time selecting which pictures to post on their profile than actually communicating with others (Siibak, 2009). This shows that these social media are not just for keeping in touch with classmates and meeting new people, they are used to build adolescent identities (Gallion, 2010). SNSs enable users to present themselves, connect to a social network, and develop and maintain relationships with others (Ellison , Steinfield and Lampe, 2007).

2.3 Mobile Social Media and Types of Social Media Users.

When social media is used in combination with mobile devices, it is called mobile social media. Social media is a group of mobile marketing application that allows the creation and exchange of users generated content. Due to the fact that mobile social media runs on mobile devices, it differs from traditional social media as it incorporates new factors such as the current location of the user, time delay between sending and receiving (Kaplan, 2002).

According to Kaplan, 2002, mobile social media can be divided into four types:

- Space – timers [location and time sensitive] – exchange of message with relevance for specific location and time (Facebook, 2go, BB chat)
- Quick – time [time sensitive] – transfer of traditional social media application to mobile services to increase immediacy (posting twitter messages, status update [2go], and updating display picture (dp) [BBM]).
- Space – locators [location sensitive] – exchange message with relevance for one specific location which are tagged to certain place (yelp, oype).
- Slow – timers [neither location nor time sensitive] – transfer traditional social media application to mobile devices (reading a wiki-pedia entry).

There are two types of social media users; digital natives sand digital immigrants. Digital natives are the ones who were born after 1980, they came to this world when the digital media existed. However, digital immigrants are the ones who were born before 1980 and adapted their lives to digital media (Antonson and Christopher, 2014). Social media platforms vary from Web blogs, to micro-sharing platforms, to live streams to social networks and much more (Antonson and Christopher, 2014).

2.4 Social Media and Social Networking

Although most of people use the terms interchangeably, there is a difference between social media and social networking. Social Networking is “the act of engagement,” while social media is the tool used to communicate with mass audience (Hartshorne, 2010). Social Media is the platform that gives individuals the opportunity to interact, using two way communications; meaning, that anyone who has online accounts can share their opinions with other social media users.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified social media into six different classes of which social network is a sub category of social media. Also, Kaplan (2002), is of the view that social media can be divided into four types, of which social network is part of the sub category. With the above definitions, it would be fair to say that social networking is a subcategory of social media. For the purpose of this research work, the terms social media networks, social media networking sites and social network sites will be used interchangeably. The researcher however, acknowledges previous discourse on the subject of overlooking the nuances inherent in the technicality of each term when used in their strictest sense. Beer (2008) observed the intricacies in Boyd and Ellison's (2008) usage of these terms. However, the social media phenomenon over the years has metamorphosed into a seamless mesh whereby their purposes include both relationship initiation in terms of strangers and relationship maintenance in the case of family and friends; sharing of information via text, video, audio, picture; as well as learning and a plethora of other uses. The focus of the current study, however, is on the uses and gratifications of social media by university students and what factors compel them to choose one or more forms of this media over others as while as the differences between the two universities and gender.

2.5 Distinction of Social Media from Other Media

A common thread running through all definitions of social media is a blending of technology and social interaction for the co-creation of value. People obtain information, education, news, and other data from electronic and print media. Social media are distinct from traditional media such as newspapers, television, and film as they are comparatively inexpensive and accessible. They enable anyone (even private individuals) to publish or access information. Traditional media generally require significant resources to publish information as in most cases the articles goes through many revisions before being published. One characteristic shared by both social and industrial media is the capability to reach small

or large audiences; for example, either a blog post or a television show may reach large number of people or millions of people. Some of the properties that help describe the differences between social and industrial media are:

- i. Quality:** traditional publishing mediated by a publisher—the typical range of quality is substantially narrower than in niche, unmediated markets. The main challenge posed by content in social media sites is the fact that the distribution of quality has high variance: from very high-quality items to low-quality, sometimes abusive content.
- ii. Reach:** Both traditional and social media technologies provide scale and are capable of reaching a global audience. Traditional media, however, typically use a centralized framework for organization, production, and dissemination, whereas social media are by their very nature more decentralized, less hierarchical, and distinguished by multiple points of production and utility.
- iii. Frequency:** The number of times an advertisement is displayed on social media platforms.
- iv. Accessibility:** The means of production for industrial media are typically government and/or corporate (privately owned); social media tools are generally available to the public at little or no cost.
- v. Usability:** Industrial media production typically requires specialized skills and training. Conversely, most social media production requires only modest reinterpretation of existing skills. In theory, anyone with access can operate the means of social media production.
- vi. Immediacy:** The time lag between communications produced by industrial media can be long (days, weeks, or even months) compared to social media (which can be capable of virtually instantaneous responses).

- vii. Permanence:** Traditional media, once created, cannot be altered (once a magazine article is printed and distributed, changes cannot be made to that same article) whereas social media can be altered almost instantaneously by comments or editing.

2.6 List of Some Social Media Sites

The number of existing social networking sites has greatly increased over the years. since the introduction of SNS, social networking sites have attracted millions of users who integrate these sites into their daily living. In reality, nearly every day, an internet user gets online; an invitation to subscribe to one social networking site or the other is flashed. Boyd and Ellison (2007) and Laura (2010) reported a list and timelines of the launched dates of many major SNS.

- **classmates.com** (1995) is a social networking site created by Randy Conrad. The website helps users to find, connect and keep in touch with friends and acquaintances from school. Classmates has more than 40 million active members in the United States and Canada.
- **sixdegrees.com** (1997) was named after six degrees of separation concept. Registered users inputted contact information of friends, family members and acquaintances so that invitations would be sent to them to join the network. It allowed users to list friends, family members and acquaintances and see their connection with any other user on the site. It was one of the first manifestations of social networking websites in the format now seen today. At its height, the website had about a million users, but closed in 2000.
- **Care2** (1998) also called green living, offers email blogging, shopping admore, all centred on those wishing to live a green life.

- **Reunion** (1999) is targeted at finding lost friends, family and old class mates. It is one of the social networking websites that require payment for premium features usually found for free on other websites.
- **Blankplanet**(1999) is one of the oldest social networks and the most popular special interest social networking site. Blankplant caters for African-Americans.
- **43 Things** (2000) is a social networking website that targets goal-setting. Members are interlinked by the goals they are going after and the goals they have completed.
- **Broadcaster** (2000) centres on video, allowing people upload their own video clips and engage in video chats with other members and send video email.
- **Friendster.com** (2002) has more than 115 million registered users and more than 61 million regular visitors per global month. The web is also used for dating, discovering new events, bands and hobbies.
- **Dodgeball** (2002) aims at mobile users. Dogeball interacts with mobile users to send text messages to friends alerting them that someone is online.
- **LinkedIn** (2003). Strictly professional site that focuses on business and professional relationships. Members invite people to connect instead of friends. LinkedIn is a contact management system as well as social network, and has a question and-answer section similar to Yahoo! Answers.
- **Myspace.com** (2003) was launched after *euniverse* employees with *friendster* saw its potential and mimicked the more popular features of the social networking sites. *Myspace* became the most popular social networking website in the United States in 2006. The 100th million account was created on August 9, 2006.
- **Wayn** (2003) is an acronym for “Where are you Now”. In 2003, it became a social networking website aimed at travellers.

- **Hi5 (2003)** has a large database of video since 2003 and one can add to his/her profile. Hi5 allows users to also add their own music and share same. One can organize his friends into friend folders to keep them separate from family or acquaintances and keep photos organized for ease of access.
- **Orkut (2004)** is a social networking site where one can meet new friends and keep in touch with them by adding them to one's friends' list or joining the same communities as them. There are lots of different communities in Orkut that one can join, so one can find friends who share the same qualities.
- **LastFm (2004)** prides itself as a social music site, and allows members to create their own radio station that learns what the person likes and suggests new music, based on interest. One can listen to radio stations of friends and other members.
- **Facebook.com (2004)** is the most popular social networking website boasting 1.3 billion users. It was founded by Mark Zuckerberg who studied at Harvard University. The original concept of Facebook came from the colloquial name for books given out at the start of the academic year by university to help students get to know one another better. *Facebook* is an online site, which requires users to register themselves and create a personal profile. A valid email address is the only requirement to join *facebook*. Users can search for anyone on *facebook* and view the users' photo, but by default, can only see profiles and photo albums of other users in their own network. Within a profile, users can share interest, list work and education history, post photos, and publish notes by posting on "the wall." A news feed section shows all action such as photo/profile changes and wall posts of other users that have been added as "friends"; tagging the names of other users in photos enables those photos to also show up on the profiles of the "tagged individuals."

- **Bebo.com (2005)** is an acronym for “blog early, blog often.” It is similar to other networking sites; the site has two specific modules: a comment section and a list of user friends. The site claims 40 million users.
- **Twitter.com (2006)** is a social networking website that enables its users to send and read messages known as “tweets.” Tweets are text-based post of up to 140 characters displayed on the author’s profile page; delivered to the author’s profile page and are delivered to the author’s subscribers known as followers. It is sometimes described as the “sms of internet” and is very popular with about 645,750,000 users.
- **Take part (2006)** is a social networking website dedicated to social activism. It was established by participant media, the company behind such films as *Syriana* and *An Inconvenient Truth*.
- **Meetup (2006)** is a social network with an event organisation theme. It allows members to organise anything from political rallies to spontaneous bar hopping.
- **Flixster (2007)** came with the tagline, “stop watching bad movies.” *Flixster* combines social networking with movie reviews.
- **Google.com/buzz (2010)** is designed to integrate the Google’s web-based programme, G-mail. Shared links and messages show up in the user’s inbox. Buzz focuses on integrating photos, videos and links as part of the “conversation” aspects of Gmail. Alongside these open services, other social networking websites were launched to support niche demographic before expanding to a broader audience. These social networks are targeted at a specific audience, according to Daniel Nations, former About.com guide (2010). This includes social network services for family, business associates, friends etc. By targeting a specific audience, a niche social networking website is able to create an automatic bond among people. The following is a list of the niches social networking sites.

- **Plurk** (2001) is a mini blogging social networking site. All the posts of all the people you are following can be found on your profile timeline. Photos and videos can be added to your posts and direct messages can be done too.

There are specific social network services that are designed mainly for accessibility by mobile phone users. Such mobile sites include Nimbuzz, 2go, dodge-ball, snaptu, BBM, qeep, WhatsApp etc. However, some web-based social sites also support limited mobile interactions, for example, twitter, facebook, Naijapal, Africanplanet, netlog, badoo, ovi, myspace, cyworld etc. There are lots of other social networking websites that attract homogenous populations from specific geographical regions, status, age, educational level and other factors.

2.6.1 Nigerian-oriented Sites

There are also Nigerian-oriented sites which targeted specifically at Nigerians. One common feature of most of these sites is that their names are usually associated with a tag name *Naija* or Nigeria. They include:

- **Nairaland.com (2005)** also called “giant that till this moment”. No Nigerian site has been able to push “*Nairaland*” aside since its establishment in 2005. Naira land was opened to Nigerian users to give them a voice at home and provide massive resources for information.
- **Naijaborn (2009)** is a custom-built social network service that creates a searchable, detailed, user-generated database for the global Nigeria Community since 2009. It is a site which is used by many Nigerians and where their creative works are displayed. It features profiles of active members, a public user-generated blog, status update features and a place for users to upload music, arts and other media forms from their

experiences. Technically, *Naijaborn* is a platform that strives to index Nigerian talents worldwide and make it easily accessible to the world.

- **Webtrendsng.com (2009)** is a web trend tracking and analysis website, focused on keeping tabs on happenings around the worldwide web as they relate to Nigeria. It provides Nigerians (individuals/businesses) with information they can use. *Webtrendsng* conducts daily research for users insightful information that will help them to understand the web better and how it can be used to their advantage. Since its launch in 2009, *webtrendsng.com* has been able to shape the Nigerian internet space with the right information.
- **Gbooza (2010)** is a Nigerian news social network which is a free, multifunctional portal and platform for Nigerians and friends of Nigerians to connect worldwide. It is for all who are interested in social networking, unity, peace, friendship and progress of Nigerians and the world. Users can post information about events, festivals, seminars, concerts, parties and workshops to the event calendar: news and other information are posted on “my page” forum of this networking site. Gbooza is also a complete educational platform for enlightenment in sports, worldwide events, national events, online movies, business, jobs and news on the other users forum or blogs. This site was created in 2010.
- **Timmynaija (2005)** is a Nigerian site created in 2005 and aims to bring Nigerians together for mainly networking purposes. *Timmynaija* features daily Nigerian news, interviews, reviews, multi-media and a fast growing community of users. It has been delivering daily news alerts to Nigerian music industry, hiphop lovers, two-way pagers, cell-phones and email addresses.
- **Nigerian Channel (2010)** allows users to meet, connect and interact with other Nigerians anywhere in the world. It was established in 2010. It connects users with

their friends and families, helps users to make new friends and build relationships. *Nigerian Channel* enables users to easily share photos, videos, events, interests and memories with friends, families and Nigerian community groups.

- **Naijapals (2007)** is one of Africa's largest online social networking and entertainment communities which enable users to meet new people. It provides updates on Nigerian entertainment and metro news, gists, opinions, latest music, Nollywood movies, confessions and interactive discussion forum. Naijapal came into existence in 2007.
- **Nigericonnect.com (2008)** is the number one entertainment site for Nigerians in the Diaspora. It has a setup radio/TV for the users to link the homeland with news features, talk shows and commentaries. It was created by Anakwo in 2008.
- **Gnaija (2009)** connects users to people around them. It allows them to make friends, say what is on their mind, create a group or join existing ones, chat with other members, add blogs, comment on businesses, events and so on. Not only can users update their *Gnaija* "my page" status, the application used on *Gnaija* allows members to update their facebook and twitter status with a single click. The site was established in 2009.
- **Nigeriaeliteforum (2010)** is similar to Nairaland, it is multi-functional, and it has entertainment section, news section, emotional section, job seeking section, dating section, joke section academic section and lot more. It was created by Abraham Sunday.
- **Media Nigeria (2012)** was created mainly for news, information about Nigeria and international and includes helping students seeking admission. It was established by Dr Sunday.

2.7 Application of Social Networking Sites

Social Networking Sites have a number of applications. These include:

Government: Social networking is more recently being used by various government agencies. Social networking tools serve as a quick and easy way for the government to get the opinion of the public and to keep the public updated on their activity.

Business: The use of social networking services in an enterprise context presents the potential of having a major impact on the world of business and work (Fraser and Dutta, 2008). Social networks connect people at low cost; this can be beneficial for entrepreneurs and small businesses looking to expand their contact bases. These networks often act as a customer relationship management tool for companies selling products and services. Companies can also use social networks for advertising in the form of banners and text ads. Since businesses operate globally, social networks can make it easier to keep in touch with contacts around the world.

Dating: Many social networks provide an online environment for people to communicate and exchange personal information for dating purposes. Intentions can vary from looking for a one time date, short-term relationships, and long-term relationships. Most of these social networks, just like online dating services, require users to give out certain pieces of information. This usually includes a user's age, gender, location, interests, and perhaps a picture. Releasing very personal information is usually discouraged for safety reasons.

Education: The National School Boards Association in United State reports that almost 60 percent of students who use social networking talk about education topics online and, surprisingly, more than 50 percent talk specifically about schoolwork. Yet the vast majority of school districts have stringent rules against nearly all forms of social networking during the school day even though students and parents report few problem behaviours online.

Social networks focused on supporting relationships between teachers and their students are now used for learning, educator professional development, and content sharing.

Finance: The uses of virtual currency systems inside social networks create new opportunities for global finance. Hub Culture operates a virtual currency Ven used for global transactions among members, product sales and financial trades in commodities and carbon credits.

Medical: Social networks are beginning to be adopted by healthcare professionals as a means to manage institutional knowledge, disseminate peer to peer knowledge and to highlight individual physicians and institutions. The advantage of using a dedicated medical social networking site is that all the members are screened against the state licensing board list of practitioners.

Social and Political: Social networking sites have recently showed a value in social and political movements. The emergence of social media has change the way in which political communication take place in most part of the world. political institutions such as politicians, political parties , foundations and political think tanks are now using social media as a new way of communicating with voters, individuals and politicians alike are able to voice their opinion, engage and engage with people of the same like mind (Kearney :2013).the active involvement of social media users has been of very great important element in political communication, especially during elections.(Bimber & Bruce: 2015).

2.8 Benefits of Social Media

One of the major benefits of social media tools is the creation of community. Social media fosters communication, engagement, and collaboration (Harris and Rea, 2009; Hung and Yuen, 2010; Junco, Heiberger, and Loken, 2011). Social networking sites can be a great way to make connections with people with related interests and goals, like a virtual meeting place where friends hang out. There is evidence of a broad range of benefits to student or users associated with the use of Social networking sites.

A community can be created locally for a particular class, beyond the boundary of a single classroom. It can be used in the university or even beyond the campus using a virtual world. A good example is Second Life. Using Second Life allows students to communicate with each other and the instructor through a three dimensional simulator which comes complete with a variety of audio and visual objects (Wankel, 2009). Some of the positive things that have contributed to social networking popularity among students is because they can discuss different topics, share information and exchange files and pictures. However, from the study carried out by Konetes and McsKeague (2011), it was noted that students are using Facebook and other channels to develop their identities, beliefs and stances on various issues such as politics, religion, and work, as well as to pioneer and develop intimate relationships.’’

In support of the benefits that social networks have on interactions among students and teachers, use of social media tools to complement face-to-face classes was shown to enhance learning and engagement particularly among freshman and international students. While some introverted students may find it difficult to participate in face-to-face classes, they may be more comfortable posting comments and thoughts to special groups on Facebook (McCarthy, 2009). International students also may find it easier to interact via social media tools, where they can express themselves freely without the fear of inadequate fluency in spoken English (McCarthy, 2009). Also, Notle (2010), noted that social networking help in

the schools and universities to leverage and complement formal education activities and enhance learning outcomes. In other words, Social networking can provide opportunities for new relationships as well as strengthening existing relationships.

2.8.1 These are some breakdown benefits of using social networking sites

Barker (2013) noted that social media offers plenty of opportunities for learning and interactivity and it is not too hard to see how students and its users benefits from using social media. (Syed, 2012; Barker, 2013) went further to discuss the following benefits of using social networking as:

- i. Friends and Relations:** Social networks started as a place to connect with your friends in an easy and convenient way. Social networks has provided the opportunity to connect with people and build better relationships with friends with whom people are unable to meet personally, and let them know about their life and take input about their lives and events happening with them. (Syed,2013)
- ii. Reducing communication barriers:** With social networks, we are able to communicate our thoughts and perceptions over different topics with a large number of audiences, and raise our voice. The sharing feature available on the social networks makes your opinion about any topic reach a huge number of people (even to those who are not on your friends list). We have the option to make groups with people who are like minded and share the related news with them and ask for their opinion or input about the topic.(Syed 2012; Barker, 2013)
- iii. Opportunities for businesses:** Social networks have become a crucial part of many people. We don't even notice this but as soon as we open our desktops or laptops to access the web, we sub-consciously open our favourite social network just to see about the updates received. Businesses have noticed the value of social networks in

our life and they are using different techniques to promote their products. There are a number of customized applications being made on the social platforms, whose main purpose is to promote the product or brand. As social marketing is cost effective and brands have a huge audience, they are shifting more towards social marketing.(Baker, 2013)

iv. Web engagement: Students use social networking sites day in day out to interact with their peers and even teachers about class-related subjects. In a world where online engagement is important for businesses, these students are becoming experts at developing a sense of internet presence. Not only do they know how to interact with others on the Internet, they know how to use basic and even complex functions in order to do so in formal knowledge and skill. Social Networking sites can facilitate learning and skill development outside formal learning environments by supporting peer- to peer learning of knowledge and skills collaboration and diverse cultural expression. (Barker, 2013)

v. Education: The rise of social software provides new avenues and new opportunities for increased participation and collaboration and an opportunity to change the way people learn (Parker and Chao, 2008; Prensky 2011). Though there are negative perceptions about the possible effects of SNS on students' academic performance, some studies showed that students found it quite appropriate for a teacher to use Facebook and for teachers and students to socialize by this means (Baran, 2010).

According to Brennan (2001) and Notley (2010) social networking help in schools and universities programmes. Such social networking sites like blogs help to leverage or complement formal educational activities and enhancing outcomes. While learning frameworks are now integrated into most educational settings; the use of SNS is less comprehensively utilized. The process of teaching and learning has always been

fertile ground for early adopters of innovation in computing technology. It is, therefore, no surprise that educational practitioners and theorists have begun to eagerly explore how social media can be harnessed to describe and implement new paradigms for communication, learning, and education. Wikis, blogs, micro blogs, online groups and forums, podcasts, Web mashups, virtual worlds recommender/evaluation systems, social repositories, and social tagging/bookmarking are but a few of the applications enabling innovative behaviours that support the acquisition, access, manipulation, processing, retrieval presentation, and visualization of information within a teaching/learning space. Hordemann and Chao (2012) and Banchard *et al.* (2007) noted that, where access and skills are promoted, SNS and social media can enhance the interactions of marginalized young people with their teacher and increase their confidence in educational activities.

Furthermore, as for informal knowledge and skills; social networking services can facilitate learning and skill development outside formal learning environments by supporting peer-to-peer learning of knowledge and skills, collaboration, diverse cultural expression; the development of skills valued in the modern workplace, and a more empowered conception of citizenship (Ito, *et al.*, 2006; Jenkins, 2007). In-fact, these popular social media applications have revolutionized our lives. Experts believe that these applications support developmental approaches to learning and have a great potential to online learning (Virkus, 2008). In formal education, this media provides us wide space of communication in which it is easier to create web based learning zone. With social media, educators can now much more readily connect their students not just to their own localities, their places of learning, and to each other, but also to a huge and ever expanding diversity of social, cultural, political networks and therefore to multiple ways of being knowing and communicating (Eijkman, 2009).

2.9 Challenges Associated with the Use of Social Media

The social media has accordingly come to be seen in many countries including Nigeria as a source of bad influence on the youth, particularly students. Criticisms of social media range from criticisms of the ease of use of specific platforms and their capabilities, disparity of information available, issues with trustworthiness and reliability of information presented, the impact of social media use on an individual's concentration, ownership of media content, and the meaning of interactions created by social media. The following are some of the challenges of social media use:

- a. **Addiction:** Many studies have shown that the extensive use of social media can lead to addiction. Studies by Seri (2012: 62) are of the opinion that youth have high risk of social media addiction, as throughout the day, they feel they have to post something on their pages or check other people's posts as it has become an important part of their life.
- b. **Isolation:** Extreme usage of social media has reduced the level of human interaction. Because of social networks, the interaction with other people has become effortless and people have isolated their lives behind their online identities. Face to face communication and meetings has been reduced and many of us have lost the flavour and charm to be together under one roof.(Blanchard ,Metcalf and Burns :2007)
- c. **Affecting Productivity:** Mostly, businesses use social media to find and communicate with clients. But it is a great distraction to employees, who may show more interest in what their friends are posting than in their work task. (Shepherd : 2011)
- d. **Cyberbullying:** This takes many forms, Cyberbullying is the use of electronic technologies to hurt or harm other people. Examples include: sending offensive text messages or emails; posting statements that are not true and create rumours; or

circulating embarrassing photos of a classmate online. Sometimes, it may be difficult to draw the line between a harmless joke and one which goes too far and becomes hurtful.(Livingstone 2008; Eze ,2012)

- e. **Criminal activities.** Eze (2012), noted that social networking has become perilous as a result of the activities of criminals. Not long ago Nigeria was faced with one of the worst dangers that the social network sites can generate. The death of Cynthia Onwkgogu who fall victim of one of the social network hazards through “facebook”. The habit of adding friends or sending message without having a second thought about the consequences had led so many people in to fallen victim of fraud.
- f. **Predators and stalkers:** Another danger found with use of social networking sites are predators and stalkers. When users complete their online profile, they have typically given away much of their personal information. Any of their “friends” can have access to their full name, birth date, school and even their present location. Not only is it possible for someone to hack the users profile, they could also steal the users identity. (Hempel, 2005).
- g. **Illusion of familiarity:** Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter create the illusion of familiarity and intimacy on the internet. The result is that people may be inclined to share information on which they would have preferred to keep private (Baker , 2009)
- h. **Disparity:** Ehrmann (2010), contends that social media in the form of public diplomacy create a patina of inclusiveness that covers traditional economic interests that are structured to ensure that wealth is pumped up to the top of the economic pyramid, perpetuating the digital divide and post Marxian class conflict. He also voices concern over the trend that finds social utilities operating in a quasi-libertarian global environment of oligopoly that requires users in economically challenged

nations to spend high percentages of annual income to pay for devices and services to participate in the social media lifestyle. Neil (2010) also contends that social media will increase an information disparity between winners – who are able to use the social media actively – and losers – who are not familiar with modern technologies.

- i. Trustworthiness:** Since large-scale collaborative co-creation is one of the main ways of forming information in the social network, the user generated content is sometimes viewed with scepticism; readers do not trust it is as a reliable source of information. Aniket Kittur, Bongowon and Chi. (2014) took wikis under examination and indicated that, “One possibility is that distrust of wiki content is not due to the inherently mutable nature of the system but instead to the lack of available information for judging trustworthiness”. To be more specific, the authors mention that reasons for distrusting collaborative systems with user-generated content, such as Wikipedia, include a lack of information regarding accuracy of contents, motives and expertise of editors, stability of content, coverage of topics and the absence of sources.
- j. Few real impacts:** For Gladwell (2010), the role of social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, in revolutions and protests is over stated. On the other hand, social media make it easier for individuals, and in this case activists, to express themselves. On the other hand, it is harder for that expression to have an impact. Gladwell (2010) distinguishes between social media activism and high risk activism, which brings real changes. Activism and especially high-risk activism involves strong-tie relationships, hierarchies, coordination, and motivation, exposing oneself to high risks, and making sacrifices. He also noted that social media are built around weak ties and he argues that “social networks are effective at increasing participation by lessening the level of motivation that participation requires”. According to him “Facebook activism succeeds not by motivating people to make a real sacrifice, but by motivating them to

do the things that people do when they are not motivated enough to make a real sacrifice”.

2.10 Avoiding the Risks or Challenges of Social Media

The best protection is to limit the information posted by users. Privacy options can provide some protection; however, users should keep in mind that privacy options are often confusing and can change frequently without the user knowing. What the user thought was private could become public for a variety of reasons. In addition, the privacy of information is only as secure as the people the user chooses to share it with. The more friends or contacts the user shares private information with, the more likely that information will become public. Ultimately, the best way the users can protect their privacy is to follow this rule: if you do not want somebody to see your post, you most likely should not post it at all.

Also users should be aware of what information their friends are posting about them. It can be just as damaging, if they post private information or embarrassing photos of you. Users should make sure their friends understand what they can or cannot post about them. If they post something the user is not comfortable with, he/she should ask them to take it off. At the same time, users should be respectful of what they post about others. In addition to privacy concerns, social networking sites can be used by cyber criminals to attack devices. Here are some steps to protect yourself:

- i. Login:** Protect your social networking account with a strong password and do not share this password with anyone or re-use it for other sites. In addition, some social networking sites support stronger authentication, such as two-step verification. Enable stronger authentication methods whenever possible.
- ii. Encryption:** Many social networking sites allow you to use encryption called HTTPS to secure your connection to the site. Some sites like Twitter and Google+

have this enabled by default, while other sites require you to manually enable HTTPS via account settings. Whenever possible, use HTTPS.

- iii. **Email:** Be suspicious of emails that claim to come from a social networking site; these can easily be spoofed attacks sent by cyber criminals. The safest way to reply to such messages is to log in to the website directly, perhaps from a saved bookmark, and check any messages or notifications using the website.

2.11 Uses and Gratifications of Social Networking Sites

With the rise of SNSs such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube, users have become constantly connected and capable of interacting with one another (Ding and Zhang, 2010). Boyd and Ellison (2007) describe SNSs as web-based services that allow individuals to:

- (1) Create personal profiles including self-descriptions within an online community
- (2) Publicly show a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and
- (3) Within a system.

Onomo (2012), acknowledged this ability of the media by remarking that social networking sites have become a widespread tool for communication and exchange of ideas, helping individuals and organizations with just causes to reach a phenomenally vast audience that could hitherto not be reached by traditional media.

Stern's (2004), survey on social networking site memberships revealed that adolescents and college students primarily use these sites to stay in touch with friends they see often and those whom they see rarely. Valkenburg *et al.* (2006) in a content analysis of adolescents' personal web pages found out that youth often express themselves by posting information about their interests and their identity. Acquisti and Gross (2006) with the aim of shedding light on the patterns and motivations of information revelation of college students on Facebook, used the mixed method of data collection. This included experimental questionnaire and sending of

email. The total sample population of 400 respondents were used and findings shows that Facebook users' motivation is to learn.

Nyland and Near (2007), investigating the relationship between individual religiosity and the Internet, social networking use at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. They used the survey method with a sample of 184 respondents. They found five individual uses of social networking sites to include meeting new people, entertainment, maintaining relationships, learning about social events and sharing media. However, those individuals who were religious were more likely to use social networking sites to maintain existing relationships about their classmates and keep in touch with them but they denied using it for dating activities. Also, Clark, Lee, & Boyer (2007) had a similar finding in their study of Facebook motivation among college students. They use Facebook to stay in touch with their friends and family. Moreover, Facebook helps them to pass time and be entertained. Dwyer (2007) carried out a study on "Digital Relationships in Myspace Generation." The research aimed to find out how people used social networking sites. Using the qualitative (experimental design) research method, the researcher found out those students at Hawaii International University in the United States used social networking websites to maintain strong, existing relationships and develop new ones. Members described an increase in their social productivity and reported the use of social networking websites to re-establish connections with lost friends and to view friends through their profiles. Young (1997) classified three major areas of reinforcement of using the Internet as social support, sexual fulfilment, and creating a persona. Another study revealed the primary reasons for adolescents' instant messaging as facilitating social relationships, exploring self by taking feedback from others, and compensating for social limitations

Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) in their study of Facebook and MySpace with the aim of knowing why people use Facebook and Myspace. Using survey method, they concluded that the reason for having either account included to keep in touch with old friends, to keep in touch with current friends, to post or look at pictures, to make new friends, and to locate old friends. Less commonly reported uses and gratifications included to learn about events, to post social functions, to feel connected, to share information about you, and about academics and dating purposes.

A meta-analysis was conducted by Coyle and Vaughn (2008), in order to ascertain how college students in Texas in the United States used social networking websites using the population of 35,000 samples. Their findings indicated that 41% used social networking websites for keeping in touch with friends, 17% found it fun and entertaining, and 12% used them to look for and post photos. Of the 35,000 subjects, no respondent indicated educational uses of social networking sites. Pempek *et al.* (2009), researched about the Facebook experience and its motivation among college students. They found that motivations for using Facebook among students are reported as facilitating social relationships with their friends rather than parents and strangers.

In a study conducted by Santos *et al.*(2009), with the aim of finding out what students use Facebook and Myspace for and whether they use it for study activities with their peers. Questionnaire and interview were the instrument used and the total samples were 38. They found out that the students' motivations for using SNSs in Singapore primarily is to socialize and a significant percentage (42%) used SNSs to both keep in touch with friends and 'have fun'.

Park Kerk and Sebastia'n (2009) did a web survey of 1,715 college students to find Facebook users gratification and their political and civic participation off line. They found out four major uses and gratification factors of social media. They are socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information. Quan-Haase and Young (2010) surveyed a sample of 77 and interviewed 21, aimed at comparing the gratification obtained from Facebook with those from Instant Messaging. Their findings showed gratifications obtained from Facebook usage besides sociability and social information includes: killing time, affection, fashion, and share problems. Baker and Oswald (2010) studied the association between online social media and friendship quality of shy individuals, in a survey of 241 participant, Results indicate that online social networks provided a comfortable environment in which shy individuals could interact with others. Millions of people go to websites to watch television shows, read newspapers, download music, and do so many things that Turow (2010) describes as having traditionally been associated with separating non-computer media forms. Likewise, Ajagbe (2011) studied 120 students of university of Ibadan, using survey, with the aim of studying the implications of social networking sites on education. He found out that students use social media for academic purposes and also for socialization.

Azeez (2011) posit that the phenomenon of virtual instant messaging replacing face to face conversation with friends can be explained by discovering that using social networks for social interaction relieves many aspects of group anxiety. Tosun (2012) in a survey of 143 students , with the aim of examining what motive young adult have for Facebook use and how the motive relate to "one true self". His findings indicate that maintaining existing relationships has been the most mentioned motivation for using Facebook, and then seeking new ones also has been a frequently mentioned objective for using Facebook. In demonstrating gender differences on SNSs usage, Reich *et al.* (2012) carried out a survey of 151 respondents, with the aim of finding out how and why they use internet and why they use

social network sites (e.g. Facebook and Myspace). At the end of the study, the result showed that adolescents mainly use social media to connect with others, in particular people known from offline context. Akpan, Akwaowo and Senam (2013), using survey method with a sample of 381 respondents, examined the use and gratification of social network websites among youth in Uyo, Nigeria. Findings included connecting with new and old friends, having fun and relaxation, promoting their businesses, being socially balanced, and easing boredom, being trendy and developing a relationship. Others are checking on friend's comments, watching movies, getting the latest information, engaging in research, playing games, maintaining business contacts and updating status/wall.

Leila ,Rouhollah ,Payame, and Muhammad (2013) surveyed gratification sought and obtained from using SNS among Iranian, Malaysian, British, and South African higher education students. Using survey method with the sample size of 320 respondents, the study found that UK students use SNS for the following: connecting to friends and family, it is cheaper, it is easier to e-mail than tell people, people don't have to be there to receive e-mail. In South Africa it was reported that the most important reason for using SNSs was to "pass time". However, the factor of passing time was seen to be the second motivation of using SNSs among Malaysians. Seemingly, this factor does not seem to be weighty among Iranian students.

Ezeah *et al*,(2013) conducted a study using survey to find out students' use of social media, with 300 respondents as population. The study revealed that students view social media for the purposes of leisurely entertainment, to watch films, to expose themselves to pornography, discuss serious national issues like politics, economy, and religious matters on the new media. Similarly, Onyeka *et al* (2013) surveyed students' SNS usage and effect among 600 respondents in Adamawa state. The study revealed that they mostly use these sites for keeping in touch. They do this by updating their status regularly, writing on friends' walls

and uploading pictures. Some of these students also go online just to while away time. Omekwu (2014) in a descriptive survey of 150 respondents examined the extent of usage of SNS by UNN undergraduates. The result of the study reveals that mostly all the student were using the social networking sites in interaction with friends, and class mates, for online study, for discussing serious national issues and watching movies. Dau (2015) investigated the impacts of SNS addiction among the students of tertiary institutions in Northern state of Nigeria He surveyed 800 respondents, and gathered that majority use SNSs for other reasons such as friendship, dating and social needs.

2.12 Time Spent on Social Media by Higher Institution Students

Pew Internet and American Life project in 2007 found that majority of youths, over 79% cannot tear themselves away from the use of social networks and must update and view their profiles daily. Oluwatoyin (2011) who surveyed 1,860 Facebook users from the Lagos State University found that most of the students could not get cumulative grade point average (CGPA) above 3.50 because they've spent large part of their time on social media than on their homework and study time which could contribute to higher grade. Oluwatoyin's findings is further supported by Ajewole and Fasola (2011) whose study of 884 students from eight higher institutions in Oyo State showed that majority of them spend more time on social media at the detriment of their studies. This view is however rejected by some researchers who acknowledge that social media sites not only re-engage learners with their studies but also enhance their academic performance. For instance, Ahmed and Qazi, (2011) sampled 1000 students from various universities in Pakistan, comparing aspects of SNS usage in areas such as student gender, specialty area of study, age, study habits, leisure activities, time and purpose on the internet, time spent on SNSs, and most importantly for this paper – the effect of using social networking sites on their studying habits, and the differences of academic

performance of students. The researcher found study habits were significantly affected by time spent using social networking sites concluding that Internet and SNS usage significantly (negatively) affect the studying habits of the students and eventually their academic performance.

According to Nielsen (2012), internet users continue to spend more time with social media sites than any other type of site. At the same time, the total time spent on social media globally across PC and mobile devices increased by 37 percent to 121 billion minutes in July 2012 compared to 88 billion minutes in July 2011. Olowu and Seri (2012) conducted a study of 884 students of different universities in Nigeria, which indicated that youths in Nigeria are spending too much time on social networking sites at the detriment of other necessary things such as their studies. They explained that Youths' use of these social networking sites even point towards obsession.

Similar findings were reported by Paul *et al.* (2012) in a very recent study of the relationship between time spent on online social networking sites and academic performance, stating that time spent on SNSs is shown to negatively impact academic performance. In a study conducted on social network addiction among youths in Nigeria. Ogedebe *et al.* (2012) studied Facebook use and academic performance in Nigerian Universities. They used a sample of 122 university students, and they tested six hypotheses to know the effect of Facebook on academic performance. The study tested among other hypotheses that the more time a student spends on Facebook, the lower his or her grade point average will be. The researcher also found study habits were significantly affected by time spent using social networking sites. Onyeka *et al.*(2013) argue that the frequent use of social media sites has no negative effect on the students' studies.

2.13 SNS Addiction Effect

A growing number of Nigerian scholars and writers agree that addiction to social media sites are potentially a disruptive technology to students' academic work in higher education. Among them is Bello (2012) of the Sunday Observer who observed that the dangerous trend of social network "obsession" If left unchecked could further affect an already collapsing education system in Nigeria In an article in the Daily Trust newspaper, Itodo (2011) posits that there is an alarming rate of social networking obsession among youths today; a trend that could affect their academic, social and spiritual lives negatively if not properly controlled. As cited in Zincz *et al* (2009) in Olowu, and Seri (2012: 62), youths are exposed to a higher risk of social network addiction. This is because of their vulnerability as they are adjusting to a massive amount of developmental and life changes. This susceptibility and exposure to an abundance of new things are aided by the use of technology and social networks that ease new connections and relieve societal pressures.

2.14 Gap in Literature

Most studies have focused on SNSs users in general in one university not considering comparing different universities' social media users. While several studies also have been conducted using Facebook and Twitter there is clear lack of research regarding studies on WhatsApp and BBM which is commonly used by students recently. The present study fills this gap by comparing two universities students in their usage of social media in terms of uses and gratification obtained from social media due to cultural and environmental difference between the schools as well as differences between the gender (male and female) This is because most of the previous studies focus on the difference between the male and female gender in teams of the gender that use social media more but this study focus on difference in usage and gratification. Also since most studies reviewed only three networking sites

mostly, Facebook, Twitter and Myspace, this study expand the scope of research to incorporate four social media networking sites: Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and BBM.

Additionally, considering the concept of demassification that avails users a wide range of choices, there is still a need to choose which site or sites to utilize. Therefore, this study seeks to identify and ascertain those factors that influence students' choice or preference of one form of social media over others.

2.15 Theoretical Framework

2.15.1 The Uses and Gratification Theory

Ohaja (2003) argues that, knowledge does not exist in a vacuum. In every discipline, there is a body of theories that provide the explanation for observable phenomena in that field. This is the reason this discourse is anchored on the Uses and Gratifications Theory. One of the successful theoretical frameworks to examine questions of “how” and “why” individuals use media to satisfy particular needs has been the Uses and Gratifications. Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) is an approach to understanding why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs. It was originated in the 1970 by Blumler and Katz as a reaction to traditional mass communication research which lays emphasis on the sender and the message while viewing the receiver as a passive component of the communication process. Uses and Gratification theory does not focus on the idea of, ‘what media do to people’ but rather ‘what people do with the media’. It discusses how users deliberately choose media that will satisfy given needs and allow one to enhance knowledge, relaxation, social interaction, diversion or escape.

Uses and Gratification theory is concerned with the social and psychological origin of needs. These generate expectation of the mass media which leads to different patterns of media exposure, resulting in need gratification and other consequences, mostly unintended ones

(Katz, 1974). The theory is purely audience centred and addresses needs like surveillance, excitement, guidance, relaxation, tension release, socialization, escape and integration. To be able to gratify these needs, it must be able to realize that the mass media audience may belong to the low, middle or high post brow group (Savary and Carico, 1971).

These uses and gratification (benefits) are determined by the needs of members of the audience. Such needs may include information, entertainment, self-esteem and prestige. Through the uses and gratifications research, communication scholars have shown that everywhere, people selectively expose themselves to mass media content, choosing only those media messages that would serve the function of satisfying or gratifying their needs (Rosengren, 1985). Therefore, uses and gratification approach emphasizes audience member's motive for making specific consumption choices and the consequences of that intentional media use. That's to say, they choose the content, make meaning of it and act on the meaning. It embraces the interactive nature of media and its audience. It is audience centred and addresses needs such as surveillance, identity, and socialization and information acquisition. Therefore, people's needs are generated by their individual differences. It could be based on sex, ethnic group, and educational qualification. Because the needs are determined by who or what they are, and people use the mass media for the purpose of gratifying these needs (Okunna, 1988).

Distinguished uses and gratification approach theorists Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch pointed out five basic assumptions of the theory: "1. the audience is active and its media use is goal oriented; 2. the initiative in linking need gratification to a specific medium choice rests with the audience member; 3. the media compete with other resources for need satisfaction; 4. people have enough self-awareness of their media use, interests, and motives to be able to provide researchers with an accurate picture of that use; 5. value judgments of media content can only be assessed by the audience" (Kunczik, Zipfel, 2006: 190). When it comes to types

of gratifications which recipient can obtain when consuming a media content, Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch conclude they are as numerous as a number of recipients themselves – the same content can gratify different needs of different individuals (Katz, Blumler, Gurevitch, 1974: 21).

But still, according to theorists, uses and gratifications can be classified into five categories related to five groups of human needs (Katz, Gurevitch, Haas, 1973, in: Tan, 1985: 235-236):

1. Cognitive needs – acquiring information, knowledge, understanding our social environment, curiosity, exploration;
2. Affective needs – aesthetic and emotional experiences, pleasure;
3. Personal identity – self-confidence, personal stability, integrity, social status, the need for self-respect;
4. Integration and social interaction – family relations and friendship, connection with the outside world, the need for affiliation;
5. Escapism – the need to escape, tension release, shifting attention from unpleasant to pleasant.

Another classification suggested by Rubin (1981: 147) discerns eight different motives for consuming television content, which, according to Rubin, include almost every possible motive for using any media:

1. To pass time (e.g. watching television in a waiting room);
2. Companionship (e.g. meeting with friends to watch football);
3. Escape (e.g. watching television to escape from the pressure created by a deadline for submitting an essay);
4. Enjoyment (some people feel pleasure merely by watching television);
5. Social interaction (creating a feeling that we are connected with others by watching television, for example we can discuss the television content);

6. Relaxation (e.g. after work or before going to bed);
7. Information (the need to be informed about social events);
8. Excitement (e.g. watching a crime movie in which the conflict and violence create a sense of excitement).

Strength and Weakness of the Theory

The Uses and Gratification Theory is a Mass Communication theory that explains why people actively seek to go after certain forms of media to seek specific benefits. The Uses and Gratification Theory indicate what the Audience can do with a particular mass media which is a primary strength. In this case, the media cannot manipulate the audience thereby making them independent in selection of information, they also make their own meaning from the media content without being forced to think in a certain way. One good point about this theory is that, it actually allows the individual to identify and discover for them selves when it comes to identifying the gratifications they derive from media uses which informs their media choices. The strength in this individualistic disposition of Uses and Gratification Theory also account for part of its weakness because no individual can be separated from societal influences. There is no doubt that gratification a group of people derive from a mass media could force all members of that group, including members of the group who are not individually disposed to likely such medium to be influence by bandwagon effects. So the individualistic oriented, Uses and Gratification theory did not consider the tendency of bandwagon effect in the society as it relates the gratification from media messages.

Also in as much as the theory seeks to allow the audience to select, go through the thinking process, they might sometimes be over loading themselves with information of no interest Furthermore, in the process of selection of any mass media of choice, certain vital information may be overlooked and as such fall ignorant to such information. The audience sometimes dont pay much attention to those media or better still may be engage

for activeness sake. Comparism come to play, which leaves a particular mass media subjective to the other which actually may be the best in reportage.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory has its strength and weakness as do any mass communication theories. The theories brought forth by researchers over the years will have to adapt and to change in order to stay ahead of the curve and stay applicable to an ever-changing society, explaining Mass Communication Research. Despite all the weaknesses of the theory it was able to cover and explain this research.

2.15.2 Relevance of the Theory to the Study

The relevance of the Uses and Gratification Theory could be viewed in this study as it looks into why and how, the students of mass communication of both universities (ABU and University of Jos) use the social media. In this research, Uses and Gratification Theory is used to explain how the students use social networking sites to fulfil specific gratification as this theory assumes that members of the audience are not passive but take active role in interpreting and integrating media contents into their own lives. The theory also holds that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their needs. The approach suggests that people use the media to fulfil specific gratifications. This theory would then imply that the media compete against other information sources for viewers' gratification. (Katz and Blubber, 1974)

Therefore, this study focuses on ascertaining the uses and benefits which social media serve for their users that invariably sustain their usage. It presupposes that there are certain satisfactions the new media provide to the public without which their usage would have been waned. Hence, the uses of the social media have been in existence for years, it is an indication that they certainly provide meaningful gratifications to those who use them. This study shall unearth the benefits or gratifications which the social media or the new media

present to their teeming number of student-users within the two universities. The major emphasis in the uses and gratifications theory is that the user or the audience plays a great part in the choice of the media or the media content he or she consumes; and this is determined by what (gratifications) the content or the media offers. Gratifications theory stresses how and why the audience use the media Klapper (1963) as cited by Haridakis and Hanson (2009). Also, expatiating on the theory, McQuail (2010) has it that, “the central question posed is: why do people use media, and what do they use them for?” From the argument above the theoretical significant of uses and gratifications theory to this study has been made clear as it addresses all the research questions guiding the study

Out of the five postulate of the theory, four among the research tenant took care of all the research objectives as follows:

1. The audience is active and its media use is goal oriented took care of research objective one, five and six which addresses the reason for usage
2. The initiative in linking need gratification to a specific medium choice rests with the audience member this addresses research objective four, five and six on the gratification derive from the use of social media;
3. The media compete with other resources for need satisfaction; this addresses research objective two on media preference;
4. People have enough self-awareness of their media use, interests, and motives to be able to provide researchers with an accurate picture of that use;

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the ways and procedures used in conducting this research work and it is categorized based on the following sub-headings; research design, location of the study, sampling techniques and sampling size, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

For the purpose of this study, survey research method was used. This is because descriptive research is primarily concerned with the collection and analysis of data for the purpose of describing, evaluating or comparing current or prevailing practices, event and occurrences. This study adopts the survey design aimed at collecting data in order to answer the various research questions this study intends to answer.

3.3 Location of the Study

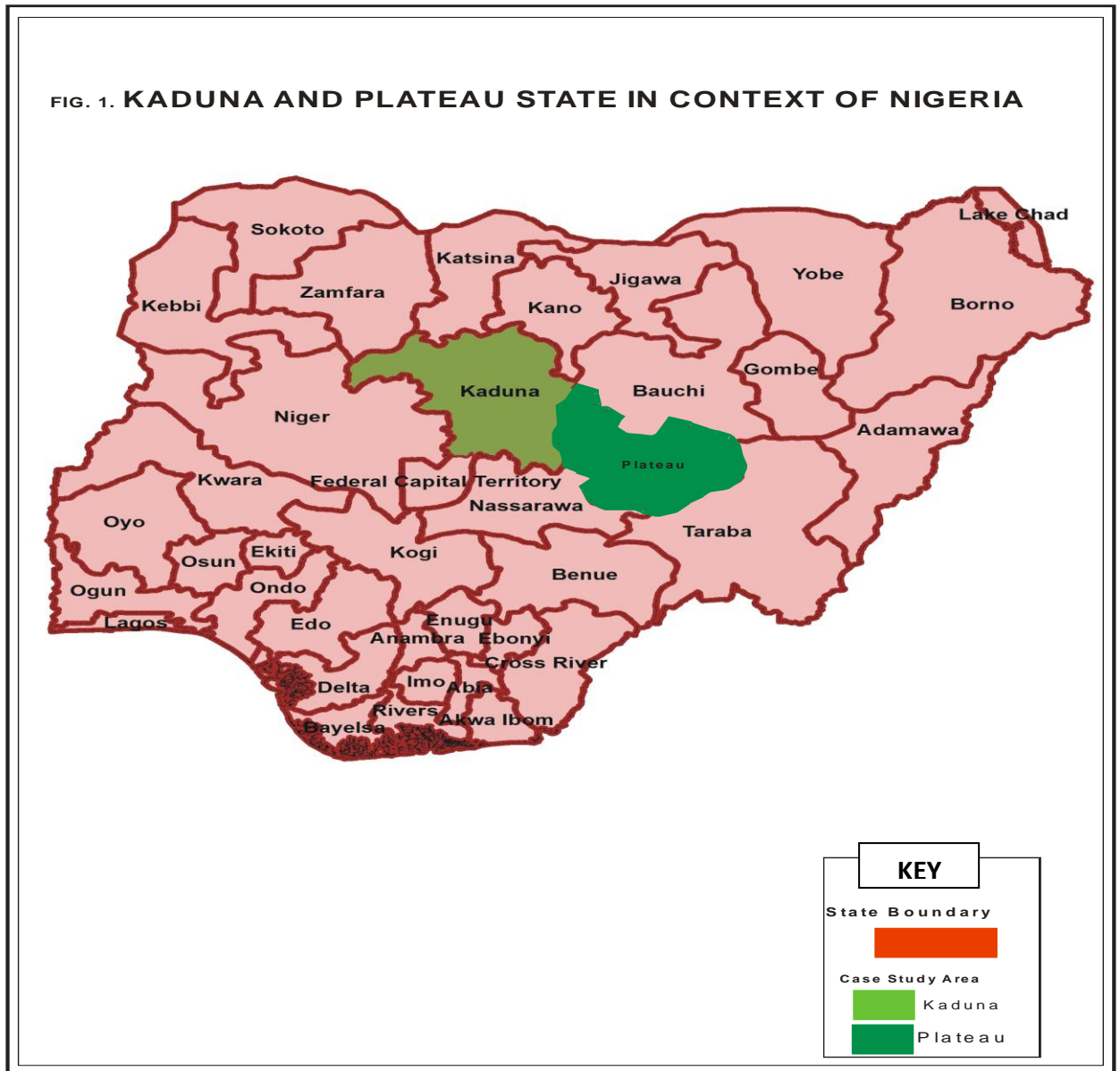


FIGURE 1: Map of Nigeria.

The location of the study is in North West (ZARIA) and north central (JOS) geo- political zone of Nigeria. Zaria is a major city in Kaduna State formally known as Zauzzau. The temperature in Zaria ranges from 26-35°C, the population was estimated as 406,990 by the National Population Commission of Nigeria (2011), of various social cultural backgrounds. Zaria economy is primarily agricultural.

Zaria possesses different type of educational and Research institutions which include Almadu Bello University located in Samaru, Leather Research Institute of Nigeria, Nigeria college Aviation, National Research institute for chemical technology among others. The concentration of the institutions of higher learning has made Zaria famous regionally, nationally, and internationally. Given the number of institutions in the area, social media exposure is expected to be high. (*Mahadi's administration, 2004*)

Ahmadu Bello University, located in Samaru, came into existence some 50years ago, precisely, 4th October 1962. The university covers an area of over 7000 hectares. The institution has a population of over 35,000 students on different programmes according to A.B.U MIS office (2014).

Jos on the other hand is a city in the middle belt of Nigeria, popularly called J town. Which is the administrative capital of Plateau state, the State is known as The Home of Peace and Tourism according to Plateau State Information and Communication Development Agency (2015)

University of Jos is a federal university in the north central zone Nigeria. The university was established in November 1975, and it is located in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. There are over 14,000 students in different programmes in the institute, Jos is a social town filled with many social activities, with the number of institutions and tourist activities in Zaria and Jos area, social media exposure is expected.

The population used for this study includes the Mass Communication undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria with a population of 991 and University of Jos with a population of 552, giving a total of 1543 students. The department of mass communication is located in the main campus of A.B.U ZARIA under the faculty of social science while in University of Jos it is located under faculty of Art in the main campus.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The sample for this study was drawn using probability sampling and non-probability sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used to choose two federal universities in the northwest and north central geo political zones of Nigeria .This is because not all the federal universities in this zones offer mass communication as a course. Also while one is a first generation university, the other is a second generation university. Stratified sampling was used to subdivide the population into different levels from 100 level to 400 level in the departments under study, and 20 % of each levels population was represented. This is because stratified sampling is a type of probability sampling that gives equal representation to all population.

Purposive sampling was also used in selecting only students that have existing account on the social media. This helps the researcher to locate respondents within the population who are available. Using a probability method of sampling would have led to choosing samples that may not be available as at the time of applying the data gathering instruments. There is no doubt also that all students may not be involved with the social media. Therefore, applying randomization in selecting the samples may include those who do not have an account on social media. And this may affect the result of the study. The adoption of a non-probability sampling methods at this stage is necessary because it is assumed that all the respondents in the study population share similar characteristics but all may not necessarily be involved in social media hence samples were purposively selected at the last stage to suit the need of the research as it relates to uses and gratifications students get from social media. In this way, it is expected that any respondent purposively selected was suitable for gathering data from the study.

Using sample size calculator, the sample size was 308 under the confidence level of 95% and margin error of 5%. Also, according to Gay (1981), sample depends on the type of research

involved. He recommends a minimum of 10% where the population is large and 20% where the population is small. Thus, for the purpose of this research the sample size for the survey was drawn from the two universities using the formula recommended by Gay (1981) as it relates to the sample size. Hence, a twenty percent (20%) sample was selected from both universities and was evenly distributed across the departments under study in the institutions. This distribution was done based on the total number of students in each level of study i.e. 100 to 400 level of study. This distribution is as follows:

Table 3.4.1: Sample Frame and Size.

LEVEL	ABU MASSCOM		UNI JOS MASSCOM	
	No. of Students	Sample	No. of Students	Sample
100	261	52	89	19
200	266	53	112	22
300	227	45	161	32
400	237	47	190	38
TOTAL	991	197	552	110

The above table shows the distribution across departments in the two universities, the total sample population for the study was 197 and 110 respondents which were purposively chosen from the Departments of Mass Communication at ABU and University of Jos respectively, The total number of 307 respondents were selected from the two universities.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

Data were gathered by the researcher through face to face basis, with the help of the class representative of each class and two assistants.

3.6 Instrument for Data Collection

In gathering the data, the instrument used was questionnaire .This is because questionnaire was more convenient to use for the large population of students of ABU, Zaria and University of Jos. This was also because it gives the respondents more confidence as he/she feels free to express his/her views because of the anonymity provided by the questionnaire. The questionnaire contained close-ended questions in order to ease and save the time of the respondents. This questionnaire was categorized into two sections. Section A: Consisted of bio –data variable of age, marital status, and educational levels. Section B: Consisted of questions that seek respondent’s opinion on each of the research questions posed earlier. It also contains two Likert Scale questions. The respondents were to choose between strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree. And one open ended question was also added.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Instrument

A pilot study was conducted to validate the reliability of the instrument used for the data collection, This is because according to Bordens and Abbott (2002:145) pilot study can help one clarify instructions, determine appropriate levels of independent variables, determine the reliability and validity of your observational method and also gives you a practice in conducting your study so as to minimize the mistakes and errors when you do the real one, in line with this 20 copies of the instrument was distributed to students in four faculties in A.B.U Zaria and the corrections were implemented , Alsoin measuring validity, face validity was employed, the questionnaire was given to three senior lecturers in the Department of Mass Communication, ABU Zaria to evaluate the questions and suggest alternatives and all corrections were implemented.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive and analytical data analysis method was employed. This gives opportunity for the collection and analysis of data for the purpose of describing, evaluating or comparing current or prevailing practice, events and occurrences.

Data for this study was analyzed using a 2-point Decision Rule rating scale of Accepted and Rejected and also simple percentage. The Accepted option is based on Highest Mean Score range of 5 downwards to 3.0 while all mean less than 3 are rejected. This is because the criteria mean is 3.

To get the criteria mean score, the five digits: 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 are summed up to get 15. This sum is divided by 5 (the total number of variables: SA, A, N, D and SD), that is $15/5=3$. Therefore, 3 becomes the criteria mean for decision making.

To get the mean score, the data was analysed by the Mean statistics. The formula is as follows:

$$\frac{(5 \times n1) + (4 \times n2) + (3 \times n3) + (2 \times n4) + (1 \times n5)}{n1 + n2 + n3 + n4 + n5}$$

Note that $n1 + n2 + n3 + n4 + n5 = 197$ and 110 for A.B.U. and University of Jos respectively.

For example.

5	4	3	2	1
SA	A	N	D	SD
58	43	5	2	2

$$58 \times 5 = 290$$

$$43 \times 4 = 172$$

$$5 \times 3 = 15$$

$$2 \times 2 = 4$$

$$2 \times 2 = 4$$

$$= \frac{290 + 172 + 15 + 4 + 4}{110 \text{ (no of respondents)}} = 4.4$$

From the above simple calculation, it can be seen that 4.4 is the *Table Mean*, which is symbolized by \bar{X} in the table. If the table mean is higher than the criteria mean (3) then the decision is ***accepted***. If the table mean is below the criteria mean (3), then the decision is ***rejected***. The criteria mean, therefore, is the benchmark for taking decision.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data gathered and discusses the findings of the study. . There are two segments in this section of the study. The first comprise of the first table, which presents the results of respondent's bio-data while the second section presents results that were used to answer the questions of this study.

Three hundred and seven copies of questionnaire were administered and retrieved across the four levels in the Mass Communication Departments of the two Universities. The response rate was 100 % was recoded, this may be because of the on the sport technique that was employed to administer the questionnaire.

4.2 Demographic Characteristic of respondent

This section focuses on the Age, Sex and university of the respondents.

Table 4.2.1: Demographic characteristic of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 24	234	76.2
25 – 31	67	21.8
32 – 38	6	2.0
Sex		
Male	146	47.6
Female	161	52.4
University		
A.B.U, Zaria	197	64.2
University of Jos	110	35.8

Table 4.2.1 reveals that 76% of the respondents fall within the age bracket of 18 – 24 as against the age bracket of 25 – 31 and above 31 years. This could be because, in recent times, most undergraduate students enter school at early an age.

The table also shows the sex of the respondents, and it shows that the female respondents are more than the male respondents in this study. This may be because there seem to be more females interested in Mass Communications than males.

Furthermore, the table reveals that there are more respondents from A.B.U Zaria than University of Jos. This is because the researcher picked 20% of each population. Since ABU has a larger population, this is why A.B.U, Zaria has more sample representatives than University of Jos

4.3 Awareness and Uses

The students awareness and use of social media were investigated. For awareness, multiple choice list was given for them to choose from. The responses are given in Figure 2 below.

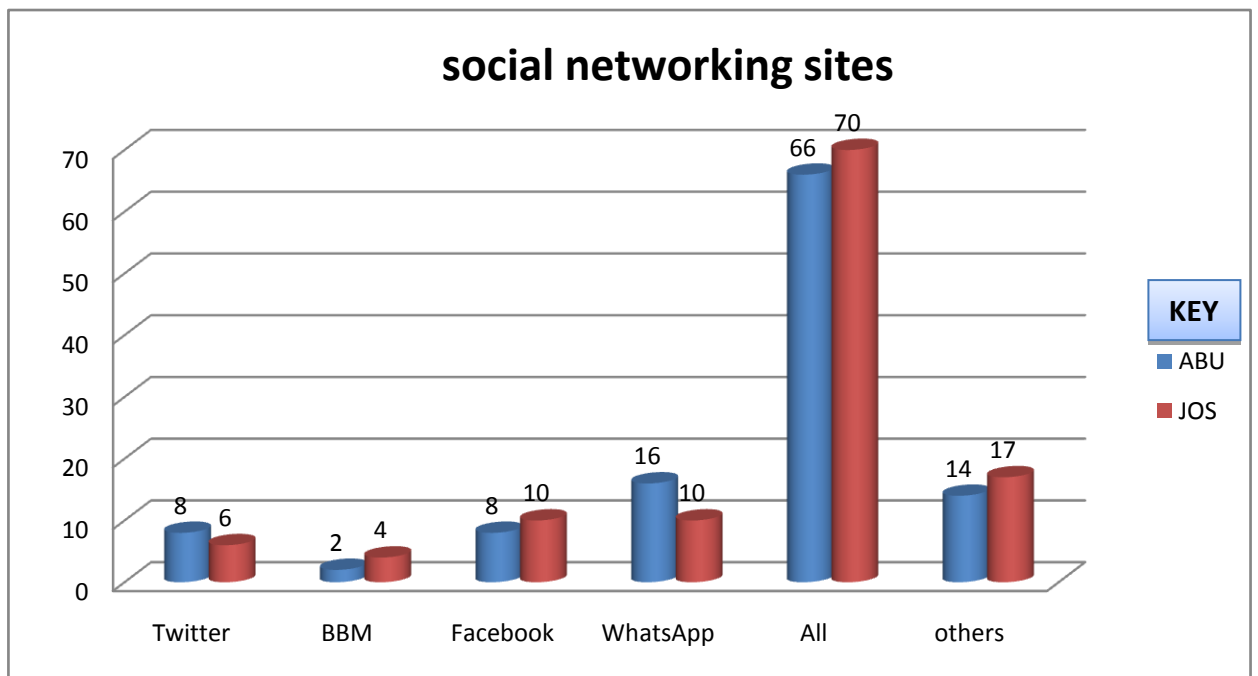


Figure 2: Awareness of Social Network Sites

In the above chart, it shows that almost all the respondents know all the social networking sites and others which were listed by the respondents include Badoo, Nairaland, and Instagram.

Uses

In investigating the uses of social media, 5 point likert scale was given to the students to choose from and the results were given in Table 4.3.1 below.

As shown in the table, a total of 16 items were given. These include: Keep in touch ,Sharing photos, keeping In touch with family, Reconnecting with old friends, Getting news, Sharing picture/video, Meeting new people, Providing my own opinion, Promoting cause, To be trendy, Promoting my business, Ease burden, To be informed, Academics, Playing games, and update my status.

Table 4.3.1: Uses of social media by students in the two universities

	ABU, Zaria							University of Jos						
	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{X}	decision	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{X}	decision
Keep in touch with friends	90	78	11	6	12	4.2	accepted	58	43	5	2	2	4.4	accepted
Sharing photos	38	73	47	23	16	3.4	accepted	22	45	23	11	9	3.5	accepted
Keeping In touch with family	86	75	28	14	11	4.3	accepted	39	43	18	6	4	3.9	accepted
Reconnecting old friends	86	75	26	6	4	4.2	accepted	46	48	10	5	1	4.2	accepted
Getting news	96	62	23	7	8	4.2	accepted	39	51	14	4	2	4.1	accepted
Sharing picture/video	33	51	53	33	27	3.2	accepted	19	36	36	10	9	3.4	accepted
Meeting new people	44	67	50	15	21	3.5	accepted	26	45	26	3	9	3.6	accepted
Providing my own opinion	29	56	56	43	13	3.2	accepted	24	38	33	11	4	3.5	accepted
Promoting cause	25	49	55	47	21	3.5	accepted	20	35	40	10	5	3.5	accepted
To be trendy	29	55	57	36	20	3.1	accepted	23	40	32	7	8	3.5	accepted
Promoting my business	25	50	53	48	21	3.0	accepted	22	41	27	14	8	3.6	accepted
Ease burden	47	62	41	25	22	3.4	accepted	27	45	19	13	6	3.6	accepted
To be informed	79	76	20	14	8	4.0	accepted	42	42	13	8	5	3.9	accepted
Academics	22	30	63	25	21	3.0	accepted	6	18	51	18	47	3.0	accepted
Playing games	28	19	55	51	14	2.6	Rejected	16	21	33	23	16	2.9	rejected
Update ones status	35	60	51	32	19	3.3	accepted	18	34	39	13	6	3.4	accepted

Table 4.3.1 shows the mean score (\bar{X}) of the uses (engagements) of social media among the students of the Two universities.

In the Table above, almost all the variables constitute the use of social media. Keeping in touch with family is the most accepted use of social media by A.B.U with the mean of 4.2 but for University of Jos students, it is keeping in touch with friends with the mean point of 4.3. And both students in the two universities do not use social media for playing game with mean point of 2.6 and 2.9 respectively. This implies that the primary use of social media by the respondents is to keep in touch, either with family or with friends and not for playing of games.

4.4 Social Media Preference

This section discusses the social media that students subscribe to and prefer. In addition, their responses for preference over the others are presented. The data are represented in Figure 2 and Figure 3, as well as Table 4.4.

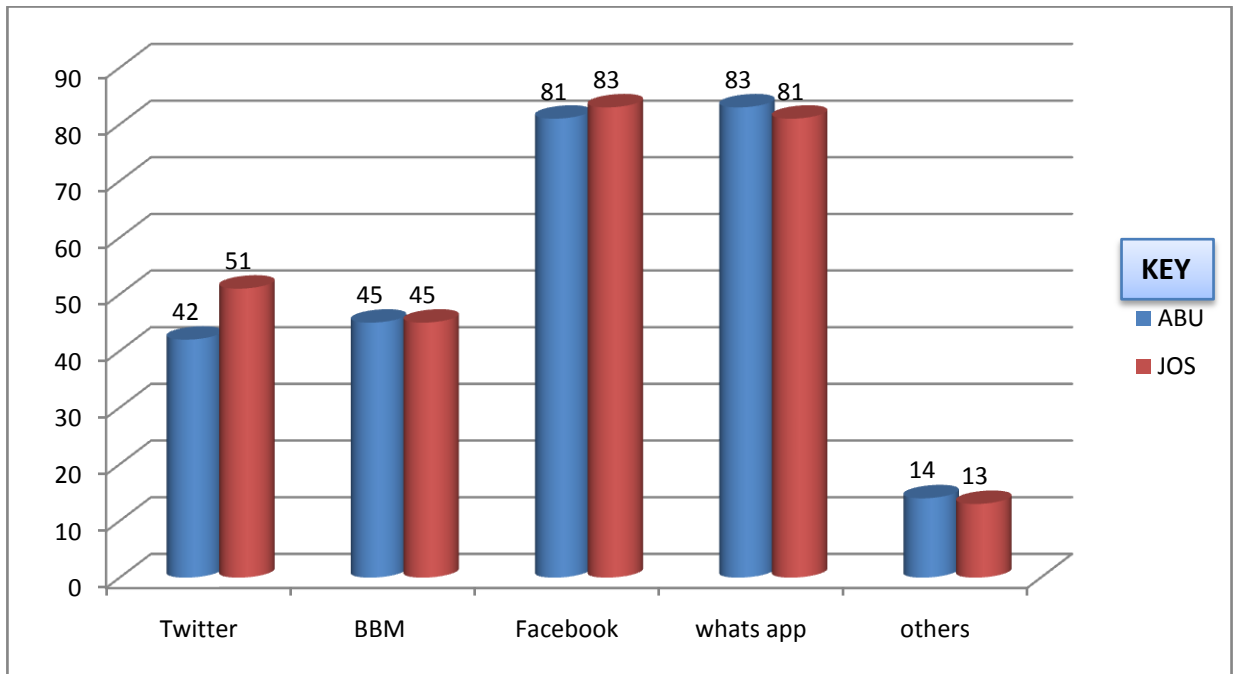


Figure 3 : Distribution of Respondents based social media subscribed.

Looking at the above data in Figure 3, it showed that there are striking similarities in the subscription by the respondents to social media, and most of the respondents have account with more than one social media. About 27% of the respondents in the two universities also have account with other networks like Badoo, Instagram, Twitter, Bella Naira and Nairaland. WhatsApp had the highest number in ABU and Facebook had the highest in Jos, while Twitter had the lowest in ABU with 42% and BBM had the lowest in Jos with 45% mean point. This implies that the respondents are highly aware and are regular users of social media.

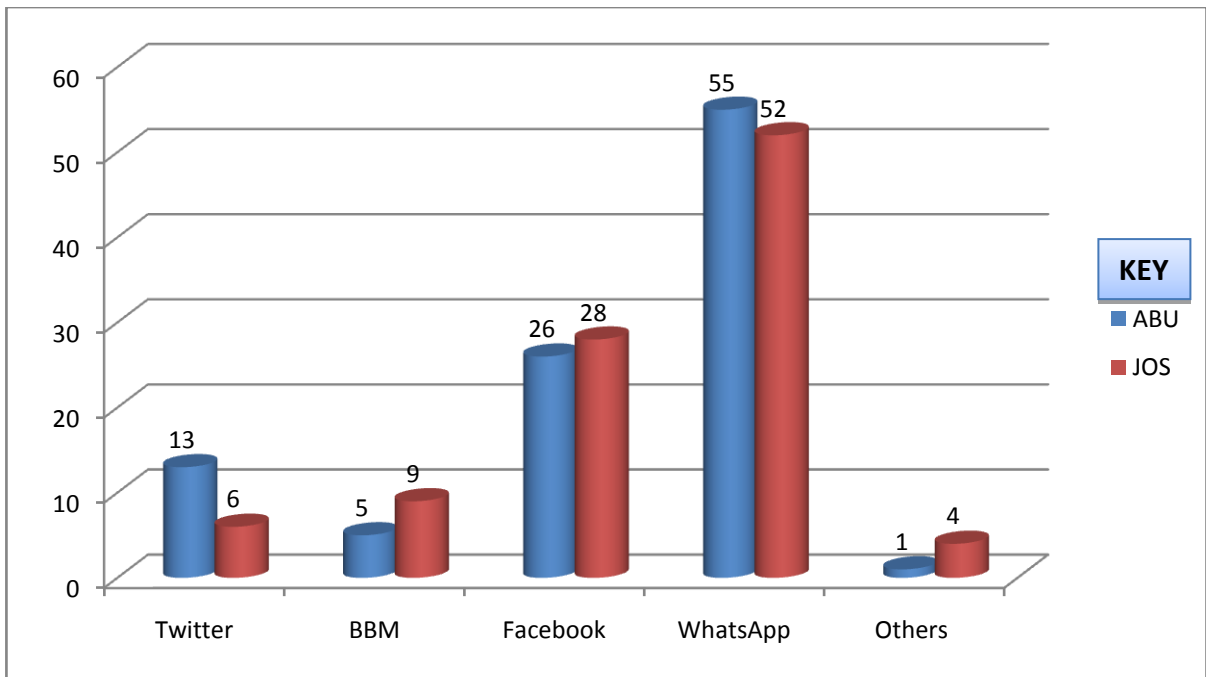


Figure 4: Distribution of Respondents based on Social Media Preference

With the findings stated in Figure 4, it shows that, WhatsApp has the highest preference rate in both universities with 55% and 52% respectively. While preference for BBM is the least with 5% and 9% respectively, this implies that although the respondents may have account with other social media sites, they still have the one they like best and WhatsApp happen to be there choice, this may be because of its simplicity in usage.

Table 4.4.1: Reasons for Preference of Choice of Social Media by Students

Reason of Preference	ABU		University of Jos	
	Frequency n	Percentage %	Frequency N	Percentage %
Faster	147	75	75	68
Cheap	137	69	56	51
Reliable	112	56	55	50
Multiple page	57	29	23	29
Good pictures	92	47	58	53
Features	103	52	63	57
More to offer	95	48	59	54
Latest	82	42	48	44
Sociable	120	61	68	62
Privacy	90	46	54	49
Follow/celebrities	45	23	41	37

Table 4.4.1 indicates that the main reasons for their preference in both universities are fastness (speed) with 75% and 68%, cheapness as well as sociability, with the option of following celebrities and opening on new page having the lowest mean score of 23% and 29% respectively. This implies that the option of following celebrities and opening multiple page is not the reason for preference, the above mentioned reasons may be the reason why WhatsApp is most preferred to other social networking site

4.5 Time Spent on Social Media

This is aimed at showing the numbers of hours students spend on social media and also how often they use social media. Figure 5 and Table 4.4 below were used to present the data gathered.

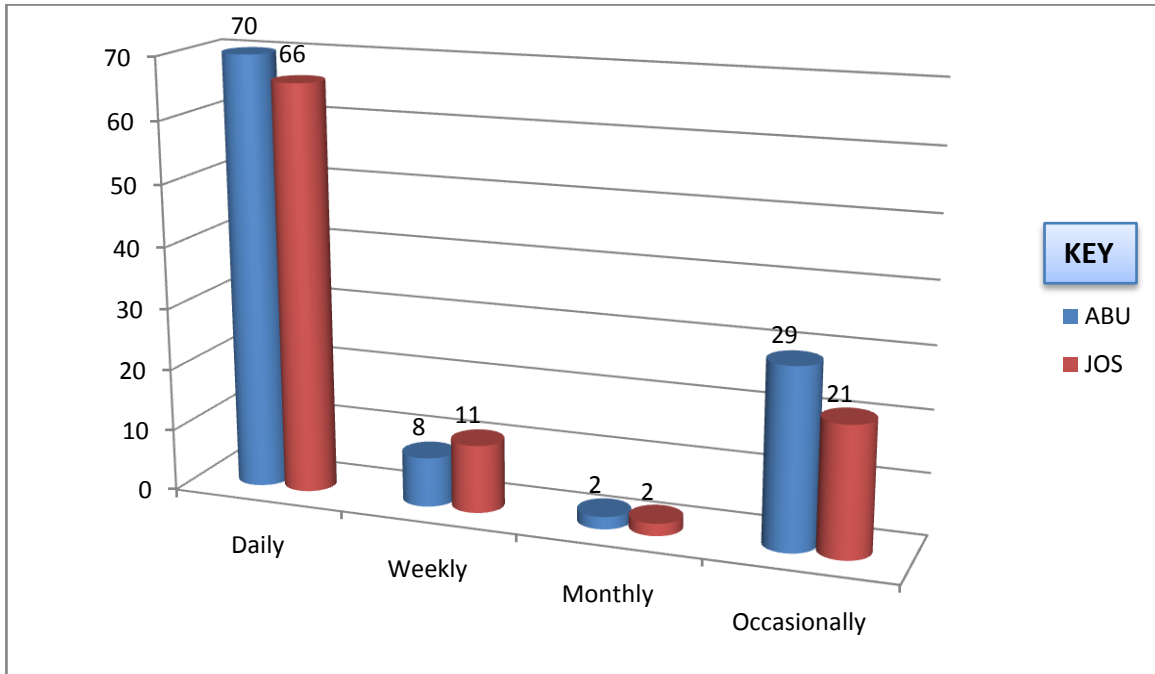


Figure 5: Frequency of logging into Social Media

Figure 4 indicates that most of the respondents use social media daily with 70 % and 66% as attested to by the respondents from both universities and only few (21% and 29%) go on social media occasionally, this implies that much time is spent online by students.

Table 4.5.1: Hours Spent on Social Media Daily by Respondents

Hours used	ABU		University of JOS	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percentage
0-2	85	43.1	43	39
3-4	62	31.5	41	37
5-6	21	10.7	14	13
6 and above	29	14.7	12	11
Total	197	100.0	110	100.0

Table 4.5.1 shows that majority of the respondents in both universities spend 0-2 hours online daily, followed by respondents who spend 3-4 hours daily, with only few spending 6 hours and above daily. The implication of this is that much time is being spent on social media by the students.

4.6 The Gratification / Satisfaction Obtained

Students' gratifications / satisfaction obtained from the use of social media was obtained through the use of 5 point Likert scale. The results are presented below.

Table 4.6.1: Mean distribution of the differences between the students of A.B.U Zaria and University of Jos in the gratification obtained.

Gratifications Variables	ABU							University of JOS						
	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{x}	decision	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{x}	Decision
Interpersonal	65	67	41	10	3	3.8	accepted	29	42	28	4	7	3.7	Accepted
Pass time	40	77	50	17	13	3.6	accepted	14	49	30	11	6	3.5	Accepted
Entertainment	75	84	29	5	4	4.1	accepted	42	42	17	4	4	4.0	Accepted
Information	94	74	21	3	5	4.2	accepted	51	38	14	3	4	4.2	Accepted
Convenience	48	74	55	10	10	3.7	accepted	17	40	37	7	9	2.1	Rejected
Pornography	15	9	39	33	101	2.0	rejected	6	4	16	16	66	1.7	Rejected
Affiliation	17	42	76	34	28	2.9	rejected	6	18	51	18	47	3.0	Accepted
Relieve stress	35	75	58	21	8	3.5	accepted	18	43	31	9	9	3.4	Accepted
Relaxation	70	86	32	86	70	5.2	accepted	32	41	23	9	5	3.8	Accepted

Table 4.6.1 shows that relaxation (5.2) is the most satisfaction ABU students derived from using social media, while unlike the ABU students; University of Jos students derived their greatest satisfaction in using social media for information seeking (4.2). Respondents in both universities did not agree that pornography is the satisfaction they derived in using social media, having the least mean response.

4.7 The Differences between the Female and Male Respondents in the Uses of social media

The differences between the female and male gender in the use of social media was obtained through the use of 5 point Likert scale. The results are presented below.

Table 4.7.1: Mean distribution of the differences between the female and male students in the Uses of social media

Variables	MALE							FEMALE						
	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{x}	decision	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{x}	Decision
Keep in touch	70	55	8	5	7	4.2	Accepted	76	66	8	4	7	4.2	Accepted
Sharing photos	23	58	36	14	15	3.4	Accepted	37	60	34	20	10	4.1	Accepted
In touch with family	48	57	19	13	9	3.8	Accepted	57	64	27	7	6	3.9	Accepted
Reconnecting old friends	69	53	17	4	2	4.3	Accepted	63	70	19	7	2	4.1	Accepted
Getting news	68	46	18	6	8	4.0	Accepted	67	67	19	5	3	4.2	Accepted
Sharing watching /video	23	37	49	21	16	3.2	Accepted	29	50	40	22	20	3.3	Accepted
Meeting new people	34	59	36	6	10	3.7	Accepted	36	53	40	12	20	3.5	Accepted
Providing my own opinion	32	39	37	33	5	3.4	Accepted	21	55	52	21	12	3.3	Accepted
Promoting cause	24	43	42	26	11	3.3	Accepted	21	41	53	31	15	3.1	Accepted
To be trendy	28	46	39	25	8	3.4	Accepted	24	49	50	18	20	3.2	Accepted
Promoting my business	24	38	39	34	10	3.2	Accepted	22	53	41	28	16	3.2	Accepted
Ease burden	35	44	37	18	12	3.5	Accepted	39	63	23	20	16	3.6	Accepted
To be informed	66	47	16	10	6	4.1	Accepted	56	69	17	12	7	3.9	Accepted
Academic	6	18	51	18	47	3.0	Accepted	22	30	63	25	30	3.0	Accepted
Playing games	21	15	37	41	32	2.7	Rejected	23	25	51	33	29	2.9	Rejected
Update ones status	27	44	43	20	12	3.4	Accepted	26	50	47	25	13	3.3	Accepted

In Table 4.7.1, while “reconnecting with old friends” (4.3) is the highest mean score for engagements for males, the females have it as “keeping in touch” (4.2) Both the females and males shared same idea when it comes to playing games. This implies that the male respondents used more of social media for reconnecting with friends while the female use

social media to stay in touch. It could be viewed that both gender uses social media for social purposes, except for playing game, which may be due to data management.

4.8 Differences between the Female and Male Students in the Gratification Obtained from Social Media

The differences between the female and male gender in the gratification obtained from the use of social media was obtained through the use of 5 point Likert scale. The results are presented below.

Table 4.8.1: Differences between the female and male students in gratification obtained from social media.

SEX Variables	MALE							FEMALE						
	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{x}	Decision	SA	A	N	D	SD	\bar{x}	Decision
Interpersonal	52	49	29	4	6	3.8	Accepted	41	60	44	5	11	3.7	Accepted
Pass time	25	60	34	18	9	3.7	Accepted	29	66	46	10	10	3.6	Accepted
Entertainment	54	57	25	7	5	4.1	Accepted	64	69	21	2	5	4.1	Accepted
Information	71	53	13	5	4	4.2	Accepted	74	59	22	1	5	4.2	Accepted
Convenience	33	56	41	10	6	3.7	Accepted	32	58	51	7	13	3.6	Accepted
Pornography	12	6	33	28	67	2.0	Rejected	9	7	24	21	10	1.8	Rejected
												0		
Affiliation	12	34	54	27	19	2.9	Rejected	11	26	73	25	25	2.8	Rejected
Relieve stress	24	53	42	21	6	2.7	Rejected	29	65	48	9	10	3.6	Accepted
Relaxation	51	55	28	8	4	3.9	Accepted	51	72	27	6	5	3.9	Accepted

From Table 4.8.1.both gender shared similar gratifications except that “relieving stress” is the major difference between male and female. Both have same idea in terms of “pornography”. They do not to accept pornography as a gratification obtained from social media. Meaning they derived gratification in most of the items listed except for pornography.

4.9 Discussion of Findings

The respondents of this study, who fall between the ages of 18-25 years, were found to be heavy users of social media, which is in line with the study of Safrank (2013), where he stated that the larger population of social media users are youths under the age of 25 years old.

4.9.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: What are the uses of social media by students in the two universities?

To answer question one, which addresses the issue of uses of social media by students in the two universities, findings in this study revealed that respondents use social media for several reasons, although majority of the respondents use social media to stay in touch, among which “connecting with family”, “connecting with friend”, “getting news”, “sharing information”, and “reconnecting with old friends” constitute the strongest reason for students’ use of the social media.

This result is in line with many studies including Clark *et al.* (2007), Dwyer (2007), Coyle and Vaughn (2008), Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008), Park Kerk and Sebastia’n (2009), Hammond *et al.* (2009), Smith *et al.* (2009), Pempek *et al.* (2009), Tosun (2012), Reich *et al.* (2012), Ward (2013), and Akpan *et al.* (2013). They all indicate that keeping in touch with friends and family is one of the primary reasons for the use of social media. This item was followed by “sharing photos”, “meeting new people”, “to be trendy”, “to ease boredom”, “sharing and watching videos”, “updating status”, “finding people with mutual interests” and “academics” having the least mean, all of which are the other options which accounted for the selection and use of social media by the respondents.

The result tends to confirm the findings of Ezeah, Asogwa and Obiorah (2013) that students use social media for social interaction and other leisure entertainment. Furthermore, it supports Haridakis and Hanson’s (2009) findings, that Nigerian students use social media more for social interaction and other leisure entertainment. Also, it supports Raacke and

Bonds-Raacke (2008) in their study which indicates that social media is used to keep in touch with old and current friends, as well as to make new friends or to get to know more people. The finding further synchronized with the study of Shana (2012), which revealed that students use social network mainly for making friends and chatting. Moreover, social media helps people to pass time, students use social media for social interaction and other leisure entertainment. These findings also tend to confirm the rationale for the application of Uses and Gratifications theory of the media as the theoretical anchor for this study. This is because the findings is in agreement with two of the assumptions of the theory which state that the audience are goal oriented and attempt to achieve their goal through the use of this media. It also states that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media because of the gratification they get from that media (Blumler and Katz 1974, cited in Anaeto *et al.*, 2008). This is to say the respondents are actually goal oriented and all the above mentioned reasons for the uses of social media may be the goals that motivate them in the use of social media. This tends to confirm the rationale for the application of uses and gratifications theory of the media as the theoretical anchor for this study.

4.9.2 RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: Which social networking site is the predominant preference of the students?

Findings revealed high level of awareness of social networking sites. Also, most of the students have account with more than one social network sites, and majority of the respondents (67.4%) have account with almost all the sites: BBM, Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. In addition, about 31% of the respondents also have account with other networks such as 2go, Badoo, Instagram, Bellaniger and Nairaland. The findings above may be explained by the advent of cheap and accessible android handsets which has made it possible to have all these network sites on phones, tablets and laptop. At the same time, it is not surprising seeing more users of more than one social media because people do not have to

own a Blackberry phone before chatting with BBM. Even with China made phones of three thousand naria, one can have access to Facebook, 2go, BBM, WhatsApp and all other social network sites.

Taking a good look at the social networking site that is the predominant preference of the students, the study reveals that in terms of subscription, subscription to all networks are about the same in the two universities, but in term of preference, WhatsApp is prefer by far. WhatsApp emerged the highest and most preferred social media. This may be because WhatsApp has more features, such as opening group, ability to change text, easy way of adding and removing member in a group, privacy, its real time messages, quality of the pictures sent and the fact that all you need is the phone number of the person you intend to chat with unlike BBM that demand the persons pin and Facebook that demand sending a request and acceptance by the person. This appears different from the findings of Mohammed (2013), Shittu (2013), Onyeka *et al.* (2013), Asemah and Edegoh (2013), and Oyero (2013) who found that Facebook is the most popular and more preferred SNSs among students. The reason why they prefer WhatsApp could also be due to what Blumler and Katz (1974) , presuming that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media because of the gratification they get from that media and accessibility.

With regard to the response(s) for their choice of preference, the findings reveal that the students in both universities agree that fastness is one of the major reasons why they prefer a particular social media with a percentage of 69% and 68% respectively. This is followed by the fact that it is cheap with 69% and 51% as the second reason for their choice of preference of a particular site over another, and the fact that it is reliable, followed by other reasons like it has good picture quality, it is the latest, it is sociable, good features, it has more to offer, and the privacy it offers, this may not be far from the trust due to the advantages WhatsApp has over Facebook and other networks, example is its privacy settings, which restrict the

users to only numbers on their phone, unlike Facebook where the users can have unknown friends another advantage is its ability to accept large files and videos with high quality lastly one of its advantage over other network is its ability to open in both Android and Symbian phones which Facebook don't allow. Opening multiple pages and follow celebrities constitute the least reason for the choice of preference. This could be attributed to the fact that WhatsApp does not give room for multiple pages. Again, since majority of the respondents prefer WhatsApp they probably won't choose multiple pages, which is associated with Facebook. The few respondents that preferred Facebook were likely those that chose multiple page and follow celebrities.

4.9.3 RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: What is the duration of time spent on social networking sites by the students daily?

It was also discovered that majority of the respondents spend high time on social media with about 75% of ABU students and 68% of University of Jos students using social media daily. 8%, 11%, using social media weekly, meaning that majority log in to their social media daily. The findings further indicate that majority of ABU students and University of Jos spend 1-2 hours and 3-4 hours daily on social media respectively. Surprisingly, respondents who spend 6 hours and above are more than those spending 4-5 hours daily. Only few of them go online occasionally and spend 4-5 hours daily. This is in line with the studies done by Edward (2009), Onyeka *et al.* (2013), and Dau (2015) with majority spending 1-2 hours, and 6 hours and above. This reveal that a good amount of time is being spent on social media.

4.9.4 RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: What gratification do the students get from the use of social media?

On the gratifications that users of social media derived by using the platform, the findings show that the gratifications are many and varied. The majority of the respondents show that

most of the gratifications obtained from the use of social media include interpersonal, pass time, entertainment, information, convenience, relieve stress and relaxation. Affiliation was also part of the gratifications obtained by some of the respondents although with smaller percentage. The above findings are in line with the study of Smock *et al.* (2011), who mentioned that six motivational factors significantly predict the use of specific features and general use of social media. These are: relaxation, entertainment, expressive information sharing, companionship, professional advancement, social interaction and pass time. Furthermore, Park *et al* (2009) revealed that a large amount of Social Network sites users find gratification in the amount of information allotted to them through SNSs. This finding reinforces the central ideas of the uses and gratifications theory of the media on which this study is anchored on.

They reject pornography as a gratification obtained from the use of social media which is contrary to the studies of Ezeah *et al.* (2013) (2013) and Sanusi, Gambo and Bashir (2014) who states that pornography is one of the reasons why students use social media and also the gratifications obtained.

4.9.5 RESEARCH QUESTION FIVE: What are the differences and similarities between students of the two universities in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media?

It was discovered that the use of social media by the students in the two universities is similar. Given the differences in culture, environment, location and state, one would have thought that their uses would clearly differ. But the findings however showed little differences in their rating of the uses. This suggests that students share similar characteristics irrespective of their location.

Both groups do not use social media for playing game but they both use social media for keeping in touch, connecting with family, connecting with friends, getting news and sharing

information. But reconnecting with old friends constituted the strongest reason why students use social media. This agrees with the study of Haridakis and Hanson (2009) who found that the motivation for using YouTube was to fulfil the information-seeking needs of their respondents.

For A.B.U students, there are five (5) major social media used and these are: to keep “in touch with family”, “in touch with friends”, “in touch with old friends”, “getting news” and the last one “to be informed”. Unlike the A.B.U students University of Jos students only have three (3) things that constitute the major factors for their use of social media, and these include: to “keep in touch with friends”, “getting news” and “reconnecting with friends”. For University of Jos students “to keep in touch with family” and “to be informed” are reported as second factors for the use of social media and not first as is the case with the A.B.U. students. A similar finding was provided by Ancu and Cozmo (2009). All other reasons, apart from the above, constitute the second factor for both universities with a clear fact that students in both universities do not use it to play game.

In analysing the differences in the gratifications obtained from the use of social media, it is important to note that the striking finding from the analysis is that despite the fact that there is no much difference in their uses, there appear to be differences in the gratification obtained between the two universities on their usage of social media, These differences could be in the way in which users experience SNSs and use them. For A.B.U. students, “convenience” was accepted to be one of the major satisfaction/ gratifications obtained from the use of social media, but for students in University of Jos it was rejected. It was also noted that while A.B.U students do not see “affiliation” to be part of the gratification and satisfaction obtained, University of Jos students tend to strongly agree and take “affiliation” to be part of the gratification they obtain.

In looking at the similarities in the two universities, it was observed that both the students of the two universities agree that they get gratification in the following: information seeking, pastime, entertainment, and information, relieve stress and relation. This study also is consistent with the study by LaRose and Eastin (2004) which found similar factors like the need for information-seeking, entertainment and social needs to be the most prevalent. Also, both the two universities do not agree that pornography is a source of gratification obtained.

4.9.6 RESEARCH QUESTION SIX: What are the differences and similarities between the male and female students in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media?

The analysis showed that there was little difference in the uses of social media among the genders. This may be because they share same characteristics as students, example of which the environment could be a factor, as well as peer influence. Which contradict Thelwall (2008) who found that males tend to make new relationship in social network environments more than females do. The only differences that appear is in the mean rating, the mean differs from each other a bit for instance while female students use more of social media to share picture the males respondent use less of it for sharing pictures. but not much differences was found.

The study also compared differences between the male and female gratification obtained from social media, both the male and female respondents reported that the most important gratification they obtained was “information and entertainment”. However, the factors of pass-time when bored, interpersonal, convenience, and relaxation is the second gratification obtained from the use of social media. This is in line with the study by Clark *et al* (2007) who found that Facebook helps college students to pass time and to be entertained. It was also

observed that both the male and female respondents did not agree to pornography and affiliation as gratification obtained from the use of social media.

The study found out that the male students did not see relieve stress as a gratification obtained from social media. The female students found social media as a form of relieving stress. This may not be far from the fact that the male students can obtain gratification in form of relieving stress from a lot of things like watching and playing football. They could also play PS games unlike the female gender that are restricted in the school environment and do not have any source of relieving stress other than engaging in social media. In contrast, the factor of “relieving stress” was identified to be the major difference among the genders in terms of gratifications obtained from the use of social media.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the chapters and the major findings of the study by taking into cognizance the various research questions put forward by the researcher. The chapter also contains the conclusion of the study, and made some recommendations based on the findings of the study. The chapter also highlighted some suggestions made for further studies related to this study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study investigates the uses and gratifications of social media among mass communication students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and University of Jos, with the following six objectives 1.To find out social media engagement by students in the two universities, 2. To ascertain the preference of social networking sites among students,3 To determine the amount of time spent on Social Networking Sites (SNS), 4. To ascertain the gratification derived from use of Social Network sites. 5. To reveal the differences and similarities between students of the two universities in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media and 6.To reveal the differences and similarities between the male and female students in the uses and gratifications obtained from Social Media. The Theory adopted for the study is the Uses And Gratification theory.

In the findings, it was discovered that many of the students are aware of various network sites and have accounts with more than two or three network site.

Findings show that respondents used social media for several reasons. Majority of the respondents used social media to stay in touch, among which connecting with family, connecting with friends, getting news, sharing information, and reconnecting with old friends constitute the strongest reason for the use of social media by students. Sharing photos,

meeting new people, to be trendy, to ease boredom, sharing and watching videos were also mentioned as other reasons.

Subscription to all social media networks was about the same in the two universities. While in terms of preference, WhatsApp was discovered to be the most predominant choice of preference among the respondents, and the reasons for their choice was based on the fact that it was fast, cheap, has good picture quality, the latest, sociable with good features, has more to offer, follows celebrities, and the privacy it offers.

A good amount of time was spent on social media activities by the students. This was shown in the fact that majority of the respondents agreed that they used social media for 1 to 2 hours daily and throughout the day, while some of the respondents agreed to using social media as long as they have data and had battery that would last browsing.

The vast majority of the respondents showed clearly that the gratification obtained from the use of social media include interpersonal, pass time, entertainment, information, convenience, relieve stress and relaxation. Affiliation was also part of the gratification sought for by some of the respondents although with less percentage. There was no much difference in their level of engagement on social media.

Both the students of the two universities declined and rejected the use of social media for playing game but accept all the other listed facts like keeping in touch, connecting with family, connecting with friends, getting news and sharing information, and reconnecting with old friends constitute the strongest reason why students use social media.

Both the male and female respondents reported that the most important gratification they obtained was “information and entertainment”. However, the factor of passing time when

bored, interpersonal, convenience and relaxation is the second important gratification obtained from the use of social media. They also reject pornography and affiliation as a satisfaction obtained from the use of social media.

Findings also showed that there is a difference between the male and female students. The study found that the male students do not see relieve stress as a gratification obtained from social media, however, the female students derive gratification in social media as a form of relieving stress.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the above findings, the study concluded that the uses and gratification of Social media by the students are for various reasons, but most importantly for social activities, with entertainment, relaxation and pass time being the gratifications obtained, and Reasonable amount of time is spent in the use of social media with WhatsApp being the predominant choice of preference by the respondents, which could be classified under Cognitive needs, Integration and social interaction as postulated by Katz and Blumler.

The study further concludes that there is a difference between the male and female students which the study found that the male students do not see relieve stress as a gratification obtained from social media, while the female students found social media as a form of relieving stress.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

As rightly pointed out in Chapter One of this study, in the existing body of literature available, most studies have focused on SNSs users in general or in one university, without necessarily comparing different universities' social media users. While several studies also have been conducted using Facebook and Twitter, there is clear lack of evidence of research

on WhatsApp and BBM of which its use is mostly common among students now, with little or no comparison made between students in different regions. The present study fills this gap by comparing two universities' students in using social media in terms of the gratification sought and obtained from social media with the inclusion of WhatsApp and BBM.

One of the major contributions to knowledge by this study is that from previous research, it was discovered that Facebook is the most common, most popular and preferred social network sites but this study reveal a contrary scenario. Facebook is actually part of the common and most popular network but definitely not the most preferred. it was discovered in this study that Facebook is gradually losing its preference to WhatsApp among the respondents, and if new features are not added, Facebook will lose its audience to WhatsApp, or better still will co-exist with weak popularity, which will give strength to the theory of mediamorphosis.

The study also contributed to knowledge in the aspect of differences in gender. Unlike the male gender, female gender obtained gratification as relieving stress while using the social media.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the above findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- I. Based on the findings which show that the mean score for the usage for academics is lower than for social activities, the study recommends that students should try and balance the use of social media for social activities and academics.
- II. Students should try and maximize the tools of social media for their academic work. They can form groups and fora in order to place announcements about a course or ask questions on topics of interest relating to their academics. Social media should be

- used for academic work more than for social activities in which majority of students engage in.
- III. Since students spend high amount of time on social media, it will be advisable for lecturers to use social media (web 2.0) to enhance teaching-learning process by uploading academic contents for use by the students. Lecturers can also make use of social media like Facebook, WhatsApp, BBM chat and others in creating groups to encourage and teach online journalism especially for Mass Communication students. Media like wikis can be used by supervisors and students to work on the same task at different locations.
 - IV. Educational Institutions should incorporate social media as a course to be used for citizen journalism in aiding students in their academic pursuit and to educate the students on the dangers in social media.
 - V. The regulatory body of Facebook should improve on Facebook Sites to keep their subscribers.

The education system has an opportunity to reach the students in a mode of communication they enjoy and use, but educators are not doing so; a fact reiterated by Akyildiz and Argan (2010). Therefore, social media should be utilized positively by students and should be for both the lecturers and students to meet up with their academic work.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

Research on the uses and gratification of social media cannot be exhausted. This means that further studies can be conducted in the following area:

1. This study did not cover the dangers associated with the use of social media, so further research should be carried out to know the dangers it poses on students.
2. It also did not cover the correlation between the time spent on social media and the gratification obtained. Further research is required to know if time spent on social media has correlation with the gratification obtained.

3. The present study only compared two universities from two regions and little differences were found; this may be because of the closeness of the regions. Further research needs to be done to make comparisons between the Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western parts of the country, to know if culture and environment have any effect on the uses and gratification of social media by students.

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APPENDIX

Dear respondents

I am an MS.C student of the above named institution, conducting a research on the topic
‘USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG MASS COMMUNICATION STUDENTS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA AND UNIVERSITY OF JOS.

I humbly request your assistance in filling the questionnaire. All information gathered shall be used purely for research purpose and shall be treated with confidentiality.

Yours faithfully

Alhassan F B

07039282960

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. What is your sex?

a. Male []

b. Female []

2. What is your age bracket?

a. 18-24 []

b. 25-31 []

c. 32-38 []

d. 39-40 []

3. What level are you?

a. 1001 []

b. 2001 []

c. 3001 []

d. 4001 []

SECTION B: USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA (ENGAGEMENT)

4. What are the social networking sites you know?

a. Twitter []

b. BB chat []

c. Face book []

d. WhatsApp []

e. Others specify.....

Note

Rate each question on the following scale of 1-5 according to the following:

SD-Strongly Disagree D- Disagree N-Neutral A-Agree S-Strongly Agree.

5. Reasons why I use social media. Please tick all that applies.

	SD	D	N	ASA
a) Keeping in touch with friends	[]	[]	[]	[]
b) Sharing photos	[]	[]	[]	[]
c) Keeping in touch with family	[]	[]	[]	[]
d) Reconnecting with old friends	[]	[]	[]	[]
e) Getting news	[]	[]	[]	[]
f) Sharing/watching videos	[]	[]	[]	[]
g) Meeting new people	[]	[]	[]	[]
h) Providing my opinion to mainstream media	[]	[]	[]	[]
i) Promoting a cause	[]	[]	[]	[]
j) To be trendy	[]	[]	[]	[]
k) Promoting your own business	[]	[]	[]	[]
l) To ease burden	[]	[]	[]	[]
m) To be informed	[]	[]	[]	[]
n) Academics	[]	[]	[]	[]
o) Playing games	[]	[]	[]	[]
p) Updating one's status	[]	[]	[]	[]
q) Others specify	[]	[]	[]	[]

.....

SECTION C: CHOICE OF PREFERENCE

6). which of the social media are you on?

- Twitter []
- BBM []
- Facebook []
- Whatsapp []
- Others _____

7). Which do you prefer?

- Twitter []
- BB chat []
- Facebook []
- Whatsapp []
- Others _____

8). Why do you prefer it? Please tick all that applies.

- a) It is faster []
- b) It is cheap []
- c) It is reliable []
- d) It opens multiple page at the same time []
- e) It has good picture quality []
- f) It has good features []
- g) It has more to offer []

- h) It is the latest []
- i) It is more sociable []
- j) I like the privacy []
- k) You can follow celebrities []
- l) Other reasons, specify

.....

SECTION D: TIME SPENT

9). How often do you engage in SNS

- Daily []
- Weekly []
- Monthly []
- Occasionally []

10). How many hours do you spend on social media daily?

- 0 – 1 Hrs. []
- 2 – 3 Hrs. []
- 4 – 5 Hrs. []
- 6 and above []

11). what time of the day do you engage in social media?

- Day time (6 am – 6 pm) []
- At night (6 pm – 6 am) []

SECTION E: GRATIFICATION OBTAINED Please check **ALL** that applies.

Rate each question on the following scale of 1-5 according to the following:

(1)Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neutral (4)Agree (5) Strongly Agree

12). what is the satisfaction you obtained from using social media?

	1	2	3	4	5
a) Interpersonal utility	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
b) Pass time	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
c) Entertainment	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
d) Information seeking	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
e) Convenience	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
f) Pornography	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
g) Affiliation	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
h) Relieve stress	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
i) Relaxation.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

13). Comment freely on the satisfaction you obtain from social media.....

.....
