An Investigation on Social Network Usage for Social Interaction and Academic in the Federal Polytechnic Damaturu

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ABSTRACT
Global influence has become simpler today because of technological advancement. Technology has put the whole world together in such a way that distance is no longer a barrier to people's achievement in life. Technology has also brought much innovation into the globe by eliminating previous hindrances which stand as barrier to people's effective communication, interaction, relationship and learning. It is not a subject of debate that technology has brought the whole world together as global village in all ramifications with its various technological instruments. Today, people can share series of information together both in private and public, make friends, learn a lot of things in virtual contact through the help of technology called social network. Technology helps people to watch, participate, and contribute to life events anywhere in the world thereby enhancing socialization through communication between devices including computers and cell phones installed with mobile operating systems. Using the social networks attract a lot of advantages and future progress to the world development. Despite the fact that the technology is bringing more global innovations to our world, there is still a high level of ignorance and inability to identify and understand the specific purpose of which social network aims to achieve, and to operate within the confines of their values in usage, especially when it comes to applying it in socialization and as effective learning material. This research work is conceived to unravel the importance of social network in today's socialization, enhancing knowledge and promoting understanding of what social network is meant to afford and encourage in its effective use in order to be benefited socially and in its use as academic learning material.
Keywords: Social Network, Global influence, Technology, Worldwide, Innovation, Future Progress

INTRODUCTION

According to Giganews (2015), the development of digital computer was rooted in the Abacus and early mechanical calculating devices. Charles Babbage was credited for the design of the first modern computer called analytical engine during the 1830s. During Second World War, the colossus was developed for British code breakers. It was the first programmable electronic digital computer. The first generation computer was replaced by the transistorized computer of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The second generation computer machines that were smaller use less power and could perform a million operations per second. These were replaced by third generation integrated circuit machines at the mid-1960s and 1970s of smaller size and more reliable. Computer machines from 1970s to 1990s were characterized by the development of microprocessor and the evolution of increasing smaller and powerful such as personal computers that brought about period of rapid growth in the computer industry.

World Wide Web came into being in 1990 with the development of graphical web browser programs and later the web and internet spurred the growth of general purpose computing and the use of computing devices as a means of social interaction. Smartphones integrate a range of computer software with the cellular telephone that is now touch screen (Giganews, 2015). Networking is an information exchange between two people with the help of network devices in which relationships are established. Danielle (2012) observed mobile technology to have made great stride and grow tremendously since the early days of networking to the present. Hayat (2016) established a clarification that mobile computing has changed how information is accessed and shared through the help of wireless networking.

Brandley (2015) described social network as a platform on the internet that logically brings people together to a central location in order to talk with each other, to share ideas and information of a common interest and to make new friends. Co-action and sharing of data and information is referred to as social media (Madden *et al.*, 2013). It can be further described as a means of sharing the first-hand information and experiences that help in life's achievement, such as developing friendship, professional alliances, employment opportunities, and business-to-business marketing and training opportunities.

According to Corgon (2015), social networking is described as the grouping of individuals into specific groups, such as small rural communities or neighborhood subdivision that could function in workspace, institutions, high schools, marketplace and in many other places.

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Figure 1: Symbol of social network with people images (Sergey,2015)

Network is a group of interconnected computers and peripherals via cable or wireless that is capable of sharing software and hardware resources between many users (Business Dictionary, (2017).According to Brandley (2015), networking is the practice of interfacing two or more computing devices with each other for the purpose of sharing data. When such networks are used to build social relationships, it is referred to as social network.

Despite the rapid growth of social network today around the globe and visibilities of its positive impacts on lives and society developments, many people are still lacking behind to fully understand its importance on timely and effective communication and its effective system of learning as a tool in various ways. This clearly shows that a good number of people, through this research are far behind on the awareness of the importance of this social networking despite of the availability of resources with them.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the effective use of social media in The Federal Polytechnic Damaturu community as an academic Institution learning.

Specifically, the study will determine the use of social media on:

1. The reason behind some social media are more prominent in use than the others among the Students and staff of the members of The Federal Polytechnic Damaturu community
2. How those prominently use of social media affects Students' academic learning and socialization either positively or negatively.

Research Questions

1. What categories of social network are predominant in use by members (students and staff) of The Federal Polytechnic Damaturu community and what are the criteria for the selection?
2. To what extent has ineffective use of social network has affected the students' academic learning and staff's effective communication and interaction with students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis conceived the idea of Usenet in 1979 as two students graduated from Duke University and later established in 1980. Their aim was to replace a local BBS-style announcement system that was made obsolete with then hardware recently upgrade. With the help of Stephen Bellovin who really assisted them in writing scripts, and the Netnews program was born and it linked Duke University and University of North Carolina, (Giganews, 2016). Usenet became a worldwide distributed discussion system which was developed from general-purpose UUCP dail-up architecture. Through this, users read and post messages to one another in form of newsgroups. Usenet is distributed among a layer constantly changing a glomeration of servers that store and forward messages to one another as newsfeed in which individual can read messages from the post messages to local server operated by a commercial provider, (Christopher, Danyel, and Springer, 2003).

A diagram of Usenet server and clients. The blue, green and red dots on the server represent the groups they carry. Arrows between servers indicate newsgroup group exchanges. Arrows between clients and servers indicates that a user is subscribed to a certain group and reads or submits articles.
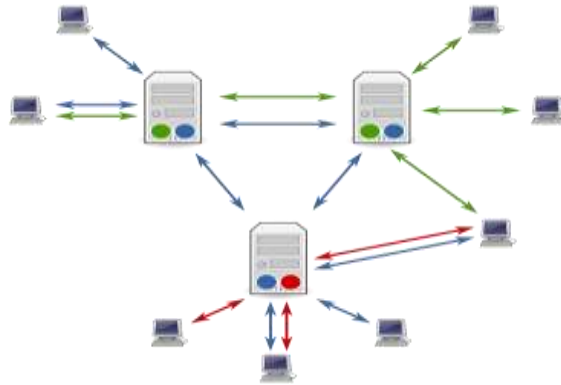
Figure: Usenet, (Esham, 2007)

The first social networking site created in 1994 was called Geocities. This social network allows the users to create and customize their own websites and group into different cities based on site's content. In the year followed, Globe.com was lunched for public use by giving the user's ability to interact with people of the same hobbies and interests by giving them the opportunity to publish their own content.

AOL Instant Messenger and SixDegree.com was later lunched in 1997. Instant Messenger gives users the freedom to chat with friends and create a profile. AOL is the true precursor to today's social networking sites. Member of OAL social networking profiles allowed its users to write biography and share details about themselves. Profiles were searchable to people who could look into your profile (Web designer, 2016).

Emile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tonnies in the late 1890s foreshadowed the idea of social networks in their theories and research of social groups. Tonnies based his argument on the fact that social groups can exist as personal and direct social ties that either link individuals who share values and belief as community and society (Charles, 1957).

Usenet groups and bulletin boards were the earliest social networking services available in the internet established by communities to communicate on specific topics. The early internet users were focused on technology, computer science and topics of interest such as role-playing games. Chat rooms, dedicated web space that allow users type and send messages to one another and receive responses in real time were the common features of these sites. Early social networking sites were not as popular as we have today.

Architecture of Social Networking

Social network is designed in a structure that will enable people to express themselves and meet online with other people of common interest in order to share together. According to Daniel (2015) social network is structured with the following:

- ➢ **Profiles:** This contains basic information and favorites in life
- ➢ **Friends:** This allows posting comments on the profile and sending private messages. Friends can post pictures, update their profiles.
- ➢ **Groups:** Majority of social networks use groups to help users find people with common interests. Groups are way of connecting with like-minded people and to identify interests.
- ➢ **Discussion:** Primary focus of groups is to serve as a means of interaction between users. Most social networking websites support discussion between users, allow members of the group to post pictures, music and video clips related to the group.
- ➢ **Blogs:** This feature is found in some social networks. It is an ability to create personal blog entries and keep people informed of what you are and what you can do.
- ➢ **Widgets:** This is one of the ways you make your personality shine. This could be achieved by beautifying your social network profile with variety of web widgets.

What is Social Media?

Daniel (2015) described social media as a social instrument of communication. Any website that invites you to interact with the site and with other visitors falls into the definition of social media. Social media is a two-way medium that gives the ability to communicate.

Figure 2: What is Social Network? (Daniel, 2015)

Social Media Websites: These are websites that help in interacting with other visitors around the world. Daniel (2015) itemized some of the examples of social media websites to include:

- ➢ **Social bookmarking:-** This website categories help to interact by tagging websites and searching through websites bookmarked by other people. These include: social bookmark are; Delicious, Blinklist, and Simpy.
- ➢ **Social news:-** The websites interact by voting for articles and commenting on them. Examples are; Digg, Propellers, and Reddit.
- ➢ **Social network:-** This social media website interacts by adding friends, commenting on profiles joining groups and having discussions. Examples are; Facebook, Hi5, Last FM.
- ➢ **Social photos and videos sharing:-** Categories of these website interact by sharing photos, videos and commenting on user submission. Examples are; YouTube, and Flickr.
- ➢ **Wikis:-** These websites interact by adding articles and editing articles. Examples are: Wikipedia, and Wikia.

Popular Social Network Platform

(1)   **Facebook:-** This is one of the most popular social networking used in internet today. Facebook helps users to setup their personal web page, to connect with friends, to share pictures and movies and to discuss interesting or ongoing events.

(2)   **Bebo:-** this is also a social network where users are allowed to share photo, stories, journals and many other things with friends and families in private or public on the internet.

(3)   **LinkedIn:-** this social network was founded in 2003, it allows connection with current and past co-workers, co-students and it creates opportunities for future benefits like jobs, studies and contracts.

(4)   **Tagworld:-** This is a social network that brings users together to enjoy similar music and other interests. It also allows users to post videos, music and it enables browsing of other users videos and music.

(5)   **Twitter:-** A fantastic social network service founded in 2006 allows users to post up to 140 characters long from their phone on to the internet. It helps users to get the pulse of what is going on around the world.

(6)   **YouTube:-** This social network was founded in 2005 and it allows users to post video blogs, vlogs and other fun and interesting videos into the internet.

(7)   **Hi5:-** This is a social network established in 2003 with currently over 60 million active members. In this social network, profiles privacy works where a user network consists not only their own contacts, but friends of friends and friends of friends of friends as second and third degree.

(8)   **MySpace:-** This social network was founded in 2003. It allows users to customize the look of their profiles. It also allows users to post music from artists on MySpace and embed   video from other sites on their profiles. It allows communication through private messages, public comments posted to a user's profile allows bulletins sent out to all the user friends. It also allows real-time status updates and news feed showing friend activity.

(9)   **Mutiply:-** A social network of family-friendly of media showing sites. It was established in 2004. These emphasizes security and privacy more than other social networks. Users have option to set security level on items posted which make things public, network- only or invite-only

(10)   **Orkut:-** This is a google's social network launched in January 2004. It is very much used in Brazil and India with over 65 million users. This social network allows users to share media, status updates and communicate through instant messaging.

(11)   **Kontain:-** This social network was launched in2008. It focuses on usability and allows users to follow each other through photos, videos

and music. It recruits business men and women by signing up and promote services by connecting with customers.

(12) **Flickr:-** This is a social network that embraced over 3.6 billion images as far back as June 2009. Flickr has groups, photo pools. It allows users to create profiles, add friends and organize images and video into photo set or albums.

(13) **Friendster:-** This social network was founded in 2002, presently, it has over 90 million users. Friendster social network allows people to discover their friends and friends-of-friends which make their networks expand. It is a safer place to meet new people than in real   life.   It   is faster in use. It is a dating site for people looking for life partner. This social network is used by gay men, attendees of Burning man and bloggers.

(14) **FriendFeed:-** This social network was launched in 2007, and it was purchased by recently by Facebook. FriendFeed allows users to integrate most of their online activities such as
Twitter, RSSfeeds, and Flickr in one place. It also allows users to create friend list, to post update and communicate.

(15) **Twoo:-** This social network is the fastest growing place to chat, search, share photos and to play fun.

(16) **Google+:-** This social network was introduced early in 2011; it has become one of the fastest growing today after a couple of failure. It allows users to build circles of contacts that they are able to interact with.

(17) **Instagram:-** This is one of the most popular social network for sharing photo on mobile web. It is a social network used to share real-time photo and short video while on the go. This application is available on mobile operating system such as iOS platform, Android and windows phone.

(18) **Pinterest:-** This is a social network used in sharing visual content on the web. Its beautiful and intuitive pinboard style platform on the web and on the mobile is one of the most incredible resources for collecting images and categorizing them on boards.

(19) **Snapchart:-** This social network based on instant messaging and it is mobile-based. It is built on self-destructing "snaps" of photos and videos taken for charting with friends and such photos and videos are automatically deleted after viewing. It is a kid's social application.

(20)   **Tumblr:-** This social network is a social bogging platform used mostly by young and teenagers. It is for sharing of the visual content. When blog theme is customized and different content format types are posted, it can be used to interact with other users by reblogging and linking. Posting many contents will make you to see many followers you can attract (Moreau, 2015).

BENEFITS OF SOCIAL NETWORK

Today, social network is used by many people for many purposes. Using social network creates awareness for millions of people (worldwide) across the globe. Social network is used in the following areas.

Social Network in Education: This is widely used in various ways to foster the learning process in many of the school system today. Some of these social networks are used to teach and deliver classroom lecture in private. It is also used in conducting research by many researchers in many schools and fields of researches. Social network could be used in data collection in various forms. Conferences and seminars could be attended through the social network.

Social network in Business: This media is used today in various forms to promote business. It is used in advertising business information to customers. It is inexpensive to use because it can reach millions of people, create awareness of goods and services to customers by small and large scale business groups. Transactions of various forms could be made between customers online through the social network. Awareness of new products could be made online through social network.

Figure 3: From Social Networks to Market Networks, (Currier, 2015).

Social Network in Life and Dead: The use of technology has greatly affected our lives in many areas. It has improved the way we keep present and past record of lives in remembrance. Information about a deceased person today could be related through the phone call. The use of social network such as Facebook is mostly used today because it really presents the total information including photograph to the whole world. Social network helps to keep the records of the deceased such as Facebook pages, blog posts and other communications made while they were alive. The biography of the deceased either friends or relatives or loved ones could be created and sent through the social network to different parts of the world which could be read as remembrance by many people, (Brown, 2014).

Social Network in Politics: Some of the countries in the world have allowed social network sites shape the landscape of their political system by judiciously utilizing them. In the last few months of 2015 election in Nigeria, many politicians used some of the social networks for their election campaign at presidential, senatorial, House of Representatives, and governorship levels. Some of these social media were used to reach Nigerians both within and outside the country.

During campaign of the first tenure of Barack Obama in 2008 for president, more than a quarter of US voters from 18 to 24 year old obtained information

through social media. Through the use of social media, the day before presidential election, Democratic candidate Barack Obama had 2,379,102 Facebook supporters while Republican candidate John McCain had 620,359 supporters. Barack Obama had 38% more than John McCain. US president, Barack Obama gave the opportunity of connecting everyone via the White House Blog through social media like: Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, Yo and Flickr to the government in order to obtain information and services and participate in policymaking (ProCon.org, 2015).

Social Network in Collective Thinking: In companies that have many employees or a telecommunicating workforce, social networking can be a great tool to connect with new innovation, share information and give all employees the same tools and goals so that everyone work toward the success to achieve in organization. This collective thinking keeps up moral because everyone is given opportunity to participate.

Social Network Improves Social Skills: Social interaction could be awkward and very difficult. The use social network over the internet allows people to improve their personal interactive personal skills, build friendships and create links between other people.

Social Network Delivers from Dangers: Information through the social networks helps a lot a times. Information could be received either to protect from danger, to educate people on certain things to avoid or an urgent step to take at a particular time.

FUTURE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

Hausman (2012) keenly observed social networks to have lots of future changes which will not only sustain the existing ones but new ones may also continue to emerge. The research observed that it may not be holy trinity (Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) that survive, but newer social networks which are yet to appear will emerge in the future. She also doubted the forever survival of current leaders of social networks (Facebook, Twitters, LinkedIn, and Google+).

Figure 4: The Future of Social Networks. (Hausman, 2012)

According to Gauray(2012), the present social networks of billions of Facebook, more than 150 of intimate friends of path, the Youtube for videos, Instagram for photos, Twitter for status updates, LinkedIn for professionals, Pinterest for curators and others will not be different in diversity from what we will have in the future.

Gauray (2012), evaluate the future of social network by considering the difference between Utopia and Dystopia linking it to the thought of the world's technology and spiritual progress. "There are probably infinite possible futures and these are merely four possibilities amongst them but I hope that you see that relatively few things need to change for us to end up with the utopian positive futures the dystopian negative futures, namely: what does society value and how much, what's commercial and what's in the commons, who wields power and to what end. Dystopias, after all, are utopias with a few critical fatal flaws and the biggest fatal flaw, perhaps, is humanity's spiritual progress lagging behind the society's technological progress. Let this be our touchstone for making choices that might lead to the more preferable of these possible worlds: are we only thinking of our technological progress, or also of our spiritual progress?"

Figure 5: The Future of Social Network. (Gauray, 2012)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The research adopted a survey for the study. It investigates on how the technology of social network is made avail to social communication and academic study of The Federal Polytechnic Damaturu community in Yobe State. The population of the study comprises of students, academic staff, senior non-academic staff and junior non-academic staff totaling 4,270. The purposive sampling technique was employed in which 3836 Students, 176 Academic staff, 145 Senior Non-Academic Staff and 114 Junior Non-Academic Staff were used. Few of the common social media were selected which including: facebook, Watsapp, Youtube, twitter, Google, Linkedln and myspace.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for this research firstly was to get the platform (selected social media) and their capability that is, video content sharing, audio content sharing, charting, information sharing, and photo sharing and to determine the target of each social media in tabular form as in **Table 1** below and compare the level of their capability each. Secondly, questionnaire were produced and distributed to students, academic staff, senior non-academic staff and junior non-academic staff to obtain the response on how individual make use the selected social network; facebook, Watsapp, Youtube, twitter, Google, Linkedln and myspace. Then, each group's platform usage percentage was calculated as in **Table 2** below.

Research Question 1

What categories of social network are predominant in use by members (students and staff) of The Federal Polytechnic Damaturu community and what are the criteria for the selection?

Table 1: Selected social media, what they are used for and the purpose of using each.

Platform/Capability	Video Content Sharing	Audio Content Sharing	Chatting	Information Sharing	Photo Sharing	Target
YouTube	V		V	V	V	General
Facebook	V		V	V	V	Social
Google+	V	V		V	V	General
MySpace	V	V		V		General
Whatsapp	V	V	V	V	V	Social
Instagram	V		V	V	V	Social
Twitter	V		V	V	V	Social
LinkedIn			V	V	V	Education
Vimeo	V		V	V	V	General

Discussion

Considering the Table 1, the following can be deduced:

1. All the social media; facebook, Whatsapp, Youtube, twitter, Google, LinkedIn and myspace are for information sharing
2. Majority of the social media are for video content sharing and photo sharing
3. The target of social media; facebook, whatsapp, instgram and twitter is for social, Youtube, google+, Myspace and Vimeo are general and LinkedIn's target is education.
4. It could also note that social media google+, Myspace and whatsapp are only for audio content sharing.

Research Question 2

To what extent has ineffective use of social network has affected the students' academic learning and staff's effective communication and interaction with students?

Table 2: Number and percentage response of students and staff of members of The Federal Polytechnic Community to the use of social media platform

Users/Platform	Facebook	Whatsapp	Twitter	YouTube	Google+	MySpace	LinkedIn
Students	2000	3,00078.21%	200	1000	2000	500	500
	52.14%		5.21%	26.05%	52.14%	13.03%	13.03%
Academic Staff	80	150	20	110	175	10	20
	45.45%	85.23%	11.36%	62.50%%	99.43%	5.68%	11.36%
Senior Non-Academic Staff	50	120	20	50	120	20	10
	34.48%	82.76%	13.80%	34.48%	82.76%	13.79%	6.90%
Junior Non-Academic Staff	15	30	7	20	30	5	3
	13.16%	26.32%	6.14%	17.54	26.32%	4.39%	2.63%

Source: Fieldwork, 2017

Analysis

In Table 2, social media are used in the following rate by the categories: students have 2000 (52.14%) Facebook, 3,000 (78.21%), Whatsapp, 200 (5.21%) Twitter, 1000 (52.14%) YouTube, 2000 (52.14%) Google+, 500 (13.03%) Myspace, 500 (13.03%) LinkedIn; academic staff: 80 (45.45% Facebook, 150 (85.23% Whatsapp, 20 (11.36%) Twitter, 110 (62.50%) YouTube, 175 (99.43%) Google+, 10 (5.68%) Myspace, 20 (11.36%) LinkedIn; Senior Non-academic staff: 50 (34.48%) Facebook, 120 (82.76%) Whatsapp, 20 (13.80%) Twitter, 50 (34.48%) YouTube, 120 (82.76%) Google+, 20 (13.79%) Myspace, 10 (6.90%) LinkedIn; Junior Non-academic staff: 15 (13.16%) Facebook, 30 (26.32%) Whatsapp, 7 (6.54%) Twitter, 20 (17.54%) YouTube, 30 (26.32%) Google+, 5 (4.39%) Myspace, 3 (2.63%) LinkedIn.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data in research question number two shows that; (i) larger percentage of students, academic staff, senior non-academic staff and junior non-academic staff are more into use of whatsapp and google+ social media, (ii) very low percentage of students and academic staff are into the use of LinkedIn social media which is meant for academic information sharing. This confirms that the use of social network in academic activity in The Federal Polytechnic Damaturu is very poor (iii) the use of all social media by junior non-academic staff is very poor which could be attributed to either the type of mobile phone they use, possibly many of them do not have mobile phone (iv)It could be deduced from the use of google+ social media by students that many

of them do not have functional E-mail address of their own. This implies that, the institution cannot get in touch with these should in case urgent mailing information is required from them while they are away from the Polytechnic during holiday session.

CONCLUSION

Impact of social networks is very obvious in our world of technology today. It is felt in almost all aspects of lives. It makes all information to be at the tip of our fingers anytime and anywhere. With the use of social network as it is advancing, the world will be easier to live in term of communication, interaction, accessibility of information, virtual contacts, and in learning because everything that keeps the world in darkness in time past has been brought to the light.

RECOMMENDATION

There is clear prospect that the use of social networks will be more in advanced level. More social networks will emerge and added to the present one. The followings are recommended based on the findings of this study:

1. There is need for Information Communication Technology (ICT) awakens among staff and students in the Institution for the purpose of academic improvement and effective information sharing
2. Provision of effective Internet in the Institution will further encourage the use of social media more effectively
3. It is high time to incorporate some of these social networks into our academic system for the improvement of the education system and research development.

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