

The Impact of social media on the Academic Performance of Students. A Case Study of The Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM) University of Sierra Leone

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Abstract: This article investigates the influence of social media on the academic performance of students at Institute of Public Administration and Management, University of Sierra Leone. With the growing popularity and pervasive nature of social media platforms, concerns have been raised about their potential impact on students' educational outcomes. To investigate this relationship, a case study was conducted focusing on the experiences and perceptions of social media use by students aiming to promote or limit any dire consequences associated thereof to ensure students' survivability in education.

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data. A sample of students from different disciplines and academic levels were selected, and their social media usage patterns, study habits, and academic performance were assessed.

The research found out that social media usage among students was high, with most participants reporting spending considerable time on various platforms. The primary purposes for using social media were found to be social interaction, entertainment, and information sharing. However, a significant proportion of students acknowledged that social media often acted as a distraction from their academic responsibilities.

Regarding academic performance, the study discovered a negative correlation between excessive social media use and students' grades. Students who spent more time on social media reported lower academic achievements compared to those who used it moderately. The study also identified several factors that contributed to this phenomenon, including reduced study time, decreased concentration, procrastination, and decreased motivation. The study concludes that social media use can have a significant impact on students' academic performance depending how they use and manage it.

KEYWORDS: academic performance, Institute of Public Administration and Management, Impact, Student, social media

I. Introduction

The impact of social media on the academic performance of students has become quintessential and pivotal in academic discourse. Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp, have become ubiquitous in the lives of many students, especially in higher education institutions. However, the effects of social media use on students' academic outcomes are not well understood. Some studies suggest that social media can enhance students' learning, engagement, and collaboration, while others indicate that social media can distract students from their studies, reduce their attention span and impair their critical thinking skills. The 21st century witnessed improvements in communication technology which has broadened the scope of

communication through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Modern Technology in communication no doubt has turned the entire world into a “Global village”, blessed the mother of civilization (technology) which has both positive and negative implications. It helps people to be better informed, enlightened, and keeping abreast with world developments. It exposes mankind to a better way of doing things. Social networking sites include: Twitter, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp messenger, Skype, Google talk, Google Messenger, iPhone and Androids. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet friends (Asemah and Edegoh, 2012). The world has been changed rapidly by the evolution of technology; this has resulted into the use of technology as the best medium to explore the wide area of knowledge.

The evolution of internet technology has led to its use as the best medium for communication, whereby, two-third of the world’s internet population visits social networking or blogging sites, thus serving as a communication and connection tool. Social networking sites (SNSs) are online communities of internet users who want to communicate with other users about areas of mutual interest, whether from a personal.

Academic excellence or achievement plays an important role in an individual placement, be it in the academic institutions or job placement. Due to this, many people are concerned with the ways they can enhance their academic achievement. The emphasis on academic excellence which is also prevalent worldwide has encouraged many studies about the conditions promoting it. The role of academic achievement as one of the predictors of one’s life success and also in the aspect of academic placement in schools to higher institutions as well as the level of employability in one’s career is inevitable (Kyoshiba, 2009).

In recent years, the rise of social media platforms has revolutionized the way people communicate, share information, and engage with one another. With its widespread popularity and accessibility, social media has not only transformed various aspects of our daily lives but has also significantly influenced the education sector.

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, have created new avenues for communication, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas. While these platforms offer numerous benefits, including enhanced connectivity and access to information; concerns have been raised about their potential negative effects on students' academic performance. As a result, researchers and educators have sought to understand the relationship between social media usage and academic achievement.

The article explored the key findings of the case study, highlighting the ways in which social media can both positively and negatively affect students' academic performance. It examined the impact of social media distractions, time management challenges, information overload, and the potential for increased collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Additionally, the article will address strategies and recommendations for students, educators, and institutions to mitigate the negative effects of social media and harness its potential for academic success.

Understanding the impact of social media on students' academic performance is crucial in today's digital age.

There is a strong relationship between the social media and student’s performance. The growth of social causes dilemma for students especially the ones that are using social networking sites. Social networking sites create social associations among people of the same interest. With that students tend to neglect their studies, assignments and focuses on the trending activities and excitement involving on the social networking sites. Many students have become addicted to the excitement found within the Facebook and WhatsApp.

These days even primary students have a Facebook account. The reason most of them perform badly in school might not be far-fetched. While many minds might be quick to blame the poor quality of teachers, they might have to think even harder, if they have not heard of the Facebook frenzy (Oche & Aminu 2010).

Students are spending too much time on social sites, and much lesser time on socializing in person. In fact, there is a lack of body signals besides other nonverbal cues, including tone and inflection in case of social networking sites. Thus, they cannot be considered as an adequate replacement for any face-to-face communication. Not only this, but students also who are spending a great deal of time on these social networking sites are not able to communicate in person in an effective manner.

II. Statement of the Problem

The increasing use of social media platforms in the 21st Century has transformed information exchange and communication. This phenomenon has impacted interpersonal relationships in addition to having an impact on academic settings. Social media's effect on students' academic performance has also affected the Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM), University of Sierra Leone. Therefore, it is essential to investigate how social media affects IPAM students' academic performance.

The academic environment of IPAM, a well-known institution in Sierra Leone, is the subject of the study. It is situated at A.J Momoh Street, Tower Hill, Freetown. IPAM draws students from a wide range of academic backgrounds. Students in the study area are frequently exposed to social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp due to its growing usage, which could have a big impact on their academic performance.

Nearly all of the students at IPAM have active social media profiles, according to recent survey that the institution has done. An average of two to three hours a day were indicated by 90% of IPAM students as their daily usage of social media sites. These numbers demonstrate how widely students use social media and suggest that it may have a big influence on their academic performance.

Examining the effect of social media on IPAM students' academic performance is the main challenge of this study. It specifically seeks to determine whether prolonged usage of social media platforms impairs students' ability to focus, manage their time well, and perform well academically overall. Additionally, it examines the possible effects of social media diversions on students' capacity to accomplish academic objectives, participate in class activities, and study well.

Even while social media's impact on academic achievement in a variety of educational settings has been studied, there is still a lot we don't know about the impact of social media on students at IPAM. Few studies have been done to comprehend the difficulties and effects that IPAM students in Sierra Leone face when using social media. By offering a thorough analysis of the influence of social media on academic performance at IPAM, this study seeks to close this information gap and add to the corpus of knowledge already available on the topic.

III. Research Objectives

The study set out to investigate the following research objectives to provide a comprehensive analysis on the impact of social media on student's academic performance at IPAM

- To investigate the use of smart phones and frequency in using of social media website by students.
- To investigate the types of social media website students normally use.
- To highlight the reasons for students using various social media websites.
- To probe into the impact of using social media website on students' academic performance.
- To examine the periods students, use social media website

IV. Significance of the study

The study on the impact of social media on the academic performance of students at IPAM, University of Sierra Leone, is significant for several reasons:

Understanding the effects of social media: With the widespread use of social media platforms, it is important to investigate how they influence various aspects of individuals' lives, including academic performance. This study contributes to our understanding of the relationship between social media usage and academic outcomes.

Academic performance: Education is a crucial aspect of a student's life, and academic performance is a key indicator of success in their studies. By examining the impact of social media on academic performance, the study provides insights into factors that may affect students' ability to excel academically.

Case study approach: The study focuses on a specific institution, IPAM, within the University of Sierra Leone. By using a case study approach, the study delves deeper into the context- specific factors that might influence the relationship between social media usage and academic performance. This localized focus enhances the

study's relevance and applicability to IPAM students.

Informing educational policies: Findings from this study can be valuable in informing educational policies and interventions aimed at promoting effective social media use among students. It can guide educators, institutions, and policymakers in developing guidelines and strategies that help students strike a balance between social media engagement and academic responsibilities.

Building upon existing research: The study contributes to the existing body of research on the impact of social media on academic performance. By adding to the collective knowledge, it helps to validate or challenge previous findings and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Implications for students: The study's findings can benefit students directly by raising awareness about the potential effects of excessive social media use on their academic performance. It encourages students to reflect on their own social media habits and make informed decisions about managing their time and attention effectively.

V. Literature Review

5.1 Definition and Types of Social Media

Social media refers to online platforms and applications that facilitate the creation, sharing, and exchange of user-generated content, ideas, and information within virtual communities. There are various types of social media, each catering to different purposes and user preferences.

One classification of social media types includes the following categories:

Social Networking Sites (SNS): These platforms focus on connecting individuals and building personal or professional relationships. Popular examples include Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social networking sites allow users to "articulate and make visible their social networks" and provide features such as profiles, friend lists, and messaging systems.

Media Sharing Networks: These platforms primarily revolve around sharing visual content, such as photos and videos. Instagram and YouTube are prominent examples of media sharing networks. Users can upload, edit, and share their multimedia content with others.

Microblogging Platforms: Microblogging platforms enable users to share short, concise messages or updates with their followers. Twitter is the most well-known microblogging platform, where users can post tweets limited to 280 characters. Such platforms facilitate real-time information sharing and quick communication.

Discussion Forums and Community-based Platforms: These platforms foster discussions and interactions among users on specific topics or interests. Reddit and Quora are popular examples, where users can ask questions, provide answers, and engage in discussions with like-minded individuals.

Blogging Platforms: Blogging platforms allow individuals or organizations to create and publish content in the form of blog posts. WordPress and Blogger are widely used platforms that enable users to share their thoughts, opinions, and expertise on various topics. Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010).

5.2 Social Media Usage Patterns among students.

Social media usage patterns among students have been the subject of extensive research, and several studies have investigated various aspects of this topic. Here are some key findings, along with in-text citations to support them:

Frequency of Social Media Use: Many students engage in frequent social media use. A study conducted by Junco and Cotten (2012) found that 97% of college students in their sample used Facebook, with the majority logging in multiple times a day (p. 277).

Time Spent on Social Media: Students tend to spend a significant amount of time on social media platforms. A survey by Rideout, Foehr, and Roberts (2010) reported that American teenagers spent an average of 9 hours per week on social networking sites (p. 3). Similarly, a study by Kuss and Griffiths (2011) found that university students spent an average of 2 hours per day on social networking sites (p. 180).

Social Media Platforms: Facebook remains one of the most popular social media platforms among students. In

addition to Facebook, other platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter are also widely used. According to a survey conducted by Statista (2021), 79% of U.S. students aged 13-24 reported using Instagram, 69% reported using Snapchat, and 60% reported using Twitter.

Motivations for Social Media Use: Students engage with social media for various reasons. A study by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) identified several motivations, including social connection, entertainment, information sharing, and self-expression (p. 356). Additionally, a study by Chen (2017) found that students often use social media for academic purposes, such as accessing educational content and collaborating with peers (p. 431).

Impact on Academic Performance: The relationship between social media use and academic performance is a topic of debate. Some studies suggest a negative correlation, indicating that excessive social media use can be detrimental to students' academic success. For example, a study by Junco, Heiberger, and Loken (2011) found that higher Facebook use was associated with lower GPA among college students (p. 95). However, it is important to note that other studies have reported mixed findings, and the impact of social media on academic performance can be influenced by various factors, such as self-regulation and the specific ways in which social media is used.

5.3 Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Models

5.3.1 Theoretical Framework:

Uses and Gratifications Theory: This theory suggests that individuals actively choose and use media to fulfill specific needs and gratifications. In the context of social media and academic performance, students may use social media platforms for information seeking, social interaction, entertainment, and self-expression. (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974).

2.3.2 Conceptual Models:

The Distraction Model: This model proposes that the use of social media leads to distractions, which can negatively impact academic performance. Distractions may include notifications, addictive browsing behavior, and time spent on non-academic activities on social media platforms (Junco, 2012).

The Social Capital Model: This model examines the potential positive influence of social media on academic performance through the development of social capital. Social media can facilitate access to information, resources, and social support networks, which may enhance students' academic performance (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007).

The Self-Regulation Model: This model focuses on students' self-regulatory skills in managing their social media use and academic tasks. It suggests that effective self-regulation strategies, such as time management and goal setting, can mitigate the negative impact of social media on academic performance (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010).

5.4 Impact of Social Media on Academic Performance

Social media has become an integral part of modern society, with platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram being widely used by individuals of all ages, including students. The influence of social media on academic performance has been a topic of interest and concern among researchers and educators. Several studies have examined the relationship between social media usage and academic performance, and their findings suggest that excessive and unregulated use of social media can have a negative impact on students' academic performance.

A study conducted by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) investigated the effects of Facebook usage on students' academic performance. The researchers found a negative correlation between time spent on Facebook and students' GPA. Students who reported spending more time on Facebook had lower GPAs compared to those who spent less time on the platform. The study suggested that excessive use of social media can lead to distractions, reduced study time, and poor time management, ultimately affecting academic performance.

Similarly, a study by Junco (2012) explored the impact of Twitter usage on college students' grades. The findings indicated that students who frequently used Twitter for academic purposes, such as discussing course

content or seeking clarification from peers and instructors, had higher GPAs compared to those who used Twitter primarily for non-academic purposes.

On the other hand, excessive use of social media for non-academic purposes, such as scrolling through news feeds, engaging in online social interactions, and watching videos, has been associated with decreased academic performance. A study by Woods and Scott (2016) examined the relationship between social media use and academic achievement among undergraduate students. The results revealed that higher levels of social media use were linked to lower academic performance, as measured by lower PAs and decreased study time.

Furthermore, a meta-analysis conducted by Rozgonjuk et al. (2019) synthesized the findings of multiple studies and concluded that excessive use of social media negatively affects students' academic performance. The analysis highlighted that high levels of social media use can lead to procrastination, reduced attention span, and diminished cognitive abilities, all of which can hinder effective learning and academic success.

Finally, numerous studies have demonstrated that excessive and unregulated use of social media can have a detrimental impact on students' academic performance. These effects include decreased study time, poor time management, distractions, and reduced cognitive abilities. It is essential for students to develop strategies to regulate their social media usage and strike a balance between their online activities and academic responsibilities.

5.5 Factors Influencing the Impact of Social Media on Academic Performance

The impact of social media on academic performance is a topic of significant research interest. Several factors can influence the relationship between social media use and academic performance. Here are some factors that have been identified in the literature:

Time spent on social media: Numerous studies have found a negative correlation between the amount of time spent on social media and academic performance. For example, a study by Junco and Cotten (2012) found that students who spent more time on Facebook had lower GPAs.

Multitasking and distraction: Social media platforms often provide a constant stream of notifications and updates, which can lead to multitasking and distraction. Research by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) revealed that students who frequently engaged in multitasking on social media while studying had lower academic achievement compared to those who focused solely on their academic tasks.

Sleep deprivation: Social media use, particularly at night, has been associated with sleep deprivation, which can negatively impact academic performance. A study by Woods and Scott (2016) highlighted that excessive social media use before bedtime was related to poorer sleep quality and daytime fatigue, ultimately affecting academic performance.

Online social comparison: Social media platforms often facilitate social comparison, where individuals compare themselves with others based on various aspects such as appearance, achievements, and popularity. This can lead to negative psychological effects, such as decreased self-esteem and increased stress, which may indirectly affect academic performance. A study by Chou and Edge (2012) found that social comparison on Facebook was associated with decreased subjective well-being and academic engagement.

Academic self-regulation: Individual differences in self-regulation skills can moderate the impact of social media on academic performance. Students with strong self-regulation skills are better able to manage their time effectively and resist the distractions of social media. A study by Junco (2012) demonstrated that students with higher levels of self-regulation were less likely to experience negative academic consequences from their social media use.

5.6 Factors That Influence IPAM Students' Choice and Preference of Social Media Platforms for Academic Purposes.

Social media platforms are widely used by students for various purposes, including academic ones. However, not all platforms are equally preferred or effective for learning and communication.

According to Kamara and Kargbo (2019), social media platforms can have both positive and negative effects on

the academic performance of students, depending on how they are used. The research found that Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Google were the most popular platforms for academic purposes, while Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and LinkedIn were less used. The main reasons for using social media platforms for academic purposes were to access information, to communicate with lecturers and classmates, to share ideas and opinions, to participate in online discussions and to enhance learning skills.

However, the authors also identified some challenges and drawbacks of using social media platforms for academic purposes, such as distraction, addiction, cyberbullying, plagiarism, misinformation, privacy issues and poor internet connectivity. The authors suggested that IPAM students should use social media platforms wisely and responsibly and that the university should provide guidance and support to help them improve their academic performance.

In conclusion, this paper has discussed the factors that influence IPAM students' choice and preference of social media platforms for academic purposes, based on the article by Kamara and Kargbo (2019). The paper has highlighted the benefits and challenges of using social media platforms for academic purposes and has recommended some ways to overcome them. The paper has also suggested some areas for further research, such as exploring the differences in preference and usage of social media platforms among different faculties, courses, and levels of study.

VI. Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive and Case Study research Designs. A mixed methodology integrating qualitative and qualitative approaches was adopted. The researcher undertook desk research (literature review) ,questionnaire and key informant interviews. The study targeted students across faculties who shared their experiences and explanations on the impact of social media on their academic performance. The sample size was 150 but representative of the population by using Convenience Sampling method. The data was analyzed using tables and figures, Qualitative data were analyzed using attributes which are descriptive in nature while quantitative data were analyzed using variables which were measurable and quantifiable. The data analysis tools in the study were mainly tables and figures because these were not complicated to use and were cheaper. The analysis of the data gathered through structured questionnaires was checked for uniformity, consistency, and accuracy.

VII. Discussion of Findings

This section contains the empirical findings of the investigation on the impact of social media on the academic performance of students at the Institute of Public Administration and Management University of Sierra Leone. It provides detained analysis of data gathered starting with the demographic characteristics of the respondents with a sample size of 150 respondents based on convenience sampling technique.

TABLE 1: Faculties of respondents at IPAM, University of Sierra Leone

Faculty	Frequency	Percent (%)
Governance and Leadership Accountancy	70	46.6
Business Administration	30	20
Information Technology	40	26.6
	10	6.6
Total	150	100

Source: Research findings 2024

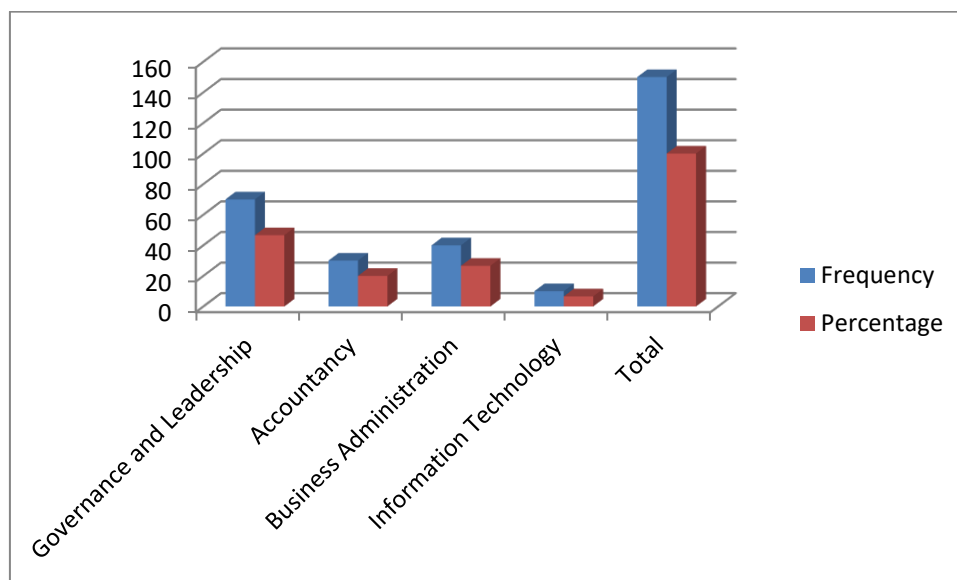


Fig.1 shows the demographic data of students according to their faculty.

The table and the graphic depicted the distribution of students according to their faculty as follows: Governance and leadership accounted for 70 respondents representing 46.6%, Accountancy 30 respondents representing 20%, Business Administration 40 respondents representing 26.6% and Information Technology with 10 respondents representing 6.6%, respectively. The variation on the choice of respondents was based on convenience sampling.

TABLE 2: Distribution of students (respondents) according to their Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	60	40
Female	90	60
Total	150	100

Source: Research findings 2024

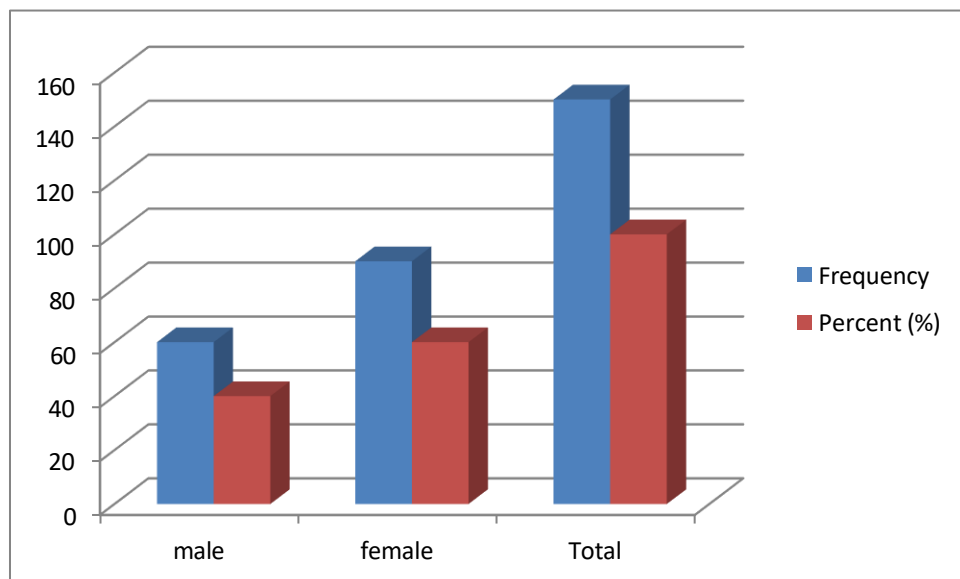


Fig. 2 shows the demographic data of respondents according to gender.

The table and the graphic show the distribution of students by their gender as follows: Male 60 students representing (40%) while 90 female students representing (60%). It is therefore noted that more female participants were selected than male for the study. This was because female students were more glued into social media than male counterpart.

TABLE 3 Distribution of Students According to their Ages

Ages	Frequency	Percent (%)
17-19 years	50	33.3
20-29 years	65	43.3
30-39	15	10
40 years and above	20	13.3
Total	150	100

Source: Research findings 2024

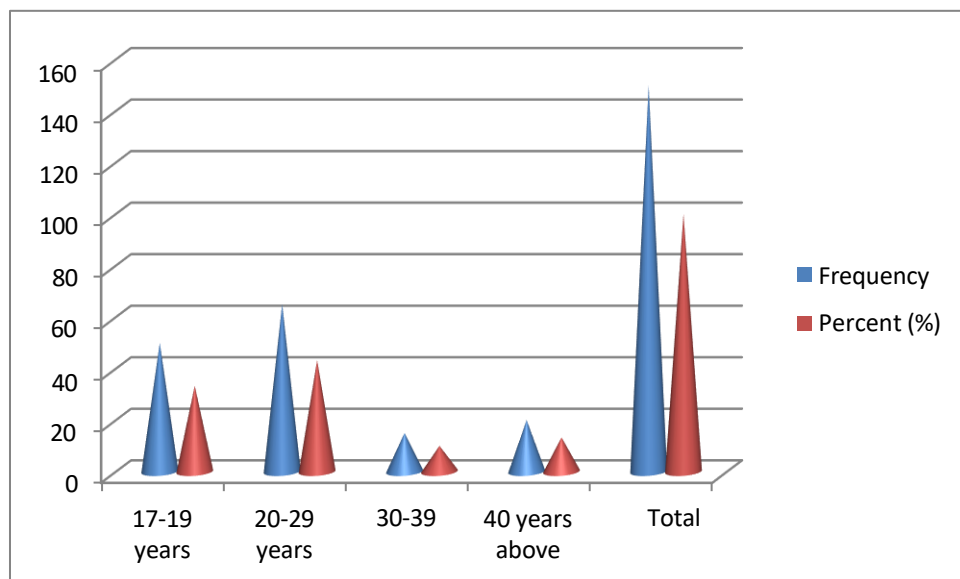


Fig: 3 shows the demographic data of students enumerated.

The table and the chart show the distribution of students according to their ages and they are as follows: Age 17-19 years 50 (33.3%), age 20-29 years 65 (43.3%), age 30-39 years 15 (10%) and age 40 years above 20(13.3%).

TABLE 4: Use of smart phone

Students (respondents) were asked whether they use smart phones.

Smartphones	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	130	87
No	20	13
Total	150	100

Source: Research findings 2024

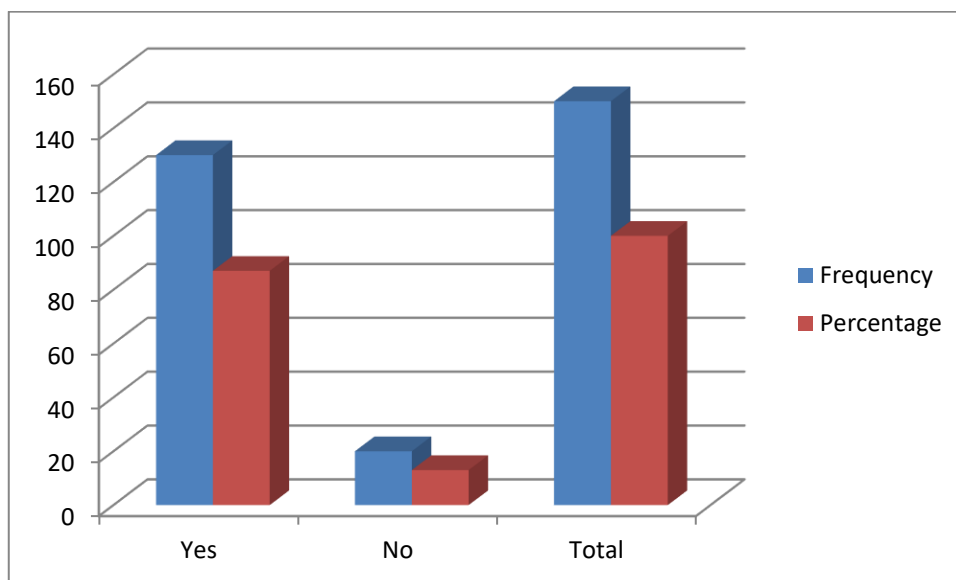


Fig. 4 Use of smartphone

The figure and the table show the distribution of students using smartphone. From the table above, 130 students representing (87%) YES to the research variable which shows that they are using smartphones. However, 20 respondents representing (13%) early indicated NO. From this analysis, it of the fact that majority of students (respondents) use smartphones because they have the capacity and capability of social media websites applications inscribed. These smartphones provide access to many social media websites such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Email, Imo, YouTube etc.

TABLE 5: How often Students use Social Media Websites

The analysis below shows the frequency of students' online usage on daily, weekly, occasionally and monthly and none of those who do not use Social Media Websites among Students of IPAM.

Times	Frequency	Percent (%)
Daily	70	47
Weekly	30	20
Occasionally	20	13
Fortnightly	10	7
Monthly	15	10
None	5	3
Total	150	100

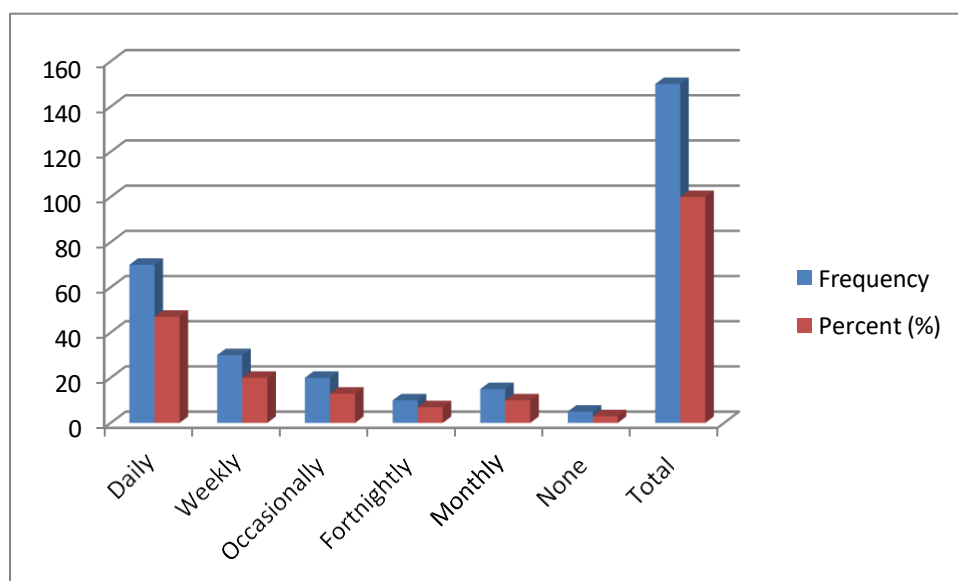


Fig. 5 How often Students use Social Media Websites

The table and the chart show that students frequency online as indicated, daily representing (47%), weekly constituted (20%), occasionally (13%), Fortnightly (7%), Monthly (10%) and those that do not use social media websites (3%). There are more students using Social Media Websites daily than others. The data can prove that students do faced lapses in their course of studies because of the time spent on Social Media Websites.

Types of Social Media Websites students normally use at IPAM.

WhatsApp 100% of IPAM students is using it.

Facebook 98% of IPAM students is using it.

TikTok 97% of IPAM students are using it.

Instagram 95% of IPAM students is using it.

YouTube 90% of IPAM students is using it.

Google 70% of IPAM students is using it.

Twitter 20% of IPAM students is using it.

Skype 5% of IPAM students is using it.

Snapchat 2% of IPAM students is using it.

TABLE 6: Reasons for Students using Social Media Websites

Reason/Purpose	Frequency	Percent (%)
Learning	10	7
Friendly	30	20
Getting Information	20	13
Enjoying fun/entertainment	30	20
Events	10	7
Killing time	11	7
All of the above	39	26
None	0	0
Total	150	100

Source: Research findings 2024

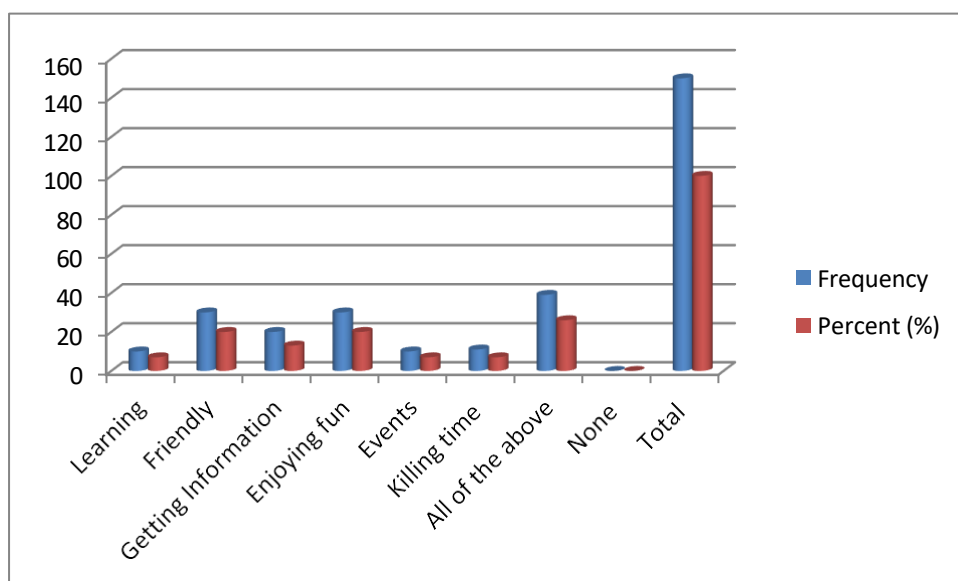


Fig. 6: shows the reasons students use Social Media Websites

The table and the graph above show the number and percentage of Students that use Social Media Websites for different purposes, learning purposes 10 (7%), friendly purposes 30 (20%), getting information 20 (13%), Enjoying fun/entertainment 30 (20%), events 10 (7%), killing time 11(7%), while those who use social medias for all purposes listed accounted for 39 (26%) respectively.

These findings are consistent with the literature that suggests that social media can enhance students' learning outcomes and academic performance (Al-Rahmi et al., 2018; Hamat et al., 2012; Junco et al., 2011). Another common reason for using social media is for entertainment purposes, such as watching videos, playing games, and listening to music. This finding is also in line with the literature that indicates that social media can provide a source of enjoyment and relaxation for students (Boyd, 2007; Kuss and Griffiths, 2011; Valkenburg and Peter,

2009). However, the literature also warns that excessive use of social media for entertainment purposes can have negative effects on students' academic performance, such as distraction, procrastination, and addiction (Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010; Ophir et al., 2009; Rosen et al., 2013). Social media was also used for social purposes, such as staying in touch with friends and family, making new friends, and sharing personal information. This finding is supported by the literature that shows that social media can facilitate social interaction and connection among students (Ellison et al., 2007; Subrahmanyam et al., 2008; Valkenburg and Peter, 2007). However, the literature also cautions that excessive use of social media for social purposes can have negative effects on students' academic performance, such as reduced attention span, lower self-esteem, and cyberbullying (Calvert et al., 2017; Karpinski et al., 2013; Patchin and Hinduja, 2010). Therefore, the study concluded that social media has both positive and negative impacts on students' academic performance and recommended that students should use social media responsibly and moderately to avoid its adverse consequences.

TABLE 7: Positive and Negative impact of using Social Media Websites

Effect	Frequency	Percent (%)
Positive	60	40
Negative	10	7
Both	50	33
None	30	20
Total	150	100

Source: Research findings 2024

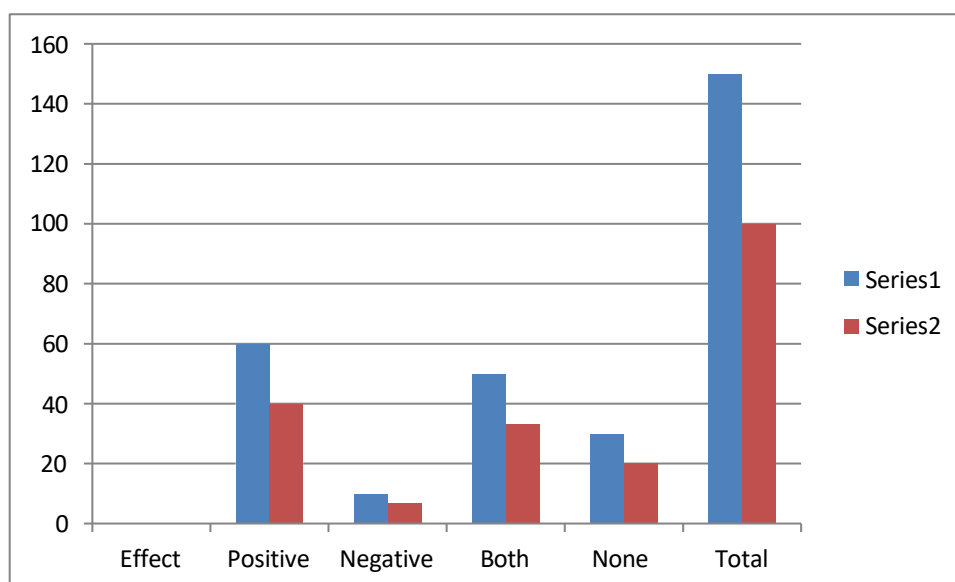


Fig. 7 shows in percentage the effects of using Social Media Platforms for students of IPAM.

There are more positive effects of using Social Media websites on students of IPAM than the negative ones. According to the data of the research collected, some students said that they are affected both positively and negatively by using social media websites. According to them, some of the benefits they gained from using social media includes, access to information for lectures in various ways, access to academic materials for self-regulated learning, access to communicate with friends and being updated on classwork, access to virtual classroom especially during pandemics. Educational videos on YouTube, easy access to e-books, online notes and learning via video calls are major aspects that contribute to educational development.

Social media helps boost creative skills in students by permitting them to learn and later execute the same by doing it themselves. Another vital impact of social media is boosting student academic performance and increasing their knowledge through data and information gathering. When students are to assigned project in universities, they go through several online platforms to collect information to find solutions to their assignments.

Negatively, some of the negative effects opined were time wasting, irrelevant chatting and messages from friends and families, exposure to pornographic materials, procrastination of their studies because of their engagement in daily chit chatting, cyberbullying, addiction to abbreviation thereby using wrong spellings and grammarless sentences. Social media platforms are a significant factor that is commencing to distress and obstacle of mind. These days students tend to lose their concentrate from studying and instead enjoy browsing on social media.

Students are often incapable of submitting their work in the specified time frame because they are more concentrated on social media platforms. With the extensive use of social media student's these days are varying more on social media platform to gain information and knowledge instead of looking for same in books, and journals, or notes. Adoption to social media sites with slight unprofitable can have mental and also physical effect on one's health. Students do not take their meals on time, do not take proper rest, and continuously being on phone or laptop can also have adverse effect on their eyes.

Periods Students use Social Media Websites

Students of IPAM often use Social Media Websites on different occasions or periods. The study divided these periods into three sets as follows:

- **Lecture Periods:** in this sect, it means the time frame when lectures commence. It does not mean in lecture room while lectures are going on but the period when college are having their various lectures from different departments. Although some students do use Social Media Websites when lectures are ongoing.
- **Examination Periods:** this means examination time frame when various departments are having their semester exams at different time schedules within a certain period. Also, students do use Social Media Websites in this time frame.
- **Holiday Periods:** this period is best characterized as a time frame when colleges are close for recess. So, during this period, students often use Social Media Websites.

TABLE 8 Periods students often use social Media Website

Period	Frequency	Percentage
During Lectures	40	27
During Examination	30	20
During Holidays	71	47
None	9	6
Total	150	100

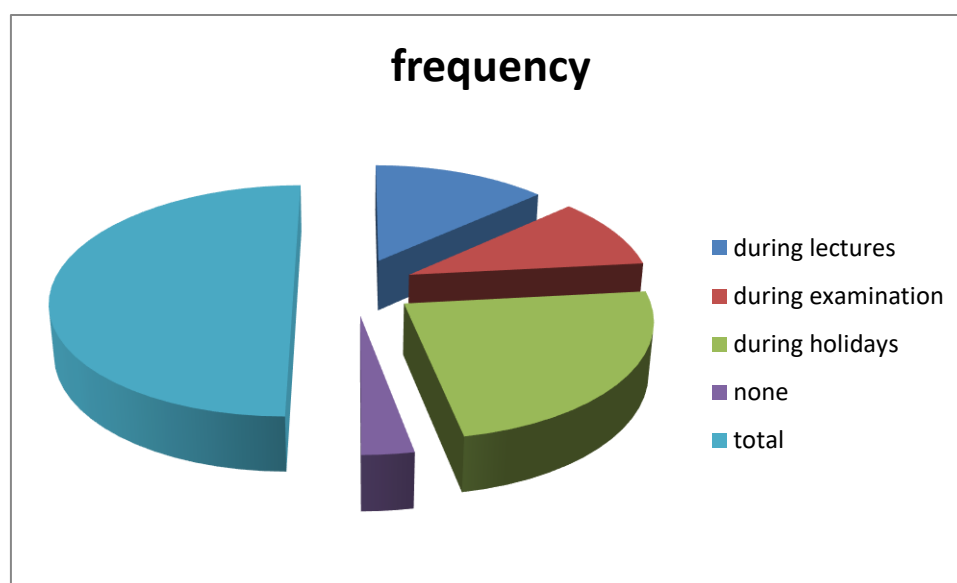


Fig. 8 Periods students often use social Media Websites:

The table and the chart above show the periods students use social media such as during Lecture periods (40, 27 %,) examination period (30, 20) holiday periods (71, 47%) and none (9, 6 %) respectively.

VIII. Conclusion

Social media has both positive and negative effects on the academic performance of students among university students. The main reasons for students to use social media at IPAM are to communicate with friends and family, to access academic information and resources, to entertain themselves, and to follow current affairs. The most popular social media platforms among students are WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The positive effects of social media use on students' academic performance include enhancing their learning motivation, facilitating their collaboration and interaction with peers and lecturers, improving their research skills and digital literacy, and exposing them to diverse perspectives and sources of knowledge. The negative effects of social media use on students' academic performance include distracting them from their studies, reducing their concentration and attention span, affecting their sleep quality and mental health, increasing their academic stress and anxiety, and exposing them to misinformation and cyberbullying. The students balance their social media use and academic work by setting priorities and, managing their time and tasks, limiting their social media use during study hours, turning off notifications and alerts, seeking support from lecturers and

peers, and using social media for academic purposes. Negative effects include distractions, reduced study time, and the potential for engaging in inappropriate or unproductive online activities. The impact of social media on academic performance varies among individuals, depending on their usage patterns and self-discipline.

8.1 Limitations of the study

The study had a limited sample size, focusing only on students at IPAM. The small sample size might restrict the representativeness of the findings and limit the ability to draw broader conclusions. The research relied on self-reported data, such as questionnaires and key informant interviews which could be subject to biases, including social desirability bias or inaccurate recall of social media usage. These biases may affect the validity and reliability of the results. The study might not account for external factors that could influence academic performance, such as socioeconomic status, family background, or personal characteristics of the students. These uncontrolled factors may confound the relationship between social media usage and academic performance. Taking the above into considerations effort was made to limit it challenges. The study only covers a single academic year, which may not capture long-term effects of social media use on academic performance. The study did not control for other variables that could affect academic performance, such as student motivation, family background, and learning habits.

8.2 Recommendations

The university should provide guidance and counselling services to students who use social media excessively or for inappropriate purposes. This would help them to understand the potential risks and benefits of social media use and to develop healthy habits and coping strategies.

The university should implement policies and regulations that limit the use of social media during class hours and exams. This would reduce the distractions and temptations that social media poses to students and enhance their concentration and performance.

The university should encourage students to use social media for academic purposes, such as sharing information, collaborating with peers, and seeking feedback from instructors. This would foster a positive learning environment and improve students' academic outcomes.

The university should offer workshops and seminars on time management and self-regulation skills to students who struggle to balance their social media use and academic work. This would help them to prioritize their tasks, set goals, and monitor their progress.

Create designated study spaces: The University can establish dedicated study areas or zones where students can focus on their academic work without the distractions of social media. These areas can be equipped with resources like computers, textbooks, and reference materials to support students' academic pursuits.

Conduct research on social media usage patterns: The University should conduct regular surveys or studies to understand the specific social media platforms that students are using, the frequency and duration of their usage, and the perceived impact on their academic performance. This data can inform targeted interventions and policies to address any negative effects.

Collaborate with social media platforms: The University can collaborate with social media platforms to develop features or tools that promote healthy digital habits among students. For instance, implementing features that allow users to set time limits on app usage or receive reminders for study breaks can assist students in managing their time effectively.

Encourage time management skills: Students should be encouraged to develop effective time management strategies that allocate specific periods for academic work and minimize excessive use of social media. This can be achieved through workshops, seminars, or online resources that provide guidance on time management techniques.

Foster a supportive academic environment: Professors and academic advisors should actively engage with students and provide guidance on balancing social media use and academic responsibilities. Encouraging open

communication and mentorship can help students navigate the challenges of social media use and prioritize their academic goals.

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