

# INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA UTILIZATION ON SELF-ESTEEM OF FEMALE UNDERGRADUTES IN NIGERIA UNIVERSITIES

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## Abstract

The paper examined the influence of social media on the self-esteem of female undergraduates. The population of the study comprised all the female undergraduates of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko in Ondo State. The study sample consisted of 100 female undergraduates. The participants were selected based on purposive sampling and willingness to participate and the data was obtained through structured questionnaire. A qualitative methodological design was used in order to allow meaning to emerge. The results were then presented in an interpretative and descriptive manner. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine the correlation coefficient which was 0.65. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The hypotheses were tested using t-test and regression analysis. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between social media and self-esteem of female undergraduates. There was a significant influence of age on the relationship between social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates. In addition, the study showed there was a significant relationship between the frequency of use of social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates. The study concluded that social media influenced the self-esteem of female undergraduates, social media has brought a lot of advantages to the society and has greatly increase social relationship among all people. However, the self-esteem of undergraduates has been greatly influenced, most especially female undergraduates, due to the fact that, there is little or no restrictions to the extent they go with it. It was recommended amongst others that there should be age limit in the use of social media to avoid counter-attack on moral development of adolescent.

*Keywords:* Self-esteem, social media, female, undergraduate.

## Introduction

The world today seems to be celebrating the 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”. But as it is, technology like two sides of a coin, bring with it both negative and positive sides. It helps people to be better informed, enlightened, and keeping abreast with world developments. Technology exposes mankind to a better way of doing things. Social networking sites include: twitter, yahoo messenger, skype, google talk, google messenger, Facebook messenger, blackberry messenger (BBM), WhatsApp messenger, 2go messenger, iPhone and androids. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet friends. 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 appears to have 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 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, business or academic perspective (William, 2009). The millions of social networking sites have transformed the thought of global village into a reality whereby billions of people communicate through social networking sites. Numerous benefits have been obtained through distant communication through the use of social networking sites.

Social network websites provide ease of connecting people to one another; free of cost and after connecting one can post news, informative material and other things including videos and pictures and so on. Wiley and Sisson (2006) argued that the previous studies have found that more than 90% of tertiary school students use social networks. In the same way Ellison et al (2007) stated that the students use social networking websites approximately 30 minutes throughout the day as a part of their daily routine life. This statement shows the importance of social networking sites in student’s life. Lenhart and Madden (2007) revealed through a survey that students strongly recommend social networking websites to stay in touch with friends to keep informed and aware.

Social media appears to have both positive and negative effects on self-esteem, often depending on the nature of feedback. The use of different media interfaces such as mobile phones, the Internet, and online gaming engages children and undergraduates in observational learning of

how to interact with others and in actual social interactions with others (Calvert, 2015). Undergraduates use multiple social media sites daily that allow them to upload and disseminate different types of information about themselves.

Undergraduate self-esteem is shaped by what they think and feel about themselves. Their self-esteem is highest when they see themselves as approximating their "ideal" self, the person they would like to be. Undergraduates who have high self-esteem have an easier time handling conflicts, resisting negative pressures, making friends, they laugh and smile more and have a generally optimistic view of the world, their life and their career prospect. Undergraduates with low self-esteem have a difficult time dealing with problems, are overly self-critical, and can become passive, withdrawn, and depressed. They may hesitate to try new things, may speak negatively about themselves, are easily frustrated, and often see temporary problems as permanent conditions. They are pessimistic about themselves their life and career prospect.

Different forms of media expose undergraduates to a wide variety of content, some good and some bad. Media can serve as a platform for educational lessons, but also violent behaviour and sexual expression. Both foreground media exposure and background media exposure can be harmful to the development of children and undergraduates. Media has been shown to be distracting, an interruption to daily activities and concentration, and a constant stream of stimulation (Calvert, 2015).

Self-esteem is an individual's attitude about him or herself, involving self-evaluation along a positive negative dimension. It is an individual's overall positive evaluation to the self. they described social self-esteem as the degree to which undergraduates "feel accepted and liked by their friends and peers and feel successful in forming and maintaining friendships". It is composed of two distinct dimensions, competence and worth. The competence dimension refers to the degree to which people see themselves as capable and efficacious. The worth dimensions refer to the degree to which individuals feel they are the persons to be valued. (Carrie 1995).

Social information processing theory is an interpersonal communication theory which suggests that online interpersonal relationship development might require more time to develop than face-to-face relationships, but when developed, it has the same influence as face-to-face communication. This means, the more students use social networking sites, the more they influence their disposition to studies, given the fact that friends from social media will begin to exert influence on each other.

Results of Valkenburg (2017) whose three-wave panel survey showed a positive relationship between undergraduates' (i.e., between 10 and 15 years old) social self-esteem and social media use. There was no evidence that social media site use significantly increased their social self-esteem, as contrastingly, results from the study yielded support for the idea that higher social self-esteem among participants was correlated with an increase in the use of social media sites. Burrows and Rainone (2017), in their study of undergraduates, found that a sense of purpose (having an ongoing motivation that is self-directed, oriented toward the future, and beneficial to others) acted as a moderator for the impact of feedback on social media on self-esteem. The results of this research provide support for the idea that if parents begin fostering the idea of a sense of purpose in older and younger undergraduates through volunteering, sports, creative arts, clubs, or other activities as they are developing self-esteem, this could potentially act as a moderator between self-esteem and engaging in social media in adulthood and possibly prove to affect them as they develop through adolescence.

Russello (2009) conducted a study regarding the impact of media exposure on the self-esteem and body satisfaction in men and women. Social media has a variety of information, most of which could be beneficial and destructive on self-esteem of young women and men at university. As such it would be of great relevance to examine the impact of social media on the self-esteem of female undergraduates.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The world today is a global market in which the internet is the most important sort of information. Since the advent of social networking sites in the 1990s, it is assumed in some quarters that the academic performance of students is facing a lot of neglect and challenges. The educational system in Nigeria is faced with so many challenges which have certainly brought about a rapidly decline in the quality of education. There are a deviation, distraction and divided attention between social networking activities and their self-esteem, students' addictiveness to social networks, students' frequency of exposure to social network. Some are so carried away that even as they are walking along the high way chatting.

Social media has a variety of information, most of which could be beneficial and destructive on self-esteem of female undergraduates at university. Despite a number of cases indicating that social media gives out information as a platform to young undergraduates, a number of them are being affected psychologically and physically as a result of their interaction with the social media platform. Many undergraduates in Nigeria lack adequate information about themselves. The high or low self-esteem undergraduate could over estimate or under

estimate him/herself, which could lead to a wrong social prospect or vice-versa. As such it would be of great relevance to examine the influence of social media on the self-esteem of female undergraduates.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of social media on self-esteem amongst female undergraduates in Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko. More specifically the study is designed to:

1. find the relationship between social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.
2. investigate the influence of age on the relationship between social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates
3. weigh the impact of frequency of use of social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

1. There is no significant relationship between social media on self-esteem of female undergraduates.
2. There is no significant influence of age on the relationship between social media on self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.
3. There is no significant relationship between the frequency of use of social media on self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. It is a form of descriptive design that uses a representative sample to collect data for systematic description of existing situation or phenomenon. The population consisted of all employees in tertiary institution in Ondo State. A simple random sampling technique was used to choose the sample for the study. The sample of the study consisted of 100 female undergraduates across Ondo State. The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire titled "social media and Self-Esteem. 120 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 100 were returned. The instrument was divided into sections; section A contain personal data of the respondents. While section B contain the item to answer the question raised. The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by the researchers. Test-retest technique was used by the researcher; the questionnaire was distributed to some sample of twenty undergraduates in Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA). After four-week interval the same instrument was re-administered to the same

set of undergraduates and Pearson product moment correlation was used to determine the correlation coefficient which was 0.58 which certified that the questionnaire was reliable. Data were analysed using frequency count, percentage and Chi-square.

**Results**

**Research Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between social media and self-esteem of female undergraduates.

**Table 1:** Test of significant relationship between social media and self-esteem of female undergraduates.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-cal	p-value
Social media	61	3.00	.183	98	1.77	0.000
Self-esteem	39	3.05	.250			

Table 1 showed t-calculated of 1.85 which is greater than the tabulated value. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between social media and self-esteem of female undergraduates.

**Research Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant influence of age on the relationship between social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.

**Table 2:** Regression table showing significant influence of age on the relationship between social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.

R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate
.476 <sup>a</sup>	.626	.211	.60679

**Table 2b:** Regression table showing relative co-efficient.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
15-17 years	6.365	1.894		3.361	.001
18-20 years	.184	.068	-.181	2.689	.008
21-22 years	.233	.081	.194	2.864	.005

23-25 years	.420	.196	.141	2.146	.033
25 and above	.646	.142	.296	4.542	.000

From table 3, 15-17 years, 18-20 years, 21-22 years 23-25 years and 25 years and above contributed 18.1%, 19.4%, 14.1% and 29.6% respectively to the prediction of self-esteem, 18-20 years was the highest predictor of self-esteem among female undergraduates.

**Research Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant relationship between the frequency of use of social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.

**Table 3:** Test of significant relationship between the frequency of use of social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.

Performance	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-cal	p-value
100L	61	3.00	.183	98	1.44	0.000
400L	39	3.05	.250			

Table 3 showed t-calculated of 0.000 which is greater than the tabulated value. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there was a significant relationship between the frequency of use of social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates.

**Discussion of findings**

The findings of hypothesis one revealed that there was a significant relationship between social media and self-esteem of female undergraduates. This is in line with Cusumano & Thompson (1997) who found that the media does have an influence on the both sexes but the sex that it influenced more were the female. This is because female undergraduates were more attracted by pictorial contents and self-revealing gesture.

The findings of hypothesis two revealed that there was a significant influence of age on the relationship between social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates. This is in line with Shetata (2017) observes that the Middle Ages from 18-20 and this study shows that the young generations are more interested and motivated to make a change.

The findings of hypothesis three revealed there was a significant relationship between the frequency of use of social media and self-esteem amongst female undergraduates. This is in line with Blomfield Neira and Barber (1986) who found that compared the levels of self-esteem of those with and without a social media profile and found that females who had a social media site

profile demonstrated lower self-esteem when compared to females who did not have a profile on a social media site.

### Conclusion

The study concluded that social media influenced the self-esteem of female undergraduates, it has advantages and has greatly increase social relationship among all people. Social media has also made the world a global village, where you can as well meet people. However, the self-esteem of undergraduates has been greatly influenced, most especially female undergraduates, due to the fact that, they prefer to be noticed and appreciated more than their male counterpart.

### Recommendations

1. Social media usage should be regulated at all level of use to reduce its negative influence on female undergraduates.
2. There should be age limit in the use of social media to avoid counter-attack on moral development of female undergraduates.
3. Social media use should be curbed to reduce the frequency of use, because most of the undergraduates are already addicted to using social media.

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