ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES BY ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION STUDENTS IN OGUN STATE

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Abstract
This study investigated the academic and non-academic use of social networking sites by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study was guided by four research questions. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and the entire population of 85 students across two universities participated in the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire titled Social Networking Sites Usage Questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the internal consistency of the instrument, and it showed a reliability coefficient of 0.88. Data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviation. Findings revealed that WhatsApp is the most preferred social networking platform among the students, followed by Facebook, Telegram, Instagram, and X, with LinkedIn being the least utilized. The analysis showed that students predominantly engage in non-academic activities such as social interaction, entertainment, and stress relief. Academic engagements such as consulting lecturers or participating in academic forums were minimal. Most students spent between 30 minutes to 1 hour daily on academic-related use of social media, but a large majority spend between 5 to 7 hours on non-academic use. The study concluded that although social networking sites have academic potential, they are currently underutilized for educational purposes by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in Ogun State. It was recommended that universities should integrate social networking tools into instructional delivery and incorporate digital literacy into the curriculum in order to maximize the academic benefits of social media.

Keywords: Academic, Non-Academic, Social Network, Electrical, Students

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has witnessed a high degree of technological advancements which have reshaped the way people interact, learn, and conduct their daily affairs. Among these transformative technological advancements are social networking sites, which have become a part of our daily living (Aduloju, 2020). According to Orji et al. (2022), the era of face-to-face interaction has been overtaken by virtual interactions where discussions, meetings, teaching activities, and dissemination of information as well as news are carried out via social networking platforms. Over the decades, the development of the internet and advancements in mobile technology have transformed social networking into a dynamic, fast-paced, and globally accessible phenomenon (Antiri, 2016). Currently, social media platforms enable individuals to create personal profiles, post content, and engage with others. Some of the platforms where social networking can takes place include X (formerly Twitter), Yahoo Messenger, Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype, Instagram, Google Messenger among others (Del Campo, Lagdameo, Nawa,

& Galaura, 2025). Social media platforms now serve as tools for personal interaction, avenues for academic engagement, information dissemination, professional networking, and collaborative learning (Ohara, 2023). Among the social networking sites, WhatsApp is the most dominant tool for communication (Al-Rahmi & Zeki, 2017; Ijeh, 2024)). Generally, social networking sites now play a big role in people's daily lives.

The advent of high-speed internet and the widespread availability of smartphones and computers have made social networking sites an integral part of students' academic and social lives. Most university students today own at least one internet-enabled device, giving them round-the-clock access to various platforms. Aduloju (2020) noted that university students are frequent users of social networking sites due to their widespread access to devices like phones, tablets, and computers, along with reliable internet. This connectivity allows them to use these platforms for communication, expanding their social circles, seeking information, and supporting academic work.

In recent years, social networking sites have gained increased recognition as learning tools, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when traditional classroom learning was interrupted globally. Many universities resorted to virtual platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, Zoom, and Google Meet to facilitate teaching and learning remotely (Papademetriou, Anastasiadou, Konteos, & Papalexandris, 2022). During this period, both instructors and students became more familiar with using social networking sites for academic purpose such as sharing lecture materials, organizing virtual meetings, submitting assignments, and holding academic discussions. These platforms have been very helpful in keeping education going and are still being used today to support both online and classroom learning. However, the usage of social networking site by students has resulted to myriads of issues. Abbare, Jibrin, and Adamu (2023) noted that students are very focused on social media and spend a lot of time using it. It has been noticed that some students continue to chat, update their status, or use Facebook during lectures, even while in classrooms and lecture halls (Mohammed & Musa, 2020; Nader et al, .2025). Students' time, which should have been used for studying, academic research, and creative activities, is often wasted on making new friends online and engaging in unimportant conversations (Osharive, 2015). Even though these platforms have helped students learn, especially during the pandemic, many now spend too much time on them. This can lead to distractions and misuse.

For students in specialized technical fields like Electrical and Electronics Technology Education, the potential applications of social networking sites are multifaceted. Academically, these platforms offer avenues for collaborative learning, instant communication with peers and instructors, sharing of technical resources and tutorials, accessing industry news, forming study groups, and participating in relevant professional forums (Hamid, Waycott, Kurnia, & Chang, 2015; Manca & Ranieri, 2016). Due to the nature of Electrical and Electronics Technology Education, which requires constant engagement with evolving technologies and practical applications, Social networking sites can act as important additional tools that support learning.

Nevertheless, despite the possible academic advantages, the recreational use of social media platforms by students has sparked concerns among educators and scholars. Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) argued that excessive use of social media for non-educational purposes could impair students' academic performance. Similarly, Tandoc, Ferrucci, and Duffy (2015) emphasized how entertainment and social gratification from social networking sites, often contribute to distraction, procrastination, and reduced productivity among students. Students use social networking platforms to chat, share updates, watch entertainment content, and take part in conversations that are not related to academics, which can take their attention away from their studies if not carefully controlled (Cường, Nguyễn, Zaw, & Jozsa, 2025). The potential misuse of social media by students for non-academic purposes has raised growing concerns.

According to Nwazor and Godwin-Madueke (2015), numerous students are deeply absorbed in social media, even during classes, frequently chatting, scrolling, and posting online rather than focusing on their studies. According to Daniel and Aduura (2024), students do not utilize social media for academic tasks because of distractions from blogs, skit makers, and other entertainment content creators. Even though social networking sites have great academic benefits, using them too much for non-academic reasons can end up being harmful. Given the demands of courses like Electrical and Electronics Technology Education, where balancing theoretical knowledge with practical application is vital, misuse of time and attention on non-academic social networking sites activities could negatively impact learning outcomes.

Despite the growing body of literature on students' use of social networking sites, there is a dearth of studies specifically focused on Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in Nigeria, particularly those in Ogun State. Existing studies have largely concentrated on general student populations or specific fields such as business, medicine, or the arts, with limited attention given to technical education. This study, therefore filled this gap by examining both academic and non-academic uses of social networking sites among Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State. It explored the platforms students prefer, the nature of their engagement on these platforms and the amount of time allocated to academic and non-academic use. By providing a contextual understanding of students' digital behavior within a technical education framework, the study aimed to inform policies and strategies that can promote more effective and balanced use of social networking sites in higher education.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the academic and non-academic use of social networking sites by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in Ogun State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out which social networking sites are most preferred and frequently used by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State.
2. Find out the primary activities carried out by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students on social networking sites in universities in Ogun State.

3. Determine how much time Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend on social networking sites for academic purposes.
4. Determine how much time Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend on social networking sites for non-academic purposes.

Research Questions

1. Which social networking sites are most preferred and frequently used by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State?
2. What are the primary activities carried out by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students on social networking sites in universities in Ogun State?
3. How much time do Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend on social networking sites for academic purposes?
4. How much time do Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend on social networking sites for non-academic purposes?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Ogun State, Nigeria. The population for this research work comprised of all Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in Ogun State universities. There are mainly two universities offering Electrical and Electronics Technology Education in Ogun state. They are Tai Solarin University of Education and Olabisi Onabanjo University (affiliated to Tai Solarin College of education). The total population of 85 Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in the two institutions participated in the study.

The instrument used for data collection in the study was an adapted questionnaire titled "Social Networking Sites Usage Questionnaire". The instrument was divided into two sections: Section A solicited for the demographic data of the respondents while Section B gathered information on their most preferred and frequently used social networking sites, investigated the primary activities carried out by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students on social networking sites and elicited information on how much time students spend on social networking sites for academic purposes and non-academic purposes respectively. It was developed based on four-response option ranging from Strongly Agree – SA (4.00), Agree – A (3.00), Disagree – D (2.00), Strongly Disagree– SD (1.00).

The instrument was validated by three experts in the department of Industrial Technical Education, Tai Solarin University of Education. The reliability of the instrument was established by administering twenty copies of the instrument to respondents outside the study area. Cronbach Alpha reliability was used to establish the internal consistency of the instrument, and it showed a reliability coefficient of 0.88. The instrument was personally administered to the respondents by the researchers. The questionnaires filled were collected on the spot. Data collected for the study were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation with the aid of SPSS software.

Results

Research Question One

Which social networking sites are most preferred and frequently used by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State?

Table 1

Most preferred and frequently used social networking sites

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	Facebook	17	20.0
2	WhatsApp	21	24.7
3	Telegram	13	15.3
4	Instagram	13	15.3
5	X (formerly Twitter)	12	14.1
6	LinkedIn	9	10.6
	Total	**85**	100

Source: Field Work

Table 1 presents the social networking sites used by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State. The table revealed that WhatsApp is the most preferred and frequently used social networking site among Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State, with 24.7% of the respondents indicating its use. This is followed by Facebook (20.0%), Telegram and Instagram (each at 15.3%), and X (14.1%). LinkedIn is the least preferred social media platform among Electrical and Electronic Technology Education students, with only 10.6% preference.

Research Question Two

What are the primary activities carried out by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students on social networking sites in universities in Ogun State?

Table 2

Mean responses of students on their major activities on social networking sites

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD
1	Hold single or group chat with friends about academic issues	2.61	0.52
2	Hold single or group chat with classmates about academic issues	2.45	0.49
3	Hold single or group chat with friends on personal issues	3.04	0.61
4	to source for social information	3.34	0.67
5	to source for academic information	2.44	0.49
6	share status, broadcasts, and files (such as display/profile	3.25	0.65

	pictures) to reflect social/ personal issues		
7	share status, broadcasts, and files (such as display/profile pictures) to reflect academic issues	3.00	0.60
8	solicit help from classmates/friends/acquaintances on academic issues	2.01	0.40
9	solicit help from classmates/friends/ acquaintances on personal/social issues	2.77	0.55
10	consult superiors/lecturers/supervisors for guidance about academic issues	1.57	0.31
11	Provide feedback on course content and lectures to lecturers	1.74	0.35
12	login to social networks to escape (academic) stress	3.67	0.73
13	Join to social networks to make new friends to increase social capital	3.00	0.60
14	Just log in to social network for the fun of it	3.20	0.64
15	Join and discuss on academic forums within the social network	1.09	0.33
16	Join/view social or gist forums for fun	2.93	0.59
	Average mean	**2.63**	

The results in Table 2 indicate that Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State primarily use social networking sites for non-academic and socially driven activities. The highest mean score (3.67) was recorded for using social networks as a means of escaping academic stress, followed by sourcing social information (3.34), sharing personal content (3.25), and logging in for fun (3.20). Activities such as holding personal chats (3.04), joining to make new friends (3.00), and sharing academic-related content (3.00) also recorded relatively high mean values. In contrast, strictly academic activities such as consulting lecturers (1.57), providing feedback on lectures (1.74), and participating in academic forums (1.09) had the lowest mean scores. The overall average mean of 2.63 suggests that while students do engage in some academic-related use of social media, their primary activities are largely centered on personal, social, and recreational interactions.

Research Question Three

How much time do Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend on social networking sites for academic purposes?

Table 3

Time spent on social networking sites for academic purposes

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	30mins-1Hrs	32	37.7
2	2Hrs-4Hrs	31	36.5
3	5Hrs-7Hrs	12	14.2

4	8Hrs-10Hrs	5	5.8
5	10Hrs and Above	5	5.8
	Total	**85**	100

The table revealed that most Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend a limited amount of time on social networking sites for academic purposes. Specifically, 37.7% of the students reported spending between 30 minutes to 1 hour, while 36.5% spend between 2 to 4 hours. Only a smaller proportion of students (14.2%) dedicate 5 to 7 hours for academic purposes on social media. Furthermore, a lower percentage (5.8% each) spend 8 to 10 hours or more than 10 hours for academic purposes on social media.

Research Question Four

How much time do Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend on social networking sites for non-academic purposes?

Table 4

Time spent on social networking sites for non-academic purposes

S/N	ITEMS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE(%)
1	30mins-1Hrs	7	8.2
2	2Hrs-4Hrs	4	4.7
3	5Hrs-7Hrs	48	56.5
4	8Hrs-10Hrs	23	27.1
5	10Hrs and Above	3	3.5
	Total	**85**	100

Data presented in the table revealed that Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State spend a large amount of time on social networking sites for non-academic purposes. Majority of the respondents (56.5%) reported spending between 5 to 7 hours daily on social networking sites for non-academic purposes. This is followed by 27.1% who spend 8 to 10 hours. In contrast, only a small percentage of students spend less time on non-academic use, with 8.2% using social media for 30 minutes to 1 hour, 4.7% for 2 to 4 hours, and just 3.5% spending more than 10 hours.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that WhatsApp is the most preferred and frequently used social networking site by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State. This was followed by Facebook, Telegram, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter), while LinkedIn was the least used. This finding is in line with the work of Al-Rahmi & Zeki (2017), who observed that WhatsApp has become a dominant tool for communication among university students due to its ease of use, group functionality, and real-time messaging features. Similarly, Ijeh (2024) found that WhatsApp is often used for both academic and social purposes among Nigerian university students. In contrast, Manca and Ranieri (2016) argued that educational platforms such as LinkedIn and Moodle offer more structured academic engagement than informal platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook. The low usage of LinkedIn in this study

may reflect students' limited awareness or perceived relevance of professional networking in their current academic level.

The findings of the study also showed that students primarily engage in non-academic and socially driven activities on social networking sites. High mean scores were recorded for activities such as using social media to escape academic stress, sourcing social information, sharing personal content, chatting for fun, and making new friends. Academic uses such as consulting lecturers, giving feedback on course content, or engaging in academic forums scored very low. This pattern is in line with the findings of Tandoc, Ferrucci, and Duffy (2015), as well as Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) who noted that social media use among students often leans toward entertainment and social gratification and which may result in procrastination and distraction. Nader et al. (2025) similarly noted that students use social networking sites mainly to manage boredom and stress rather than for academic enhancement. However, some studies contradict this view. Hamid, Waycott, Kurnia, and Chang (2015) reported that students increasingly use social media for collaborative academic tasks, tutorials, and peer interactions that enhance learning. The low mean scores for such activities in this study suggest that students may not be fully maximizing the educational potential of social networking sites.

Furthermore, findings revealed that most students spend limited time on social networking sites for academic activities. This is in line with the findings of Daniel and Aduura (2024) students do not utilize social media for extended academic tasks because of distractions. In addition, the study also revealed that a majority of students spend 5 to 7 hours daily on social networking sites for non-academic purposes. This finding is supported by Osharive (2015), who observed that many Nigerian university students devote large portions of their day to chatting, browsing, and viewing entertainment content online. Similarly, Mohammed and Musa (2020) reported that students even use social media during lectures, compromising their academic focus. However, Daniel and Aduura (2024) argued that social media could improve student performance if integrated into curriculum design through the creation of official class groups and learning communities.

Conclusion

This study examined the academic and non-academic use of social networking sites by Electrical and Electronics Technology Education students in universities in Ogun State. The findings revealed that students have widespread access to social networking platforms, and they use it predominantly for non-academic purposes such as social interaction, entertainment, and stress relief. WhatsApp emerged as the most frequently used platform, while LinkedIn was the least utilized. Furthermore, students were found to spend large amount of time on non-academic activities compared to academic engagements on these platforms. Although social networking sites offer potential academic benefits such as information sharing, collaborative learning, and access to educational resources, these opportunities are currently underutilized. This is because most students allocate limited time for academic purposes, as activities like consulting lecturers, participating in academic forums, or soliciting academic help via social platforms recorded very low levels of engagement.

Recommendations

1. Universities should encourage lecturers to incorporate social networking platforms such as WhatsApp, and Telegram into their teaching methods to share lecture materials, organize group discussions, and provide academic support in real-time.
2. A course on the effective and responsible use of social networking sites should be introduced in the general studies curriculum.
3. Students should be motivated to form peer-led academic forums on social platforms where they can exchange ideas, discuss assignments, share resources, and solve technical problems together.
4. Regular seminars and workshops should be organized to educate students on how to use social media productively.

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