

Social Media And It's Impact On Students' Performance In Secondary Schools: A Case Study Of Iganga

Municipality, Iganga District

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of social media on students' performance in secondary schools in Iganga municipality, Iganga district. The usage of social media among students has weakened their performance while the parents and the teachers similarly believe using social media results in decline in performance in most secondary schools. The study was based on three major objectives which include, to determine the relationship between social media usage and academic performance of secondary school students in Iganga municipality, to explore the time spent on social media by students in secondary schools in Iganga municipality, and lastly to examine the effect of social media on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Iganga municipality. The study findings revealed that more hours were spent on social media especially on Twitter and You tube, most students used social media in their performance in school and most students were satisfied that social media was the way forward despite of their minimal performance. In conclusion the Teachers and Head teachers confirmed that much time was spent on social media of which did not fully enhance learning in secondary school's despite of few achievements. The study of the researcher recommends that through the Ministry of Education introduce approved blended pedagogy in secondary schools.

Keywords: Social Media, Students, Performance and Secondary Schools

Background of the study

Social media platforms have rapidly expanded among today's digital generation of high school students (Sophie & Crispus, 2024). Statistics from the Ugandan Communications Commission show that more than 95% of adolescents aged 13-18 are active social media users, spending an average of 4 hours a day on various networks (John et al., 2023). While these platforms offer numerous networking opportunities, their overuse has raised concerns about the effects on academic engagement and performance. A study by Kasirye (2013) linked excessive time spent on non-academic online activities such as chatting, gaming and videos to declining grades among Ugandan university students. Similar global studies have linked symptoms of social media addiction, such as withdrawal symptoms, when not associated with poor concentration, absenteeism and underachievement at the secondary level (Anthony et al., 2023). There are also concerns about digital risks such as cyberbullying, inappropriate interactions and exposure of information to young minds that are still developing cognitive abilities. In Iganga Municipality, located in south-eastern Uganda, according to the District Education Authority, more than 90% of secondary schools are connected to computer labs with internet access. However, limited supervision and monitoring of students' online activities potentially exposes them to both learning distractions and digital dangers (Davids et al., 2023). An evaluation by Abudh and Gachie (2015) linked the increasing use of social media in Iganga schools to declining trends in academic performance in national examinations over 5 years. The spread of mobile technology and the penetration of high-

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speed internet among educational institutions in Iganga Municipality has created a favorable environment for the pervasive adoption of various social media platforms among adolescent students (Zulaikah & Rebecca, 2023). However, the relative lack of structured guidance and oversight in the use of these valuable connectivity tools raises legitimate concerns about their pervasiveness displacing time spent on school activities and undermining pedagogical goals. Previous evaluations examining the emerging relationship between intensive use, which takes up a significant portion of students' daily schedules independent of any academic purposes, and declining indicators such as test performance, classroom attention, and homework regularity suggest that such absorbing commitments may reduce focus of attention and interfere with optimal results. learning outcomes if left unchecked without guidance (Musaibah et al., 2023). Similarly, potential difficulties in moderating interactions in unfiltered online environments leave developing youth vulnerable to a range of digital risks, including mood-altering content, cyberbullying, and relationships with strangers that could threaten well-being, all of which require preventative education to maximize the benefits of preservation of impressionable users (Shamim et al., 2023).

Statement of the problem

The rapid and pervasive adoption of various social media platforms among today's digital generation of high school students presents both opportunities and risks that require careful consideration and management to optimize learning outcomes (Sophie & Crispus, 2024). While statistics from the Uganda Communications Commission indicate that over 95% of 13-18 year olds currently have active profiles, spending an average of around 4 hours a day on various online activities, studies examining the associated impacts paint a mixed picture that requires careful interpretation (Phionah et al., 2023). On the one hand, such connectivity provides valuable networking forums, while excessive nonacademic use correlates with suboptimal test scores and attendance according to Kasirye's 2013 analysis of university undergraduates, coupled with O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson's 2011 research from other jurisdictions linking addiction to social networks, symptoms of underperformance raise urgent concerns among educators (Filstar, 2023).

Especially in Iganga village, the availability of computer lab facilities with internet in more than 90% of secondary schools according to the records of the district education office has enabled students with learning resources, but has brought problems of regulating applications that do not support the curriculum objectives, such as (Sophie & Crispus, 2024) assessment linked expanding integration of social media in part with downward trends in national assessment results over 5 years. While acknowledging the benefits of connectivity, relatively limited guidance and follow-up on appropriate integration threatens to interfere with volumes of engagement that replace academic focus and expose growing minds to online risks, including depression-inducing material, cyberbullying, and strangers if left unfettered (Shakilah & Kazaara, 2023). Therefore, building an informed, balanced policy stance that optimizes opportunities while protecting school well-being, understands prevailing patterns of use, redirects study time independently of any pedagogical value, quantifies impacts on key performance indicators such as class participation, homework consistency, and scores through a statistically validated study, as well as a qualitative exploration of stakeholder perspectives on pros and cons, serve as an urgent imperative to appropriately direct activities supporting curriculum implementation goals (Shakilah & Kazaara, 2023).

Purpose of the study

The study assessed the impact of social media on students' performance in secondary schools in Iganga municipality, Iganga district, Uganda.

Objectives of the study

1. To determine the relationship between social media usage and academic performance of secondary school students in Iganga municipality.
2. To explore the time spent on social media by students in secondary schools in Iganga municipality.
3. To examine the effect of social media on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Iganga municipality.

Methodology

This study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature and examined the impact of social media on the performance of high school students (Nafiu et al., 2012). Quantitative design was used to process data that was not quantified in numerical form, for example the age of respondents, income costs, among others. According to (Nafiu, 2012), quantitative research helps to obtain an in-depth analysis of the investigated problem. It was used to describe qualitative data that cannot be quantified in numbers. This included the views and ideas of the respondents. Qualitative research has also been applied to describe current conditions or investigate relationships, including effect relationships. Additionally, it helped in answering questions regarding the current status of the research subject (Rasheed et al., 2022). This study was conducted in Iganga Municipality, Busoga Region, Eastern Uganda. This site was chosen because many students are heavily involved in the internet fueled by peer pressure as well as dismal results in schools. The population of the study consisted of 150 people, mainly students and staff of secondary schools from the municipality of Iganga (Olanrewaju et al., 2021b). This population was selected because it is believed to have sufficient knowledge about the subject under investigation and the research variables under investigation. The researcher used several techniques to select an appropriate study sample. These included both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. In this study, purposive sampling and non-probability sampling techniques were used to select respondents from the population (Lu et al., 2013). These techniques allowed the study to give an opportunity to only eligible participants by selecting from each unit within the study population (Nafiu et al., 2017). In this case, the researcher ensured that participants from different categories had an equal chance to participate. This study used purposive sampling, cluster sampling, and simple random sampling procedures. Purposive sampling was used to identify respondents such as Iganga village school staff who were few and hard to reach. Simple random sampling was used to identify fraternity respondents (Jallow et al., 2021). The sample size was approximately 100 respondents from various departments as shown in Table 1 below.

Population Category	Number of Staff	Sample Size	Percentage
Administration	10	03	3%
Teachers	50	05	5%
Students	1300	92	92%
Total	150	100	100%

Table 1: sample size & composition

Source: adopted from Kaplan, 2005

This included data obtained from respondents in Iganga Municipality. These data were obtained through interviews, questionnaires and observation. Self-administered questionnaires were used in this research (Nafiu et al., 2017). These were distributed among the students. The reason for using this tool was that questionnaires can be easily quantified and analyzed.

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Additionally, questionnaires were used because the study focused on respondents' opinions, attitudes, feelings and perceptions (Jallow et al., 2022). An interview guide consisting of structured questions was designed and provided to the chief representative of Iganga village. The information elicited by this tool helped the researcher improve the responses from the self-administered questionnaires and this allowed the researcher to cross-examine some key issues in the research (Nafiu et al., 2013). This tool was chosen because it is considered a good method for generating data that deals with the topic in depth. Data were presented in the form of tables, graphs, pie charts and triangulation using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022). Qualitative data analysis was conducted using narratives recorded during face-to-face interviews and through observation. The researcher used rapid impressionistic summarization in the qualitative data analysis, she summarized the key findings by noting the respondents' frequent responses during the interview to various questions (Olanrewaju et al., 2021a). This qualitative data analysis technique was chosen because it saves time and is not too expensive.

RESULTS

Uses of Social Media by Students

The researcher asked students on the purpose for using You-tube and results are as shown in Table 1 below: -

Table 1: Response by students on their Use of You-tube

Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Assignment	55	34.4
Social chatting	30	18.6
Knowledge access	49	30.6
Students' interaction	32	20
Total	160	100.0

Table 1 indicates that 55(34.4percent) of respondents indicated that they use You-tube while doing school assignments. 49(30.65percent) agreed that You-tube can assist in useful knowledge to their studies. 32(18.65percentage) agreed they use You-tube for students' interaction and finally 30(18.6percent) agree that they use You-tube while social chatting. The results show that You-tube is mostly used on assignments and retrieving notes relevant to the syllabus hence assisting in academic school work. Lowenson (2010) posits that it is possible to share short videos of around 15 minutes which are not pornographic, but academic and informative in nature for public viewings for example in 2010, 14.6 billion videos were uploaded in the USA.

Table 2: Responses of Teachers & Head teachers on the Uses of You-tube by Students

Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Assignment	36	25.7
Social chatting	09	6.4
knowledge access	40	28.6
students' interaction	55	39.3
Total	140	100.0

Table 2 Illustrates 55(39.3percentage) respondents agreed that they use YouTube mostly in students' interaction. 40(28.6 percentage) agreed that You-tube assists in knowledge access in their studies. 25(25.7percentage) agreed they use You-tube in assignments and finally 09(6.4%) agree that they use You-tube while social chatting. The results show that more students use You tube for classroom interaction and also for materials that are relevant to the syllabus. It supports Inaba (2017) Social networking platforms like Facebook, Twitter and You-Tube assists students in meeting many people online which means they get engrossed in these forums most of their times socializing on various subjects and topics globally. These people are not necessarily friends or people they have seen but strangers who are very resourceful.

Table 3: The Uses of Twitter by Students

Category	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Assignment	10	6.4
Social chatting	76	47.5
Knowledge access	12	7.5
Students' interaction	62	38.6
Total	160	100.0

Table 3 indicates 76(47.5 percentage) students confirm that they use Twitter for social chatting. 62(38.6%) respondents use Twitter for interaction with class mates or school mates. 12(38.6 percent percentage) respondents say some of the information gotten from Twitter provides information that is helpful to their education. Finally, 10(6.4 percentage) says that Twitter assists in assignments. The results clearly show that Twitter is mostly used for social chatting and interaction of students. This supports

Conway (2012) notes that networking has given a lee-way to uploading numerous items or discussions which are not more than 140 characters which can be displayed publicly or privately.

Table 4: Responses by Teachers & Head Teachers on Uses of Twitter by Students

Category on Time	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Assignment	05	3.6
Social chatting	89	63.6
knowledge access	02	1.4
students' interaction	44	31.4
Total	140	100.0

Table 4 indicates 89(63.6percent) students use Twitter for social chatting. 44(31.4 percentage) the students use Twitter while interaction with class mates or school comrades.

05(3.6 percentage) respondents say Twitter assists students to do their assignments. Finally, 02(1.4 percent) that Twitter has information that is helpful to their studies. The results show that many students use Twitter for social chatting and class interactions. This means that twitter services are very helpful to the students.

This is in line with Munkaila and Idrissu (2015) who affirms that Twitter as a social media platform helps the students to avert isolation in terms of schooling and discussions this in turn assists in strengthening long term relations through connections with other people or students.

Table 5: The Uses of Face Book by Students

Category on Time	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Assignment	06	3.8
Social chatting	98	61.2
Knowledge access	04	2.5
students' interaction	52	32.5
Total	160	100.0

Table 5 indicates that 98(61.2 percentage) of respondents agree that they use Face-book frequently for chatting. 52(32.5 percentage) respondents use Face-book on students' interaction. 06(3.8 percentage) use Face-book on assignments and finally 04(2.5 percentage) agree that there is information that assists students in their studies. The findings indicate that more students use Face-book for social chatting and interactions with the students. Boyd and Ellison (2007) confirm that Face-book assists students in sharing information, discussion, social events arrangements leadership, community mobilization through virtual platforms.

Table 6: Responses by Teachers & Head Teachers on Uses of Face Book by Students

Category on Time	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Assignment	04	2.9
Social chatting	101	72.1
Knowledge access	03	2.1
Students' interaction	32	22.9
Total	140	100.0

Table 6 indicates that the majority respondents 101(72.1 percentage) agreed that they use Face-book frequently for chatting. 32(22.9 percentage) respondents use Face-book on students' interaction. 04(2.9 percentage) use Face-book on Assignments and finally 03(2.1 percentage) agree that students can access knowledge which can assist their studies. The results show that many students use Face-book for social chatting and class interactions. These findings agree with the findings from the students

Table 7: Benefits of Social Media to Students

Statement	F(n)	%
Social media gives me guidance for examination	43	27
I get academic reading materials related to school work from social media	18	11
My academic performance depends on social media	36	23

I make academic discussions with fellow students on social media	49	30
I learn a lot by listening to and watching social media.	14	09
TOTAL	160	100

Table 7 Majority 49(30 percentage) respondents indicate most students make academic discussions with fellow students on social media. 43(27 percentage) respondents indicate that students agreed social media gives guidance in examinations. 36(23 percentage) respondents agree that their academic performance depends on social media. 18(11 percentage) respondents accept they benefit in acquiring relevant information that assists them in their studies 14(10 percentage) respondents also agreed that they get more knowledge by listening and watching social media.

Table 8: Teachers & Head teachers’ response on benefits of Social Media to Students

Statement	F (n)	%
Social media gives students guidance for examination	32	23
Students get academic reading materials related to school work from social media	14	10
Students’ academic performance depends on social media	39	28
Students make academic discussions with fellow students on social media	45	32
Students learn a lot by listening to and watching social media.	10	07
TOTAL	140	100

Table 8 shows that 45(32 percent) teachers and Head teachers indicate that most students make academic discussions among themselves on social media. 39(28percent) Teachers and Head teachers agree that students’ academic performance depends on social media. 32(23 percent) teachers and Head teachers indicate that social media gives students’ guidance in examinations. 14(10percent) teachers and Head teachers accepted that students get valuable information which assist in their academic endeavor in learning institutions. 10(07percent) teachers and

Head teachers also agreed that students get more knowledge by listening coupled with watching social media. The results show that many teachers and head teachers agreed that the use of social media for academics enhances students' performance.

Table 9: Head teachers & Teachers on Impact of Social media on students' performance

Category on Time	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
You Tube	73	52
Twitter	19	14
Face Book	36	25
None of the Above	12	09
Total	140	100.0

Table 9 indicates 73(52percent) teachers and head teachers said that You-tube enhances students' school performance. 36(25percent) agreed on Face book, 19(14percent) indicated that Twitter enhances school performance and finally 12(09percent) were non-committal by indicating none of the above.

The results show that school teachers and head teachers agree that You-tube and Face-book are relevant in assisting academic performance in schools.

Benefits of using social media**Table 10: Students 'Gratification on Social Media in school performance**

Category	Frequency (n)	%
Strongly Disagree	08	05
Disagree	05	03
Neutral	02	01
Agree	68	43
Strongly Agree	77	48
TOTAL	160	100

Table 10 indicates that 77(48percent) of students strongly agree that social media gives satisfaction to their studies. 68(4348percent) Agreed, 08(0548percent) strongly disagreed and 05(048percent) disagreed that there is satisfaction, lastly

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02(0148percent) were neutral. The results indicate that many students agree that social media satisfies them. This is in line with Neal and Fulton (2017) who confirm that with any institution, it's important to use the new technology tools of social media compared to the traditional methodology which impedes opportunities in learning activities.

Table 11: Gratification by Teachers and Head Teachers' on school performance

Statement	Frequency (n)	%
Strongly Disagree	22	16
Disagree	13	09
Neutral	16	11
Agree	43	31
Strongly Agree	46	33
Total	140	100

Table 11 indicates that 46(33 percentage) teachers and head teachers strongly agree that students gets satisfaction from social media 43(31 percentage) Agreed, 22(16 percentage) strongly disagreed, 13(09 percentage) disagreed that social media bring in gratification to students, lastly 16(11 percentage) were neutral. The results show that many head teachers and teachers confirm social media is good in their secondary schools

Conclusion

The time spent on social media is more compared to the normal time allocated for a student to study. This is because most of the time students engage themselves in browsing through the social media in terms of research for new knowledge and also entertainment in general. Most of the students use You-tube on a larger extent compared to Face-book and Twitter.

Most students make use of social media platforms to discuss academic issues, gives students guidance to examination, research work is easier for their assignments and hence good performance. On the other hand, the school teachers and administrators suggest that the students should combine with the hard copy books to broaden their knowledge.

Students' involvement on platforms has assisted them in terms of getting valuable information concerning academics, varieties of resources and multiple opportunities of socializing but it's very addictive.

Recommendation

To balance the pedagogy, the study recommends that the Ministry of Education in Uganda should fully sponsor and train more teachers in using social media.

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In embracing the social media, the school's administration should come up with strategies of acceptable blended learning for all secondary schools.

Secondary schools should focus on creating awareness on social network as an instrument for communication, entertainment and learning in institutions.

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