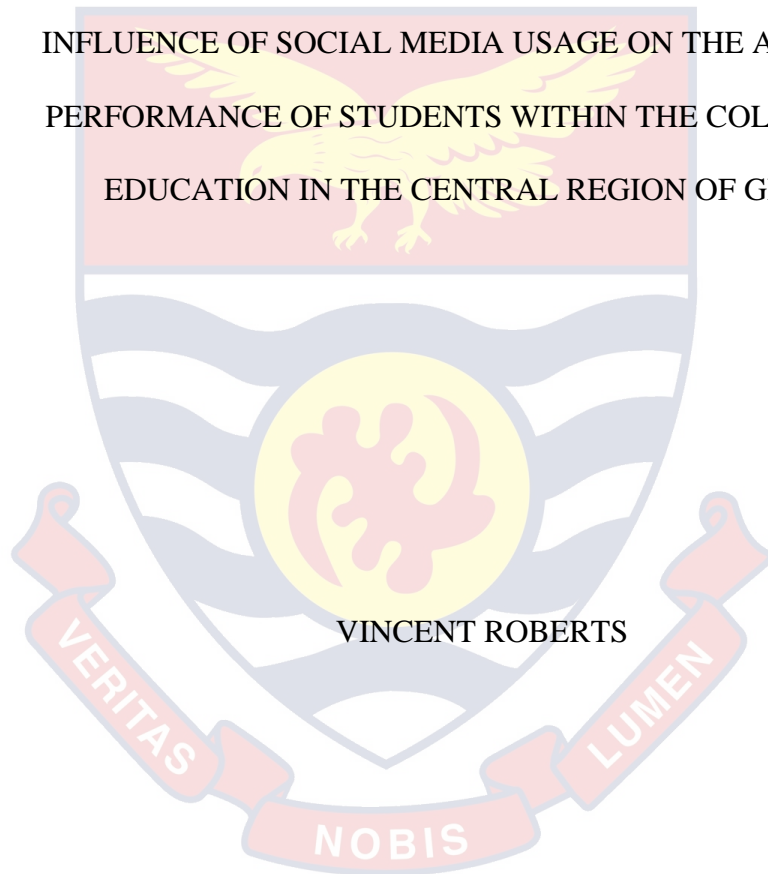UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON THE ACADEMIC

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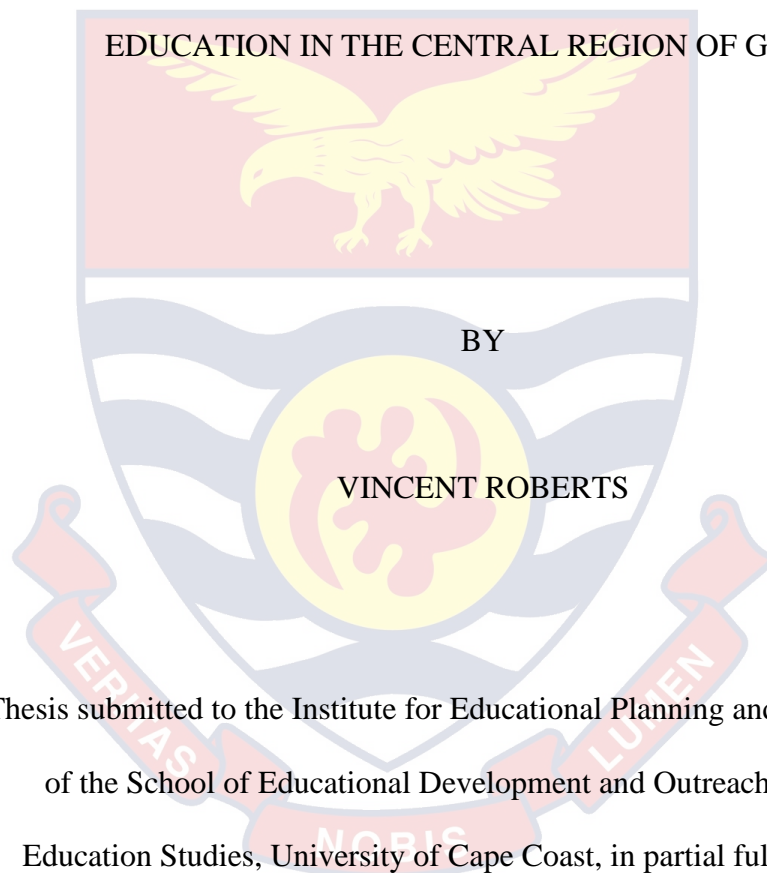
EDUCATION IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

VINCENT ROBERTS

2020

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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EDUCATION IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

BY

VINCENT ROBERTS

Thesis submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration

of the School of Educational Development and Outreach, College of

Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Educational

Administration

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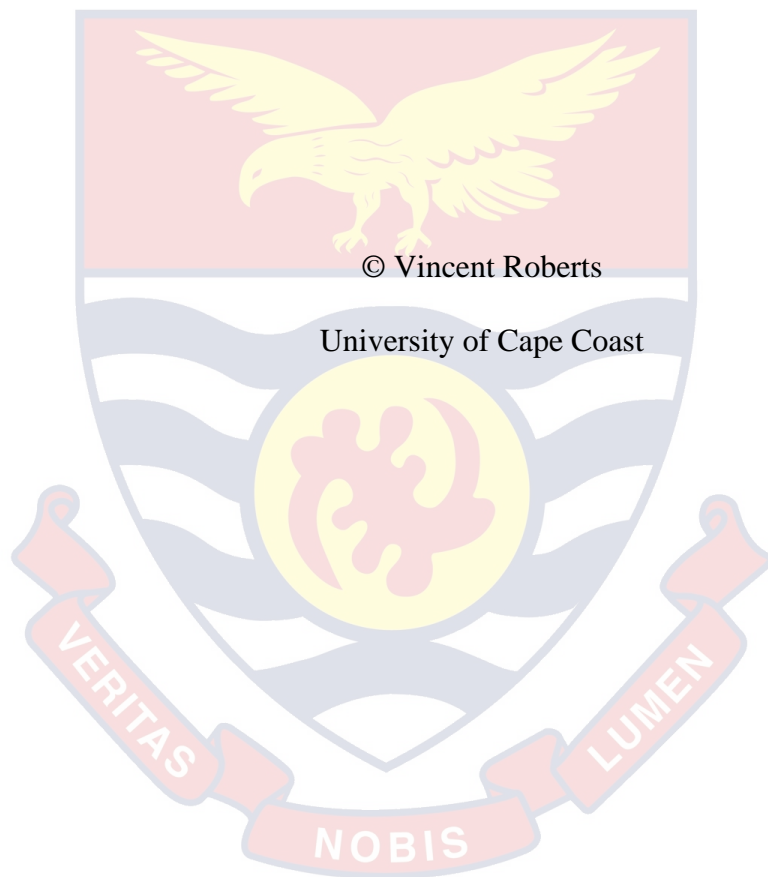
DECLARATION

**Candidate's Declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and

that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or

elsewhere.


Candidate's Signature: ……………………….. Date: ……………………….

Name:…………………………………………………………………………..


**Supervisors' Declaration**

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were

supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid

down by the University of Cape Coast.


Principal Supervisor's Signature: ……………………….. Date: ……..………

Name:…………………………………………………………………………..


Co-Supervisor's Signature: ………………………… Date: ……..……………

Name:…………………………………………………………………………...

## ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students within the Colleges of Education in the Central Region of Ghana. The study employed the descriptive survey design (cross-sectional) with a quantitative approach. The study targeted Colleges of Education students within the Central Region of Ghana who were in levels 200 and 300. A questionnaire on students' usage of social media was used in the conduct of the study. Through a multi-stage sampling technique, the questionnaire was administered to 331 students. Out of the 331 questionnaires, 267 were completely responded to and returned. This led to a response rate of 81%. Hence all the analysis were based on the 267 respondents. Means and standard deviations, Pearson correlation coefficient as well as one samples t-test were used to analyse the data to answer the research questions. The findings of the study revealed that Colleges of Education students use social media sites for a number of purposes. Among some of these purposes include academic usage of social media, using social media sites for the purpose of socialisation, entertainment usage of social media as well as using social media for the purpose of reading headline news. The study further found a negatively weak correlation between extent of social media usage and students' academic performance. The study also found a significant difference in the extent of social media usage among male and female students. Based on the findings, it was recommended that counsellors and tutors in the Colleges of Education should guide and educate students on the dangers of being addicted to social media usage, since too much time spent on social media sites could affect students' academic performance.

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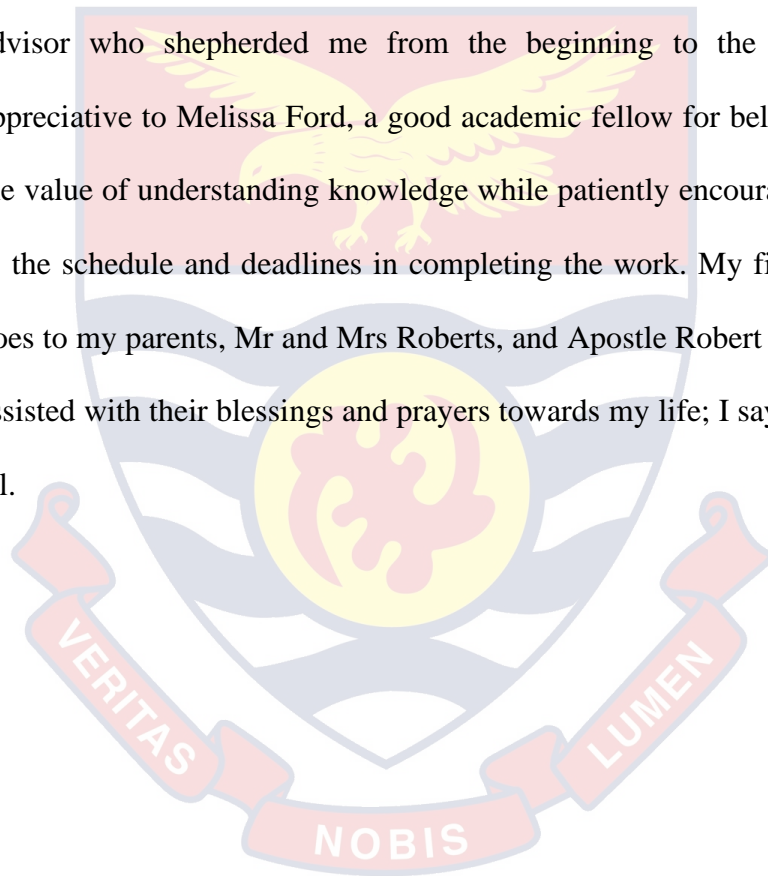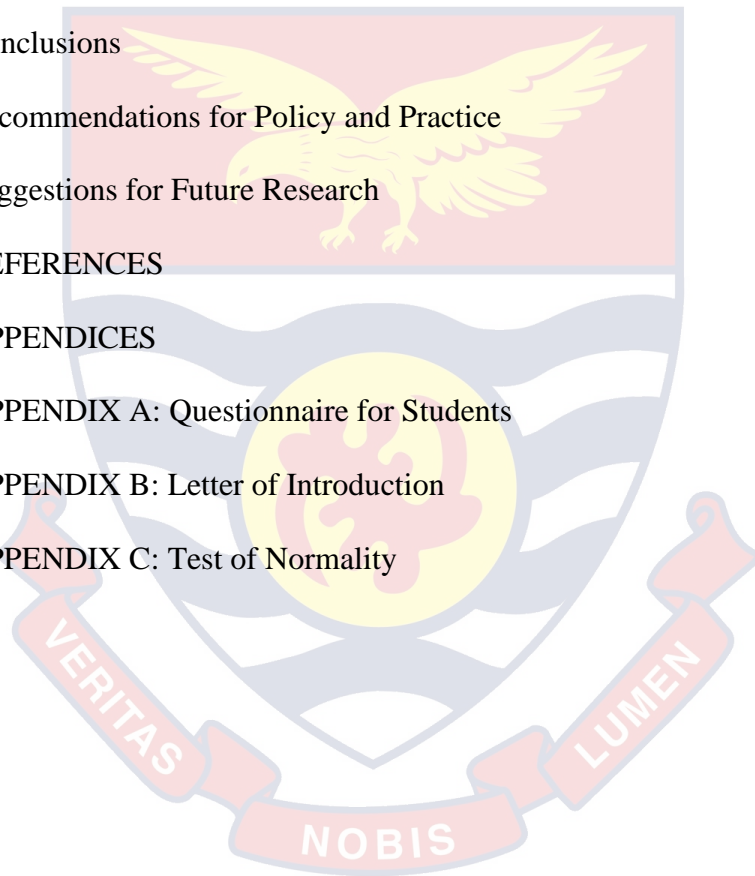
DEDICATION

To friends and family members

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

**Background to the Study**

The advent of the internet in the 1990s has led to major developments in the world of communication, hence the introduction of social networking sites (SNSs). The coming into being of these sites revolutionized the world of communication and today we celebrate its improvements ranging from education to entertainment (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Boyd and Ellison (2007) underscored that the evolution of the internet has led to its usage as the best medium of communication whereby two-third (2/3) of the internet world's population visit social networking sites (SNSs), thus serving as communication and connection tools; these networking sites are referred to as social media.

Media explosion is a category of online discourse which enables people to create contents, share them, bookmark them and network at a prodigious rate (Jha & Bhardwaj, 2012). This has breached the gap that existed in communication where people had to rely solely on traditional methods such as letters and phone calls as a mode of getting in touch with friends and relatives. Today, communication is as easy as walking into a neighbor's residence to deliver a piece of information or vice versa through the use of social media. Social media is fast changing the public discourse in the society and is setting trends and agenda in topics that range from the environment and politics to technology and the entertainment industry (Asur & Huberma, 2010).

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The driving factors for adoption of social media are the progressively ubiquitous access, convenience, functionality, and flexibility of social technologies (Brown, 2010). Brown emphasized that these factors have made the adoption of social media very easy and have tremendously improved mankind's life by exposing him to different ways of creating and sharing information. An additional benefit of social technologies provided on the internet is that they are frequently free or requires marginal investment, thereby eliminating a potential barrier to adoption (Brown, 2010). As it is known, nothing interesting is ever completely one-sided, so it is for social media as it comes with both positive and negative effects (Rifkin, Longnecker, Leach & Ortia, 2009).

There have been various views and opinions which recognize four major advantages of social media usage in higher education. These include enhancing relationship, improving learning motivation, offering personalized course material, and developing collaborative abilities (Wheeler, Yeomans, & Wheeler, 2008; Rifkin, Longnecker, Leach & Ortia, 2009). Also, Liccardi, Ounnas, Pau, Massey, Kinnunen, Lewthwaite, and Sarkar (2007) argued that students are socially connected with one another and therefore share their daily learning experiences and do conversation on various topics through social media whereas Kuppuswamy and Shankar (2010) reviewed that social network websites grab students' attention and then divert it towards non educational and inappropriate actions including useless chatting.

Research has proven that there is heavy presence of social media usage among students. Wiley and Sisson (2006), for instance, argued that previous studies have found out that more than 90 percent of tertiary students in the

University of Dayton in Ohio use social networks. It is also an open secret that students use social networking sites (SNSs) approximately thirty (30) minutes throughout the day as part of their daily routine life (Nicole, Charles, & Cliff, 2007). This shows that the level at which students patronize these sites may bring along both positive and negative effects on students as far as their academic performance is concerned.

The use of the Internet has become a central part of the developed and developing societies around the world. Approximately 78.1 percent of the United States population use Internet on a regular basis (Jones & Quayle, 2007). Close to 245 million people use Internet in United States, ranking among top ten countries in the world with highest Internet usage. Studies have shown that more than 90 percent of college students in United States use Internet actively; this accounts for approximately 20 million college students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Internet has become an integral part of almost every college student life, while a large fraction of college students think that the Internet is extremely beneficial to their education, specifically conducting research and communicating with their peers and faculty (Jones & Quayle, 2007).

American Educational Research Association [AERA] ((2009) conducted a research in San Diego, California and it was declared on its annual conference that Social Network Sites (SNSs) users study less and generated lower grades eventually. Similarly, Banquil, Chua, Leano, Rivero, Burce, and Dianalan (2009) found a continuing drop of grades among student users of social networking sites. However, many researchers have also found a positive association between the use of the internet and social networking sites

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(SNSs) and academic performance of the student users. Students, using internet frequently, scored higher on reading skills test and had higher grades as well (Banquil et al., 2009).

From the early 2000s, World Wide Web has moved from a static and passive viewing of web pages to more interactive and user-contributed content within what seems to be online. The use of social media among students has reached high levels and has affected their study time, poor grammar and wrong spellings when socializing on social media as well as diverting their attention from their studies (Ndaku, 2013).

The advanced and improved usage of social media platforms such as Facebook has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite some time (Nicole, 2007). Though social media usage started as a hobby for several computer literates, the usage of social media has changed into a social norm and existence-style for students around the world (Nicole, 2007). To buttress his argument, Nicole (2007) emphasised that students and teenagers have especially recognized these social media platforms to be able to contact their peers, share information, reinvent their personas and showcase their social live.

Also, Karpinski (2009) stated that social media has a negative association with students' academic performance which is much greater than the advantages derived through the use of social media platforms. People around the globe have been addicted to the internet which has given rise to more students using social media more often than before. Nalwa and Anand (2003) indicated that those who are addicted users love to use the internet to set back their personal and professional responsibilities in which the final

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outcome is poor academic performance. It was highlighted in the finding of Karpinski (2009) that social media platforms (Facebook, Whatsapp, etc.) users usually devote lesser time to their studies compared to what nonusers did and subsequently had lower GPAs. It was also mentioned by Karpinski, and Duberstein (2009) that among the major distractions of the current generation, social media platform (such Facebook, Whatsapp, etc.) remains a major distraction. According to Kubey, Lavin, and Barrows (2001), there is a correlation between academic performance and the dependency on social media platforms.

The increased use of Social Networking Websites (SNS) has become an international phenomenon in the past several years. What started out as a hobby for some computer literate people has become a social norm and way of life for people from all over the world (Boyd, 2007) Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and showcase their social lives (Boyd, 2007). With the increase of technological devices which are often used for communicating with others, and the popularity of the Internet, "Social Networking" has become an activity that is done primarily on the internet, with sites like MySpace, Facebook, Bebo, Friendster, and Xanga (Coyle, Smith, & Platt, 2012).

Teenagers now use the Internet for the majority of their daily activities and information gathering, as opposed to older generations who used resources like the television or newspaper (Lewis et al., 2008). A recent survey showed that approximately 90 percent of teens in the United States have internet access, and about 75 percent of these teens use the Internet more

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than once per day (Kist, 2008). This study also showed that approximately half of all teens who have Internet access are also members of social networking sites, and use the Internet to make plans and socialize with friends (Kist, 2008). In September, 2005, out of the total adult internet users (18-29 years), 16 percent were those who were using any social networking site and this percentage increased to 86 percent in May, 2010 (Oskouei, 2010).

Tuckman (1975) defined academic performance as the apparent demonstration of understanding, concepts, skills, ideas and knowledge of a person and proposed that grades clearly depict the academic performance of students. Use of technology such as internet is one of the most important factors that can influence educational performance of students positively or adversely. Shah and Augsburger, (2001) asserted that student users are affected by the internet and this impact is determined by the type of internet usage. Student users are positively affected by the informative use of internet while having drastic impact on recreational use of internet. Also, Oskouei (2010) proposed that internet is advantageous to both students and teachers if used as a tool of knowledge creation and dissemination.

According to Oskouei (2010), students' academic performance is affected the more by the use of Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, among other social networks. Social platforms are mainly used by students for socializing activities rather than academic purpose (Oye, 2012). Oye further opined that majority of students feel that social platforms have positive impact on their academic growth.

In a different research conducted by Shana (2012), it was ascertained that students use platforms mainly for chatting and making friends. In another

study, Young (2006) investigated the consequences of the internet and social platforms on students' academic growth. The findings of the study revealed that internet has spread its wings to reach teenagers' school life. It was also observed by Young that students are more dependent on internet to access information that pertain to their academic life as well as entertainment.

Additionally, Young said that internet, though it takes a lot of time, has less impact on studies. It was observed by Wang (2011) that impact of social platforms rests on the degree of usage. Jeong (2005) observed that internet addiction is significantly and negatively related to students' academic growth, as well as emotional attributes. Seo (2004) confirmed Jeong's statement when he opined that the negative influence of internet is only on excessive users and not on all users.

An ever-increasing growth rate of social networks sites (SNSs) not only calls for the parental and teacher monitoring of student users but also attracting the focus of academicians and researchers towards this phenomenon. Student's use of social networking continues to create challenges and issues for higher education professionals and keeping abreast with these challenges has proven difficult because of the speed at which new technologies are being introduced (Bugeja, 2006; Capriccioso, 2006; Finder, 2006; Quindlen, 2006; Shier, 2005).

Social networking sites have become a very important aspect in student's life. Internet use has grown considerably in the last decade: Majority of young adults use the internet daily if not more (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005). Social network is a social structure made up of individuals or organisations called "nodes", which are tied (connected)

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by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, common interest, financial exchange, dislike, sexual relationships or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige (Adeboye, 2012, cited in Asmah & Edegoh, 2012).

Social network can also be referred to as a map of specified ties, such as friendship between the nodes being studied. The nodes to which an individual is thus connected are the social contacts of that individual: the network can also be used to measure social capital – the value that individual gets from the social network. Social networking sites include Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), Google talk, Google + Messenger. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet friends (Adeboye, 2012, cited in Asemah & Edegoh, 2012).

The expansion in technology has also affected internet software, thus leading to chatting sites known by the name "social media". With social networking sites, one can send and receive messages almost immediately. However, lack of regulation of the internet has led to its excessive use. McQuail (2008) avers that the internet penetrates more homes. It is a common sight to see a youth chatting in sensitive and highly organized places like church, mosque and lecture venues. Some are so carried away that even as they are walking along the high way, they keep chatting.

The manufacturing and distribution of equally sophisticated cellular phones has complicated the situation, as youths no longer need to visit a cybercafé before they send and receive messages. Attention has been shifted from visible to invisible friends, while important ventures like study and

writing are affected in the process (Lenhart & Madden, 2007). This phenomenon has become a source of worry to many who believe in knowledge and skill acquisition.

As it is known, this generation tends to rely on the net and also spend most of their time on social networking sites such as Twitter, Google Plus, MySpace, Facebook and Whatsapp. This is probably due to the reason that college and university students as well as teens used it extensively to get global access. The use of social network sites among students of tertiary institutions is now widespread (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005).

The rapid advancement of media technology has had a greater impact on the way people communicate on a daily basis. The growing dimension of the use of the social media among the youth of today cannot be over emphasized. Over the years, social networking among students has become more and more popular. It is a way to make connections, not only on campus but with friends outside of school. Social networking is a way that helps people feel they belong to a community. Due to the increased popularly of it, economists and professors are questioning whether grades of students will not be affected by how much time is spent on these sites (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005)

Choney (2010), MehMood and Taswir (2013), Kist (2008), Jacobsen and Forste (2011) believe that the use of technology such as internet is one of the most important factors that can influence educational performance of students positively or adversely. Many parents and guardians are worried that students are spending too much time on Facebook and other social media sites and have not enough time to study. Though parents are worried about

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students' constant use of the social media sites, many students continue to utilize these sites on a daily basis. It seems to becoming popular and fashionable in the colleges of education because majority of Colleges of Education students in Ghana prefer to stay on the internet for hours.

**Statement of the Problem**

Advances in internet technologies have introduced compelling changes in how individuals interact, communicate, learn, and build knowledge. For much of the connected world, internet technology permeates nearly every aspect of human existence from shopping and banking, to communication and education among many other pursuits (Tariq, Mehboob, Khan, & Ullah, 2012). It is not surprising that social media usage is one of the most common activities among children, adolescents, and emerging adults nowadays. It offers today's youth a gateway for entertainment and communication and it is becoming one of the main platforms for accessing information and news (Freund & Weinhold, 2002). The aggressive adoption of social media among the younger generation, according to Vorderer (2016) could be attributed to their up-to-date knowledge of and comfort with the latest technology and the convenient accessibility to these social networking tools. For instance, a generation like this, can access social media from their cell phones at any time and at any place.

The use of social media sites could have both positive and negative consequences on its user. Different researchers have conducted research to ascertain the influence of social media on users. Bashir, Mahmood and Shafique (2008) for instance focused on the internet usage by undergraduates, graduates and post graduate students. The study analyzed a sample of 300

users and the analysis assessed the relationship of internet with experience, frequency and places of internet usage. The results suggested a positive relationship among students and internet usage, and 63% of the total students mentioned that they used internet regarding academic related work only. Contrary to the findings of Bashir, Mahmood and Shafique (2008), Oye (2012), noted that most students use social networking sites mainly for socialising activities, rather than for academic purpose.

In their study, Choney (2010), San-Miguel (2009) and Enriquez (2010), studies on students' use of the social media sites revealed a negative effect of the use of social media sites on students' academic performance. Empirically, much is known about the influence of social media use on university students' academic performance (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2015; Mowafy 2018, Kolan & Dzandza, 2018). Kolan and Dzandza (2018) for instance found a negative influence of social media use on university students' academic performance. It however appears that little is known about the influence of social media use on college of education students' academic performance; taking into considering the extent of the social media usage.

Although Kolan and Dzandza (2018) looked at the influence of social media use on university students' academic performance, their studies did not take into consideration the extent of social media usage (the frequency of the usage and the degree of the usage). The number of times a student visits a social media site within a day, a week or a month could cumulatively influence such students' academic performance based on the use to which the social media site is put. Equally, how long a time a student spends on a social media site could also influence such students' academic performance. The

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emergence of social media as a result of advancement in technology and expansion in internet software has raised eye brows among academics on its (social media) impacts on academic excellence. Students at all levels of learning to some extent have divided attention regarding academic work as a result of available opportunities to be harnessed from social media. Whether these opportunities promote academic work is a question that needs to be answered. This study therefore seeks to investigate the influence of social media use on student's academic performance among the Colleges of Education within the Central Region of Ghana.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study focuses on the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students within the Colleges of Education in the Central Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to:

i.    Find out what Colleges of Education students use social media for.

ii.   Examine the relationship between the extent of social media usage and students' academic performance.

iii.  Investigate whether gender differences exist in Colleges of Education with regard to the extent of students' social media usage.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the conduct of the study:

1.    What do Colleges of Education students use social media for?

2.    What relationship exist between the extent of social media usage and students' academic performance within the Colleges of Education?

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3.    What gender differences exist in Colleges of Education with regard to the extent of students' social media usage. ?

**Significance of the Study**

This study is significant to the teachers, parents, students and managements of education. The findings of this study is intended to help the teachers of the Colleges of Education to know the influence that social media has on their students, so as to assist them to enlighten and create awareness to the students on the possible influence of it on them. The findings of this study will be significant to parents in the sense that they will know the possible effects these social media use has on their children, so as to serve as watch-dogs to their children on the use of the social networking sites.

The study would enable the students in the Colleges of Education to be aware that, apart from the social benefits of social networking site, using the sites more than necessary will pose possible dangers to their health. It will be relevant in assisting students in understanding the diversity of social media. The findings of this study will provide relevant material for students and other researchers undertaking similar research. The study would assist researchers with more information on the influence of social media on students' academic performance.  The study would assist management of education to make some input on the usage of social media among students and whether the usage will be relevant to students' academic performances or not.

**Delimitation**

There are a number of social media sites: this study was delimited to use of Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter and You-tube among Colleges of Education students in the Central Region of Ghana. The study was

also delimited to only Colleges of Education in the Central Region of Ghana, specifically OLA College of Education, Komenda College of Education and Assin Fosu College of Education. The study was also limited to only second and third year students in these Colleges of Education. Students with visual impairment were excluded from the study because of their inability to read printed materials. With regards to the content, the study focused on four dimensions of media usage: academic usage of social media, using network sites for the purpose of socialisation, entertainment usage of social media, as well as using social media for the purpose of gathering information relating to headline news. Similarly, regarding the extent of social media usage, the study was delimited to the frequency and intensity at which students use social media sites.

**Limitations**

A study of this nature revealed challenges which might affect the validity of the responses. First, the nature of the design resulted in issues of validity and reliability. Survey designs captured brief moments in time just like taking a photograph of an on-going activity. This suggests that the validity of the findings in survey studies were time-bound and therefore, the validity of such studies reduces with time passage. In line with this study, the result of this present study might not hold in ten years since the influence of social media on students' academic performance might change over time. Caution should be taken when reporting findings of this study in some time to come.

Again, the self-report nature of the questionnaire prone the results to some biases as the validity and reliability of the results obtained are dependent on the accuracy of the responses provided by the respondents.

**Definition of Terms**

**Social Media Usage**: This refers to the use to which people put online platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp to. People often use online platforms to share opinions and experiences including photos, videos and music. This study conceptualised social media usage in terms of what students use online platforms for.

**Academic Performance**: This refers to the measurement of students' achievement across various academic subjects. Students' Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) was used as a measure of academic performance. This was based on students' first four semester examination results.

**Organisation of the Study**

The study is captured under five chapters, chapters 1-5. Chapter one focused on the introduction which included the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitations, limitations and definition of terms. Chapter two dwelt on the literature related to this study. The literature review included the theoretical review, conceptual review, the conceptual framework as well as the empirical review. Chapter three highlighted the methodology employed to conduct the study. The research design, population, sampling procedures, instrument, data collection and data analysis procedures were highlighted. Chapter four dealt with how the collected data was analysed, as well as the interpretation of the results, thereof. The findings were also discussed. Chapter five presented the summary of the study and key findings,

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conclusions and recommendations. Suggestions for further studies were also captured in the final chapter of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The study sought to examine the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students of the Colleges of Education within the Central Region of Ghana. This chapter reviewed literature related to the study. The review covered four thematic areas. This included the theoretical review, conceptual review, the conceptual framework as well as the empirical review.

**Theoretical Review**

The theoretical aspect of the literature reviewed a model on Technology Adoption Model (TAM), Bandura Social Learning Theory (SLT) and the theory of gratification. The study was built around these models.

**Technology Adoption Model (TAM)**

Technology adoption model as developed by Davis (1986) was based on Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action (TRA). The theory of reason action explains that attitudes are influenced by beliefs, which consequently lead to intentions, which then guide or generate behaviours (Dzandu, Boateng, Agyemang, & Quansah, 2016). In a similar view, the Technology adoption model explains and predicts belief, attitude, intention and behaviour of users towards information technology acceptance (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989). According to this model, user acceptance is primarily based on two behavioural beliefs, namely; the perceived ease of use (PEU) and the perceived usefulness (PU). These two beliefs determine an individual's behaviour intention (BI) to use social media (Davis et al., 1989).

Perceived usefulness is defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular technology would enhance his or her job

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performance (Davis et al., 1989). For instance, in the view of students, the use of a particular social media gives the conviction that particular social media adopted would improve students' academic performance in the school. Hence, in the context of this study, perceived usefulness can be explained to be the extent to which prospective users who are Colleges of Education students believe that they will benefit from using social media in their studies. Davis et al. (1989) explained a system high in perceived usefulness as one for which a user believes in the existence of a positive user-performance relationship as well as perceives the system to be an effective way of performing the task(s). In the same vein, Kim, Sohn, and Choi, (2011) supported by Al-Daihani (2010) added that an individual's evaluation of the result of their behaviour in terms of the foreseen benefits base their choice on the desirability of the usefulness. In other words, a particular social network is rejected by users or students if users perceive the social media as not useful even if that social media technology was easy to use.

In assessing the external validity of this theory, many studies have indicated perceived usefulness to have a significant effect on user adoption and satisfaction across a range of social media technologies (Davis et al., 1992; Lu et al. 2009; Sago, 2013). For instance, Sago (2013) found that the frequency of use of social media services is positively impacted by the level of perceived usefulness provided by the social media services. Consistent with this finding, Lu et al. (2009) revealed that before participants used a particular social media, their need to find instant messaging as a useful tool in improving their communication efficiency as well as enabling them to have more convenient chat with their friends, colleagues and others was an instrumental

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factor in their decision. Furthermore, Shirazi (2013) explored the role of social media in communication discourse in the Islamic Middle East and North African (MENA) countries and found that social media helps the citizens to partake in conversations and mobilisation. This study confirms communication and social networking role of social media as noted by Hamade (2013).

However, despite some support findings on this theory with respect to the perceive use of social media, Lee et al. (2007) and Strader et al. (2007) revealed contrary findings. For example, in an online survey of undergraduate and graduate business students, Strader et al. (2007) found that perceived usefulness had no positive effect on intention to use instant messaging by students. Similarly, Lee et al. (2007) conducted an online survey of business students and found that perceived usefulness has less significant impact on behavioural intention to use instant messaging as compared to perceived ease of use.

Perceived ease of use, as one of the beliefs stated by Davis (1986), is defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a system would be effortless. Considering that human's effort is a limited resource, an application perceived to be easier to use than another is more likely to be adopted by users (Davis et al., 1989). Therefore, with respect to perceived ease of use, students will adopt various social media in schools, colleges and universities if that social media network appears to be stress-free to use. This means various types of social media which are not familiar with student will be difficult to be used by students in their studies.

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Numerous studies have found perceived ease of use as a major determinant of attitude towards a social media technology use (Burton-Jones & Hubona, 2005; Lee et al. 2007; Sago, 2013; Setterstrom et al., 2013). Sago (2013) concluded that the perceived ease of use of the social media services is the reason for its frequent use. Also, Lee et al. (2007) conducted an online survey of business students and found that perceived ease of use has a stronger impact on behavioural intention to use instant messaging. In an online survey of undergraduate and graduate business students, Strader et al. (2007) found that perceived ease of use had a positive effect on intention to use instant messaging.  Van Slyke (2007) together with Ilie et al. (2005) found that the perceived relative advantage and ease of use had an influence on intention of business students to use instant messaging positively.

**Social Learning Theory (SLT)**

The social learning theory was developed by Bandura (1997). According to social learning theory, three elements, including individual learners, peers, and situations, potentially affect individuals' learning outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Ainin et al. (2015) states that the social learning theory describes how the environmental and cognitive components work together to affect an individual's learning and behaviour patterns. Social learning theory views learning as a social process that individuals will self-initiate, regulate learning and effectively construct knowledge by acquiring, generating, and structuring information (Yu et al., 2010).

In relation to the SLT as stated by Bandura (1997), the use of the social networks (by the individuals or students) with friends (peers) on various social network platforms (situations) affects students' academic performance

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(learning outcomes). This is supported by Ainin et al. (2015), who stated that individuals' cognition and behaviour are influenced through observation and interacting with peers and the situations (e.g., learning the environmental norms, cultures, policies). This means that as student observe their colleagues as well as interact with them, their thinking and actions demonstrated toward the use of social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, among other social networks are either positively or negatively affected.

Again, Bandura stressed that antecedent factor of an individual behavioural consequences is as a result of individual's interaction with the environment. Therefore, individuals' interaction with peers, social support from peers and their understanding of situations are important factors which affect individual learning outcome (DeAndrea, Ellison, LaRose, Steinfield, & Fiore, 2012). This implies that students' interaction with peers on social media platforms through observations, interactions and other activities are likely to result in a behavioural outcome which might affect the academic performance of such students either positively or negatively (Mingle & Adams, 2015).

**Gratification Theory**

According to Olise and Makka (2013), the theory was developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, in 1974. The gratification theory holds that people are responsible for choosing a particular media to meet their needs. That is, students' choice of a specific social media such as Facebook, twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp is based on the specific needs to be performed. Furthermore, Katz et al. (1974) added that media in turn compete with other information sources for viewers' gratification. Therefore, the academic performance of students of Colleges of Education in the Central Region is as a

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result of the competition between social media network participation and academic work. This means that the amount of time invested in participating on social media is likely to affect the time allocated for studies by students and this could affect their learning outcome as a result (Mingle & Adams, 2015).

Gratification approach identifies the needs and motives behind online media usage (Mowafy, 2018). Uses and gratification theory suggests that social media users have power over their media consumption and assume an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives and that they are accountable for selecting media to meet their desires and needs to achieve gratification (Olise & Makka, 2013). Uses and gratification of the social media approach focuses on why and how people use social media to satisfy their needs (Larose, Mastro, & Eastin, 2001).

**Conceptual Review**

The conceptual review expatiated on some key concepts around which the study is built. Concepts reviewed included concept of social media, history of social media, social media and Ghanaian education as well as the concept of academic performance.

**Concept of Social Media**

Social media is a phenomenon that has been evolving in a rapid pace. Different researchers and authors have described it in a different way and as Jacka and Scott (2011) stated, there is no single recognised definition of social media. Drury (2008) explains social media as an online resource that people use to share content such as video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humour, opinion, gossip, news. Andreas and Michael (2010) are of the belief that social media is a set of internet-based application that constructs on the

philosophical and technological basis of web and that permits the design and exchange of user generated content. Shrestha (2013) believes that social media is a means of links or networks among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Lusk (2010) share similar view on the concept of social media. In his view, social media is the use of Facebook, Blogs, Twitter, My Space and LinkedIn for the purpose of communication, sharing photos as well as videos. Safko and Brake (2008) further defined social media as activities, practices, and behaviours among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media.

To explain further, conventional media are web-based applications that help an individual to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios. It appears diverse researchers explained their perspective regarding social media. Therefore, in this study, social media is defined as an online resource that people use to share content such as video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humour, opinion, gossip, news. Based on the various definitions, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), in an effort, classified social media into six different classes as follows:

1. Collaborative Project (Wikipedia)

2. Blogs and Micro blogs (Twitter)

3. Content Communities (You-tube)

4. Social Networking Site (Facebook; 2go; BB chat)

5. Virtual Game World (World of war craft)

6. Virtual Second World (Second life nationally has become an international trend).

The concept of social media may be used in connection with social media network (Osharive, 2015). According to Osharive (2015), some media website includes:

1. Social Bookmarking: interact by tagging website and searching through website book marked by others (Blink list, simple).

2. Social News: interact by voting for articles and commenting on them (Digg, propello).

3. Social Networking: interact by adding friends, commenting on photo and profiles, sharing groups for discussions (Facebook, 2go, BB chat)

4. Social Photo and Video Sharing: interact by sharing photos or videos and commenting on the user submission. (You-tube and Fliki).

5. Wikis: interact by adding articles and editing existing articles. (Wikipedia, wikia).

**History of Social Media**

According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), social network was born with Web 2.0 presenting features of blogging and posting with the website named 'six degrees.com', which promoted itself as a tool to help people connect with each other and provide E-messaging facility. It was named after the 'Six degrees of separation' theory and lasted from 1997 to 2001. The idea was based on the theory that people are separated by no more than six degrees from one another. It allowed users to create profile, make groups, search and invite friends. However, they encouraged members to invite more people to the site and had too many membership drives. Many people complained that the membership invitations were spam filling up their websites with junk. It was sold in 2001 for $125 million but completely shut down the year after.

Other niche-driven sites are Asian Avenue established in 1997. By 1999, Black Planet was established and in 2000, MiGente.com for Hispanic servers. In the mid- 1990s, the internet was at its full force.  Yahoo! was established and Amazon had begun selling books. Every household was getting a personal computer (PC). The World Wide Web showed no signs of slowing down. Weinreith (2007) says that although it attracted millions of people, unfortunately, it failed to become a sustainable business.

Its organizer believes that sixdegrees.com was simply ahead of its time. Wasow (2007) argues that from 1997 to 2001, a number of social networking websites began to support various combinations of profiles and publicly expressed friends. Asian Avenue, Black Planet, and Mi-Gente allowed users to create personal, professional, and dating profiles; users could identify friends on their personal profiles without seeking approval for those connections. By late 2000s, social media had gained widespread acceptance and some services gained huge numbers of users.

Later, it came up with new features in the year 2003 – a new face of social networks linkedin.com and myspace.com – but in the year 2003, facebook.com and orkut.com changed the total concept of social networks in the history of social media and web sciences; it changed the definition of social networks. After the year 2003, social networks were very much advanced with new features; by new features, the user even can change the whole front and appearance of the website on his/her profile which is a step towards evolution. For example, in November 2012, Facebook announced that it had 1 billion users worldwide. In July 2012, twitter had estimated 517 million users. Boyd and Nielsen (2006) reported that the social networking

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sites developed with the passage of time, and its number of users increased from 46.8 million to 68.8 million.

Based on this, social media law was enacted to control the effect of social media on the youth. Talking about law and jurisdiction, the international law has it that one must be 18 years old, minimum, to use social networking websites but unfortunately, Lenhart and Madden (2007) calculated a huge number of underage users which were violated. According to their calculation, it has been analysed that 41 percent of 12–13 years old and 61 percent of 14-17 years old users use social networking websites. Lenhart and Madden (2007) estimated that students are more likely to use social networking websites; nearly 47 percent of teenagers (12 to 17-year-olds) and 69 percent of young adults (18 to 21year olds) and 20 percent of adults (18+) use social networking sites, and only 20 percent use social networks to contact other people. In contrast, only 42 percent of adults that use social networking sites visit these sites daily or more and 24 percent adult users visit social networking sites monthly.

**Social Media and Ghanaian Education**

Ghanaian education has felt its own taste of social media since its introduction. Social media in Ghana started as a slow process like in other African countries but has grown steadily over the past years (Kolan & Dzandza, 2018). The Ghana National Communication Authority (2016), cited in Kolan and Dzandza (2018), reported that the total mobile subscription increased by 1.3 percent from 36,138,706 in the first quarter of 2016 to 36,613,987 at the end of the second quarter. Also, according to the report, the number of mobile data subscribers in the country increased dramatically.

Moreover, mobile data subscription for the second quarter of 2016 was 18.8 million with a penetration rate of 67.6 percent This indirectly implies that there will be more access to the internet which of course includes social networking sites.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Owusu and Agatha (2015) on the use of social media and its impacts on academic performance of tertiary students revealed that majority of students in Ghana were engrossed in social networking sites. It also revealed that most users utilised these sites for chatting and downloading purposes only, which affected their academic performance negatively. This finding was consistent with the finding revealed by Mingle and Musah (2015).

The researchers discovered that most respondents in their study experienced negative effects such as poor grammar spelling, late submission of assignments, less study time and poor academic performance. Though part of these studies affirmed some benefits of social media usage in the academic life of students, it is necessary for educators to be concerned about its negative effects which seem to be outweighing the advantages as far as education is concerned in Ghana (Kolan & Dzandza, 2018).

**Academic Performance**

According to Mankoe (2002), performance refers to the extent to which a worker or student contributes to achieving the goals of his or her institution and an individual with weak motivation might perform well owing to some chance factors that boost performance. This means that performance measures the aspect of behaviour that can be observed at a specific period. Academic performance, according to the Cambridge Dictionary of English

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(2018), refers to how well a school, college, university, an individual or a group is able to perform when given a learning task, activity or one's achievement in standardized tests in academic pursuit. In other words, academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers (Mankoe, 2002). Academic performance is related to content and intellect, meaning that academic performance depends on the learner's competence.

According to Otoo (2007), academic performance constitutes what a student is capable of achieving when he or she is tested on what he or she has been taught. It is further stated that academic performance is related to intellectual capacity (Otoo, 2007). According to Awori, Mugo, Orodho, and Karugu, (2010), students who are described as poor academic performers in a learning situation refer to those who fail to attain a set standard performance in a given evaluation exercise such as test, examination or series of continuous assessments. This means that the standard could be based on a number of stipulated subjects and other school activities.

**Empirical Review**

This aspect of the literature reviewed empirical studies on the respective objectives of the study. Issues such as types of social media, social media usage among students, influence of social media usage on students' academic performance, social media usage with respect to gender, as well as social media usage with respect to level of study were reviewed.

**Types of Social Media**

Asemah and Edegoh (2013) conducted a study to find out whether the exposure of students to social media has effect on their academic performance.

The study anchored on two theories, namely; social information processing theory and media equation theory. The survey research method was adopted, employing the questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. Findings showed that Facebook is the most used social media by undergraduate students of Kogi State University. The findings also indicated that undergraduate students of Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria, have access to social media and that their exposure to social media is to a very great extent. Finally, finding revealed that exposure to social media had a negative effect on students.

Furthermore, Kolan and Dzandza (2018) conducted a study on the effect of social media on academic performance of students in Ghanaian universities.  The study randomly selected total sample size of two hundred (200) students from the total population of thirty-eight thousand (38,000) in eight (8) randomly selected halls of residence out of the sixteen (16) halls of University of Ghana. The study employed questionnaire in data collection and adopted a descriptive statistics in the analysis of the data. The findings revealed that students of University of Ghana are well exposed to social media networks; all the respondents use one social media platform or the other. To explain further, the respondents are on Facebook and WhatsApp. Furthermore, findings indicated other major social media such as twitter and Instagram platforms were used by the students.

Moreover, Okereke and Oghenetega (2014) conducted a study on the impact of social media on the academic performance of university students in Nigeria. The study adopted causal-comparative research design as well as questionnaire as a data collection method. The study used four tertiary

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institutions, namely; Nnamdi Azikiwe University-Awka, Delta State University, Abraka, Madonna University, Okija campus, and Anambra State University. The study used a purposive sampling technique to sample twenty-five students in each school, making a total of hundred undergraduates. Findings revealed Facebook 40(40.81 percent), WhatsApp 20(20.40 percent) 2go/Skype 14(14.28 percent) as often used by respondents. Furthermore, the findings indicated that Myspace, Twitter, Badoo, Blogs/web scholars, Google+/ social bookmarking are not often used by undergraduates in the four universities used for the study. Overall, findings showed that social media usage among students was not for academic purposes. This finding was similarly confirmed by Mingle and Adams (2015), who revealed that majority of respondents used WhatsApp and Facebook as major type of social media.

In addition, Maqableh, Rajab, Quteshat, Masa'deh, Khatib and Karajeh (2015) conducted a research to find the relationship between student's grades and social media networking in the University of Jordan. The study randomly selected undergraduate students of the University as well as adopted self-developed questionnaire in collecting data. The study indicated that almost 39 percent of the students were spending 3 hours per day on Facebook, while 40 percent of the students spent 10 hours on social media every week. Also, most of the social media network users were females with ages between 20-23 years.

Also, Alloway et al. (2013) conducted a study to investigate the impact of social networking sites on social connectedness and cognitive abilities. In order to provide a reliable measure of cognitive skills, the researchers adopted standardized tests of verbal ability, working memory, and academic

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attainment. Students also responded to questions about the length and type of social media used (Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter). The findings indicated that young people used Facebook, YouTube and Twitter very often.

**Uses of Social Media by Students**

A descriptive survey study conducted by Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) revealed that 1,308 respondents representing 86.8 percent said they use the social media to chat with friends, 104 representing 6.8 percent use it to download music and video, and 96 respondents representing 6.4 percent use it for academic work. Furthermore, the study revealed that majority of the respondents had mobile phones which also had Internet facility on them and had knowledge of the existence of many media sites.

The study further confirmed that most of the respondents visit their social media sites using their phones and spend between thirty minutes to three hours per day. Surprisingly, analysis indicated that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (96.6 percent) do not use the social media sites for academic work. In a similar study, Kolan and Dzandza (2018) revealed that a total number of 165 students (82.5 percent) indicated that they mainly used social media for chatting and downloading pictures/videos while the remaining 32 respondents used social media mainly for academic purposes.

Moreover, using a mixed method approach, Mingle and Adams (2015) conducted a study to identify social media network sites and their usage among students, how students networked and participated on social media networks, time invested by students on social networks, the effects of social media on students' grammar and spelling as well as the effects of social network participation on the student's academic performance within the

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context of the social learning and the use and gratification theories. The study purposively surveyed students in four senior high schools and interviewed the heads of the senior high schools.

Again, out of the total valid responses, 132 (12.3%) respondents indicated that they used social networks for entertainment while 170 (15.8%) respondents indicated that they used social media networks for discussions with friends on school matters. In addition, 329 (30.5%) respondents claimed that they used social media networks for chatting while 446 (41.4%) indicated that they used social media networks for making friends. Friendship making was therefore identified as the main purpose for which students used social media networks.

Furthermore, Mehmood and Taswir (2013) conducted a research to investigate pedagogical impacts of social networking sites on undergraduate students at the College of Applied Sciences (CAS), Nizwa, Oman. Blogs, wikis, tweets, RSS feeds, discussion boards, podcasts were educational nodes in a huge network. The study tabulated the usage of these web2.0 applications and their impact on linguistic and social behaviours of young learners. The demographic segmentation constructed a framework to evaluate social tools and e-learning technologies popular amongst learners.

The study revealed that students used social media for chatting. Also, the findings revealed that student used social media for downloading music/videos, posting photos and chatting, which was categorized as entertainment use. Also, few indicated using social media for educational activities like publishing articles, participating in quizzes/poll, communicating with teachers. To explain further, only 6 percent used social network sites for

uploading videos, 8 percent for creating quizzes/poll, 8 percent for blogging, 14 percent for submitting articles, and 14 percent communication with teachers. This reflects that social network sites were used by students for entertainment mostly and less for educational purposes.

For instance, in the study, it was discovered that while most students used social networks for entertainment purposes, 72 percent agreed that they used social networks while working on classroom assignments; 28 percent do not use any social network for completing assignments and 80 percent of the students reported that they used a social networking site on phone. With respect to those who use their mobile phone in navigating on social media network sites, approachability and flexibility of being in touch was identified as the main reason. Thus, respondents identified smart features available on social networks like reading RSS feeds, location tagging and status updates as popular uses of social network on mobile phone.

In another study, Isik (2013) analyzed the utilization of social media networks in education of two private schools in North and South of Cyprus. The main emphasis of the study was to compare students' activities of the two schools regarding usage of social media. Using questionnaire as well as random sampling techniques in selecting participant for the study, result indicated that the instructors of both schools appreciated usage of social media only along-with face-to-face lectures and communication. The reason behind this was that the students belonging to both schools lacked confidence in face-to-face communication. This is a great setback of using social networks. The study showed that often teachers are required to communicate with their students in order to ensure better understanding with provision of visual

examples over social media and to wish them well for their examinations and studies.

Also, in the south school, daily updates regarding course, tests and homework were being published on social media. The study also revealed the privacy concerns of the teachers belonging to both schools. Also, the study indicated that the computer technology teachers in the schools were not promoting utilization of social networks because of lack of trust on such networks. The conclusion of the study was that teachers should have training on safe and secure utilization of social media in order to have competency and comfort in using social networks.

Again, Bashir, Mahmood and Shafique (2008) conducted a study at one of the universities in Pakistan which focused on the internet usage by undergraduates, graduates and post graduate students. The study analyzed a sample of 300 users and the analysis assessed the relationship of internet with experience, frequency and places of internet usage. The results suggested a positive relationship among students and internet usage, and 63 percent of the total students mentioned that they used internet regarding academic related work only.

Moreover, in a preliminary survey of a group of Malaysian university students, Helou and Rahim (2014) conducted a research to obtain students' perceptions on how their use of social networking sites influenced their academic performance. The study gathered an initial finding on Malaysian university students' use of social networking sites and its influence on their academic performance. Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS) software was used to analyze the data. Result revealed that majority of the

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respondents use social network sites for making friends (21 percent) and chatting (21 percent). Again, respondents also use social network sites for receiving and sending messages (17 percent).

Furthermore, 8 percent use social network sites for playing games and 7 percent use social network sites to share files. Also, 26 percent of the respondents indicated that they use social networking sites for academic purposes like communicating with their supervisors and lecturers; 8 percent of the respondents used social networking sites for conducting academic related discussions; 9 percent of the respondents used social networking sites to communicate with friends for academic interests.

To support the aforementioned findings on students' usage of social media for educational purposes, a number of researchers have revealed in their findings how student use social media with respect to education. For instance, Yunus et al. (2012) indicated that students gained more vocabulary and improved their writing skills as a result of their participation on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Similarly, Asad, Mamun and Clement (2012) stated the exchange of assignments, resources and discussions on academic work and other issues were done through the use of social networks among students.

Furthermore, Salvation and Adzharuddin (2014) revealed that students are able to formulate group discussions to exchange ideas and communicate to their teachers as well as appeal to their friends about assignments on SNSs. They also indicated that teachers share course related materials with their students and create student groups to collaborate on projects and communicate with their fellow lecturers from other universities through social media

networks, thus facilitating teaching and learning process and the enhancement of academic performance. English and Duncan-Howell (2008) revealed that students used Facebook as a tool to enhance peer support among business education students during their training programme. The study also detected that through social media, students' exchanges were mostly of the affective type facilitating group cohesiveness through encouragement and support.

Khan (2010) examined and investigated the effect of social media websites on students. Specifically, to understand and analyse effects that accompanied using social media on the subjects under the study, students using social media sites were engaged in the study. The study employed a survey method and adopted a questionnaire as well as correlation in the data analysis. This study indicated that a large portion of students use social media networking because of the peer pressure and due to the fact that their friends have been using it. The results indicated that 67.3% of the subjects have been using social networking websites. However, the findings revealed that those students who achieved 3.0 to 3.5 GPA (Grade Point Average), for the most part, utilize person to person communication sites for excitement. The findings revealed from the study seem to indicate a strong indication to the point that usage of social networks has not affected students' academic results.

**Influence of Social Media Usage on Academic Performance**

Maqableh, Rajab, Quteshat, Masa'deh, Khatib, and Karajeh (2015) investigated how and to what degree the use of social network sites affect the students' academic performance. The research used a sampling of 366 undergraduate in the University of Jordan. The study adopted descriptive statistics, T-test and ANOVA to analyse the impact of social network sites

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effect on student's academic performance. The findings of the study showed a significant impact of social network sites on the student's academic performance. Also, there was a significant impact of social network sites use per week on the student's academic performance, whereas no difference was found in the impact of use of social network sites on academic performance due to age, academic achievement, and use per day to most used sites. To throw more light on the results, multiple correlation coefficient $R = 0.839$ showed that there is a positive correlation between the use of social networks websites and academic achievements.

Also, the value of $R^2 = 0.703$ from the result indicated the amount of variations in academic achievements that is accounted for by the fitted model. This implies that 70.3% of the variability of academic achievements was explained by the variable of the use of social networks websites. Also, the higher the use of social networks websites, the higher the applicability of academic achievements itself. In order for the researchers to generalize the results obtained from the respondents to the whole population, adjusted $R^2$ was calculated. From the result, adjusted $R^2$ was 70.2%, indicating a high degree of generalizability of the model. Also, F-ratio for the data was 862.852 which is significant at $p < 0.05$ (sig = 0.000). Therefore, there was a statistically significant impact of the use of social networks websites on academic achievements. Researchers recommended future strategies in enhancing student's awareness in efficient time management and better multitasking that can lead to improving study activities and academic achievements.

Moreover, Al-rahmi, Othman, Yusof, and Musa (2015) conducted a research to examine the relationship between using social media and

improving academic performance. The study used 323 valid responses obtained from research students of University Teknologi Malaysia. The study adopted structural equation modeling to test the relationship between three constructs: social media, collaborative learning, and academic performance. Results showed a significant effect of social media on the students' academic performance with collaborative learning as the mediating variable. This implies that without good collaborative learning, an education institution cannot take advantage of social media for improving academic performance.

Furthermore, Alwagait, Shahzad and Alim (2015) investigated how excessive social media use can raise questions about whether academic performance is affected. The study explored this question by conducting a survey on university students in Saudi Arabia regarding social media usage and their academic performance as well as whether social network is the most popular amongst Saudi students, what students thought about their social media usage and factors besides social media usage which negatively affect academic performance. The study used 108 participant and used descriptive statistics including normality tests, specially scatter plots to examine the relationship between the average number of hours students spent of social media a week and GPA scores of the students. The results demonstrated that there was no linear relationship between social media usage in a week and GPA score. Students highlighted that besides social media use, time management is a factor which affects students 'studies negatively.

In another study, Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) assessed students' use of social media and its effect on academic performance of tertiary institutions students in Ghana with a focus on Koforidua Polytechnic students.

The study employed questionnaire in collecting data from one thousand five hundred and eight respondents. The findings from the study revealed that out of the total respondents of 1508, 1120 representing 74.2% responded in the negative when asked if the use of social media had improved their academic work, 301 representing 19.9% responded in the affirmative, whilst 87 5.7% were not sure.

Also, there was a strong positive relationship between the dependent variable (academic performance) and the independent variable (time spent) at a significant of 0.01 level. This implies that more time spent on social media affects excellent academic performance. Therefore, spending much time on social media contributes to low academic performance. In other words, the more use of social media, the less academic performance students will record. This implies students who use the social media sites frequently turn to perform poorly academically.

Choney (2010) confirmed this finding by looking at the time spent on Facebook and its effect on academic performance. His findings revealed that students who were users of Facebook indicated an average GPA of 3.06, while non-users indicated an average GPA of 3.82. However, surprisingly, the findings revealed that most of the respondents were aware that social media use affects their academic performance. Similarly, MehMood and Taswir's (2013) study indicated that the use of technology such as the internet is one of the factors that can influence students' performance positively or adversely. This is further supported by Choney, (2010) and San Miqual (2009) who underscored that students' use of social media will have negative effect on their academic performance.

In addition, Akubugwo, Ijeoma and Burke (2013) investigated the effect of social media usage on improving scholarly performance. The study utilized both subjective and quantitative strategies for information gathering including questionnaires and interviews. Findings from this study revealed that social media could have contrarily effect on students' social conduct and scholastic advancement. The findings indicated that consistent association with social media can make the understudy turn into a possible social media addict. On the contrary, the findings of Negussie and Ketema (2014) indicated a non-significant relationship between times spent on social networks such as Facebook with students' grade point average (GPA). This was also consistent with a study conducted by Ahmed and Qazi (2011) in Pakistan among six universities. Ahmed and Qazi discovered that there was no much difference between times spent on social media networks and students' academic performance.

In support of the above findings, Junco, Heiberger, and Loken (2011) examined the impact of twitter on university students' engagement and GPA. Using an experimental design, students from a first-year pre-health seminar were assigned to an experimental group (N=70) in which Twitter was used for a variety of academic activities and a control group (N=55). The analysis of engagement and GPA via an ANOVA test showed that students in the experimental group were significantly more engaged and had a higher GPA. Analysis of Twitter postings also reflected high level of engagement on behalf of students and faculty. The authors concluded that social media had no negative impact on students' academic performance if they learned to allocate their time effectively

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**Social Media Usage with respect to Gender**

Kirik et al. (2015) conducted a study to determine the level of social media addiction in young people in Turkey, and to make suggestions on the prevention of the addiction while stating the current work was carried out on the subject in Turkey. Survey type research model was used in the study, and social media addiction was examined in depth to determine causes of the addiction among young people. In the study, the addiction factor of the Social Networking Status Scale was used as a data collection tool to measure social media addiction among young people. The study was conducted on 271 students between the ages of 13-19 years. With respect to gender, the study found that gender (t = 0.406; P > 0.05) made no significant difference in social media addiction and its usage. An independent sample t-test was run to determine if there were differences in the perception of the impact of social media on academic engagement between males and females. The results of the study revealed a non-significant difference t (420) = -.066, p = .947 between gender and the perception of the impact of social media on academic engagement.

Moreover, Putzke, Fischbach, Schoder and Gloor (2014) conducted a study to examine cross-cultural gender differences in the adoption and usage of the social media platform, Last.FM. A large-scale empirical study of 3748 Last.FM users from Australia, Finland, Germany, and the United States of America were engaged in the study. The findings of the study revealed that men listened to more pieces of music on social media platforms than women do. Again, women focus their listening on fewer musical genres and fewer tracks than men do. Also, women maintain more virtual friendships on

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Last.FM than men and finally, women, when choosing to listen to music on social media platforms, are more likely than are men to choose tracks that correspond to mainstream tastes.

In addition, Ly and Hu (2015) investigated gender differences in attitudes toward social media usage in a Chinese context. By using questionnaires, data was collected from students in Shanghai, China. Using descriptive statistics, analysis of the results showed that Chinese women are more likely to follow a famous person by using social media than men. Both men and women most frequently use Wechat and Weibo as a type of social media.

Similarly, Ularo (2014), in a research from Pew research center, showed that 70% of female teenagers use social media and that only 54 out of the 70 are active members and post photos on different social media platforms, as compared with males with 54 people, only 40 out of the 54 are active members. Consistent with this findings, Zheng, Yuan, Chang and Wu (2016) showed that females used to put seductive profile pictures more than males because they believe that the attractiveness of the profile picture influences the number of online followers or friends they have. This study also showed that females gave emphasis to emotional expression while using social media. On the contrary, males enjoy showing that they are having fun while using social media. In another study, Chan, Cheung, Na Shi and Lee (2015) examined the factors associated with user satisfaction in the social network sites (SNSs), and to explore the moderating effects of gender on user satisfaction.

The study employed research model built upon the expectation disconfirmation model (EDM) with a focus on SNSs specific motivations (i.e.,

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relationship maintenance and entertainment). The model was tested empirically with 221 experienced Facebook users using an online survey. The findings revealed that the research model explained 40.5% of the variance in user satisfaction. In addition, the results showed that entertainment plays a more important role in determining user satisfaction with SNSs for male users, while relationship maintenance is more important in determining user satisfaction with SNSs for female users.

Mazman and Usluel (2011) conducted a study to determine individuals' usage purposes of social networks with a focus on the possible differences between females and males. Facebook, which is one the most popular and being most widely used social network, was investigated in this study. The study group consisted of 870 Facebook users who responded to an online survey designed by the researchers. Analyses of the results showed that usage purposes can be categorized under four categories, namely; maintaining existing relationships, making new relationships, using for academic purposes and following specific agenda. Significant differences were found between genders in all of the purposes mentioned. While the difference on making new contacts was in favour of males, the differences on the other three user purposes were in favour of females. That is to say, females use Facebook for'maintaining existing relationships', 'academic usage' and 'following agenda' more than males do while males only use Facebook for 'making new relationships' more than the females. Cohen's 'd' effect size was used to calculate standardized difference between the two means, during the analysis, the effect size between 0.2 to 0.5 were classified as small, between 0.5 to 0.8 as medium and above 0.8 indicated the large effect size. Results of the

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Cohen's d effect size showed that the most significant difference was in making new relationships (d = 0.052) while the least significant difference was in academic usage (d = 0.209).

Studies conducted by Lin and Subrahmanyam (2007) have shown that boys have been online more than girls in previous decades because of earlier forms of technology such as video or computer games. Girls have reported that they use social media for things like chatting and downloading music (Giles & Price, 2008). Because of this, one may hypothesize that girls will be more likely to be attracted to social media networks and other online social groups (Giles & Price, 2008). According to most research done on the topic, the number of teenage girls and boys who communicate on these social media networks are equally divided (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2008).

Research has shown that though girls and boys are both likely to have a social networking sites (SNSs) account, the reasons for the accounts may vary based on gender (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2008). For girls, social networking sites are primarily placed to reinforce pre-existing friendships; for boys, the networks also provide opportunities for flirting and making new friends (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2008). Girls are also more likely than boys to post sexually explicit pictures of themselves, and to talk about sexual activity in public forums (Rafferty, 2009). However, boys are more likely to create an account simply because they are trying to meet a significant other, or because they are already in a relationship with someone who has requested them to join (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2008).

Girls are also more likely than boys to share personal information about their daily lives (Merten & Williams, 2009). Results of a recent study

involving Facebook, MySpace, and Xanga showed that though most teenagers aged 13-17 used these sites for fun and positive reasons, 55 percent of girls shared personal stories about depression, anxiety, and relationship problems (Merten & Williams, 2009). Only 15 percent of boys shared any personal information besides their hobbies, interests, and friendships (Merten & Williams, 2009). This study also showed that adolescents use social networking sites (SNSs) when dealing with a death of a peer, and use forums and member profiles to help their grieving process (Merten & Williams, 2009). In a recent study, it was shown that boys seem to benefit more from social media use and communication technology than girls do (Peter & Valkenburg, 2009). This was hypothesized because boys tend to have more difficulty expressing their thoughts and emotions face-to-face with others than girls do (Peter & Valkenburg, 2009).

**Social Media Usage with respect to Level of Study**

Benetoli, Chen and Aslani (2015) conducted a systematic review aimed to investigate the use of social media in professional pharmacy practice and pharmacy education, and included an evaluation of the research designs utilized. In the study, articles from Medline, Embase, PubMed, IPA, and CINAHL databases were broadly searched for peer-reviewed research studies about pharmacy and social media (SM). The search was restricted to years 2000 to June 2013, with no other restrictions applied. Key words used were within three concept areas: "social media" and "pharmacist or student" and "pharmacy". Findings showed that social media in general and social media network in particular were used mainly for personal reasons. Wikis, Facebook, and Twitter were used as educational tools in pharmacy education with

positive feedback from students, which implies that participants in different stages of educational level used social media based on their own reasons.

Similarly, in a national research study, Perrin (2015) revealed that those who have attended at least some college are more likely than those with a high school diploma or less to use social media, a trend that has been consistent since 2005. The study further showed that in that year, 4% of those with a high school diploma or less used social media, along with 8% of those who attended some college and 12% of college graduates. The study found that adoption rates for social media stand at 76% for those with college or graduate degrees, 70% for those with some college education and 54% for those who have a high school diploma or less.

Sadowski, Pediaditis and Townsend (2017), in a research, explored how higher education students in a regional Australian dual-sector institute use and manage SNSs for personal and study-related activities and their perceptions of how this impacts their educational experiences. The study employed mixed-methods study involving a quantitative and qualitative survey of 355 vocational training and higher education students and in-depth focus groups with ten higher education students. In the study, four key themes were identified through thematic analysis: SNSs as a tool for fostering peer connectedness with fellow students; deliberate and distinct variation between personal and educational use of SNSs; resistance to external SNSs within education settings; and, need for a balance between digital and face-to-face learning and connectedness. This implies that whether using social media for academic or personal purpose, differences in usage were recorded among respondents.

**Social Media Usage with respect to Age**

In a study, Chou, Hunt, Beckjord, Moser and Hesse (2009) identified the socio-demographic and health-related factors associated with current adult social media users in the United States. Data was obtained from the 2007 iteration of the Health Information National Trends Study (HINTS, N = 7674) which was a nationally representative cross-sectional survey on health-related communication trends and practices. Survey respondents who reported having accessed the Internet (N = 5078) were asked whether, over the past year, they had participated in an online support group, written in a blog and visited a social networking site. Bivariate and multivariate logistic regression analyses were conducted to identify predictors of each type of social media use. Multivariate analysis found that younger age was the only significant predictor of blogging and social networking site participation; a statistically significant linear relationship was observed, with younger categories reporting more frequent use.

In furtherance, Kirik et al. (2015) conducted a study to determine the level of social media addiction in young people in Turkey, and to make suggestions on the prevention of the addiction while stating the current work carried out on the subject in Turkey. The study revealed that the factors of age (F= 6.256; P < 0.05), daily time spent on the Internet (F= 44.036; P< 0.05) and daily frequency of visiting social media profiles (F= 53.56; P< 0.05) made significant differences in addiction level and it usage. The results showed that low addiction level in terms of its usage of 14-year group increases with age up to 17 years, and the level decreases in 18-year group.

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Similarly, O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) conducted a study on the impact of social media on children, adolescents, and families in America. The findings of the study revealed that during the last 5 years, the number of pre-adolescents and adolescents using such sites has increased dramatically. According to a recent poll, 22% of teenagers log on to their favourite social media site more than 10 times a day, and more than half of adolescents log on to a social media site more than once a day. Seventy-five percent of teenagers now own cell phones, and 25% use them for social media, 54% use them for texting, and 24% use them for instant messaging.

Teenagers have become accustomed to this lifestyle much more than older generations have in recent years, as this way of living is all they know (Lewis, 2008). Teenagers now use the social media for the majority of their daily activities and information gathering, as opposed to older generations who used resources like the television or newspaper (Lewis, 2008). A recent survey showed that approximately ninety percent of teens in the United States have Internet access, and about seventy-five percent of these teens uses social media more than once per day (Kist, 2008). This study also showed that approximately half of all teens who have Internet access are also members of social networking sites, and use the Internet to make plans and socialize with friends (Kist, 2008). As one researcher stated, "Teens use the social media as an extension of their personality, to show their friends – and the world – who they are, what they care about, and to build connections with other like-minded people" (Goodman, 2007, p. 84).

It is estimated that the vast majority of teenagers in Ghana visit at least one social networking site approximately twenty times each day (Peter &

Valkenburg, 2009). There is often controversy as to whether or not students should be able to freely use social media for communicating with others (Tynes, 2009). Parents in particular are strongly cautioned by the media and school officials about online predators and the influence of certain websites on teenagers (Tynes, 2009). They may use Internet services such as Cyber Nanny to block certain websites and keep records of what their children may be looking at on the Internet (Tynes, 2009). Other parents make house rules about when the Internet may be used or insist that the computer be located in a central area of the house so that they may monitor what is being looked at by their teen (Tynes, 2009).

Social networking sites have also been in the center of concern for many parents because of safety concerns and risks (Tynes, 2009). Other parents just simply do not want their children staring at the computer too long. The risks and dangers of teen internet usage are constantly flooding television shows, newscasts, and magazines, always warning parents to educate parents on teen internet behaviours (Tynes, 2009). Sharing inappropriate information or disclosing "too much information" is another concern that many adults have about teens that participate in social networking online (DeSouza & Dick, 2008).

In a recent study done on teens and their MySpace participation, it was estimated that at least 65% of teens who had a MySpace account had very personal information on their profile pages (DeSouza & Dick, 2008). This personal information included where they live, their phone number and email addresses, where they attend school, where they work, and a number of things that they enjoy doing in their spare time (DeSouza & Dick, 2008). Also, many

teens, especially females, posted information about their sexual behaviour and their alcohol and substance use (DeSouza & Dick, 2008).

On the other side of the issue, there are other adults and many professionals, including teachers and school faculty, who encourage the use of social networking sites like Facebook because they allow students to connect with one another and discuss school related issues (Alexander & Salas, 2008). Students can form online communities in order to plan for a project, have group discussions about class material, or use the SNS as a way to keep in contact when a student has been absent and needs to be updated on current academic information (Alexander & Salas, 2008).

In response to the question of how much time adolescents spend on social network websites, it is significant to note that there are other parents who are in favor of these sites (Bryant, Sanders-Jackson, & Smallwoood, 2006). Some parents are concerned about their children's social lives and are grateful that they may have an outlet for their potential depression and loneliness (Bryant, Sanders-Jackson, & Smallwood, 2006). In a study completed in 2006, almost 35% of parents of adolescents reported that they feel that communication with others, in any form, is better than having no communication at all, and therefore are fully supportive of their child's internet use (Bryant, Sanders-Jackson, & Smallwood, 2006).

In their study, Fotis, Buhalis and Rossides (2012) examined the role and impact of social media on the whole holiday travel planning process: before, during and after the trip, providing insights on usage levels, scope of use, level of influence and trust. Level of use was found to be differentiated by age, $\chi^2$ (15, N = 34.99, $p$ = .01). That is majority (94%) of respondents "below

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25" visit social media websites "several times a day" or "almost every day", whereas among those "55 and over" the same usage level decreases to 72%.

**Chapter Summary**

The literature highlighted the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students. The literature was captured under three (3) categories. These categories include the theoretical review, conceptual review, as well the empirical review. The theoretical review expatiated on three theories that guided the conduct of the study. These theories include the technology adoption model, social learning theory as well as the gratification theory. The tenets of these theories were explained and related to the present study accordingly. Issues such as history of social media, social media and Ghanaian education as well as the concept of academic performance were captured under the conceptual review.

Regarding the empirical review, literature was reviewed based on the objectives of the study. It was evident in the literature that students use social media platforms for a number of purposes. Among of the purposes highlighted in the literature were: students mainly used social media for chatting and downloading pictures/videos. Friendship making as well as academic usage were also identified as some of the uses to which students put social media to. Regarding the influence of social media on students' academic performance, a number of authors found a positive relationship between the use of social networks websites and academic achievements. Similarly, the studies conducted by some authors underscored that students' use of social media had a negative effect on their academic performance.

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## CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH METHODS

The study sought to examine the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students of the Colleges of Education within the Central Region of Ghana. This chapter provides information on the research methodology employed in the conduct of this study. The chapter, specifically, presents the step-by-step procedure used in gathering valid and reliable information as well as how the data is analysed with the aim of achieving the overall objective of the study. The chapter is organised into the following sections: research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, data processing and analysis, and chapter summary.

**Research Design**

Every research necessitates a research design which is carefully designed to meet the exact demands of the study (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000). Research design is a researcher's overall plan for obtaining answers to the research questions or for testing the research hypotheses (Amedahe & Asamoah-Gyimah, 2015). The research design provides the basic structure of the study. There exist a number of research designs, but the choice of a particular research design depends on the research questions the study sought to answer. This study adopts the descriptive survey design because the study sought to examine the influence of social media on the academic performance of students of the Colleges of Education within the Central Region of Ghana without any manipulation. Descriptive design mainly observes, describes, and documents aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs (Amedahe & Asamoah-

Gyimah, 2015). This study was cross-sectional in nature. The descriptive cross-sectional design was appropriate for this because this study sought to collect data from people of different age groups at one point in time, summarise their responses to provide answers to the research questions and the hypotheses.

This design was chosen because it has the advantage of measuring current practices. The design allowed for students' current social media usage to be assessed. It also provides information in a short amount of time, such as the time required for administering the survey and collecting the information. Again, this design is suitable because this study intends to generalise from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about the influence of social media on the academic performance of students in the entire population. It must, however, be noted that this design is not a fact finding per se; it serves as a starting point for hypotheses generation or theory development. Also, descriptive design is time-bound in the sense that data is collected at a particular point and for that findings are more likely to vary with respect to time. There is a likelihood that findings of this study may change due to situational change and other factors (Creswell, 2012).

**The Study Area**

According to records produced by the Institute of Education University of Cape Coast (UCC), the Central Region has three Colleges of Education, namely; Komenda College of Education with a student population of 750, OLA College of Education with a student population of 758 and Assin Fosu College of Education also having a student population of 800. These Colleges of Education have three categories of students, that is those in the first year,

those in the second year and finally those in the third year. It is important to put on records that the third-year students often operate the in/out programmes. Thus, students in the third-year do not often get the opportunity to reside on campus, due to inadequate accommodation facilities.

**Population**

Population is the target group about which a researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions. The research population for this study was drawn from Colleges of Education in Ghana. The colleges used for the study were the three Colleges of Education within the Central Region of Ghana, namely; OLA College of Education, Komenda College of Education and Assin Fosu College of Education. The Central Region Colleges of Education were chosen for the study because they were relatively large and fairly populated.

The target population for the study was made up of all second- and third-year students within the Colleges of Education in the Central Region of Ghana. The first-year students were excluded from the population because such students they did not have records on academic performance as at the time of data collection. According to the records produced by the Institute of Education University of Cape Coast (UCC), Komenda College of Education had a population of 750 students, OLA College of Education had a population of 758 students and Assin Fosu College of Education had a population of 800 students. These figures constitute the population of only second and third year students in the various Colleges of Education. The total population for this study was 2,308. Table 1 presents the population distribution of the respondents.

**Table 1: Population Distribution of Student**

| College | Population |
|---|---|
| Komenda College of Education | 750 |
| OLA College of Education | 758 |
| Assin Fosu College of Education | 800 |
| **Total** | **2,308** |

Source: Field survey (2020)

**Sampling Procedure**

Sample is a sub-group that has the same characteristics as the population from which it was selected (Creswell, 2014). A sample size of 331 was used for the study. This sample size was chosen based on the assertion of Krejchie and Morgan (1970). According to Krejchie and Morgan's table of sample determination, a minimum sample of 331 should be selected for a population of 2400 respondents. To get the individual respondents, a multi-stage sampling was used to sample the 331 College of Education students. First, a proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to determine the number of students to be sampled from each college. The colleges here served as the strata. Therefore, the strata were three in number: Komenda College of Education, OLA College of Education and Assin Fosu College of Education. In each college, the numbers of students to be selected were determined by gender. To roll-in the respondents, a simple random technique was then used to select respondents who were willing and ready to participate in the study. For example, in determining the proportion of students to select from Komenda College of Education, the following formula was used:

$$\frac{\text{number of customers in Komenda}}{\text{total population of students}} \times 331 = \frac{758}{2304} \times 331 = 111.$$

The rest of the samples were calculated and the respective samples were determined. Table 2 provides details of the sampled students.

**Table 2***: **Proportions of Students Sampled within Colleges, and Gender**

| COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | GENDER | | TOTAL |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Male | Female | (Colleges) |
| Komenda | 68 | 43 | 111 |
| OLA | - | 103 | 103 |
| Assin Fosu | 81 | 36 | 117 |
| Sub-total | 149 | 182 | 331 |

Source: Field survey (2020)

**Data Collection Instruments**

Data was collected from two sources: secondary and primary. The primary source has to do with collecting information directly from participants, whereas the secondary source involves data collection from other sources other than the participants themselves (Creswell, 2014). The secondary data in this study was students' Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) which was used as a measure of academic performance. This data was retrieved from the school administration.

A questionnaire on students' usage of social media (See Appendix A) was the main instrument used in gathering primary data for the study. Questionnaire were used because the study was a survey and considering the number of respondents involved, questionnaires were appropriate instruments to use. However, the use of the questionnaires restricted respondents from expressing their views unlike in interviews (Creswell, 2012; Newman, 2007). The questionnaire was in three (3) sections. Section 'A' solicited information

on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section 'A' consisted of 6-items. The Section 'B' aspect of the instrument was adapted. Section B consisted of 19-items. These items solicited information on social media usage. The aspect of the instrument was adapted from social networking usage questionnaire (SNUQ) designed by Savita and Liyaqat (2018). The SNUQ was put into five categories regarding social media usage. The categories included academic usage of social media, using network sites for the purpose of socialisation, entertainment usage of social media, using social media for the purpose of gathering information relating to headline news, as well as the constraints students experience while using social networking site.

A confirmatory factor analysis was applied to the five factors extracted in the exploratory factor analysis. The indices of the model were (CMIN/DF=2.193, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) =.887, Goodness Fit Index (GFI) =.926, AGFI=.904, Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA) =.053, and Chi-square = 320.240 (p >0.01). The final CFA model was reduced to four factors: academic usage of social media, using network sites for the purpose of socialisation, entertainment usage of social media as well as using social media for the purpose of gathering information relating to headline news.

The Cronbach's alpha was used to compute the reliability of the SNUQ. A reliability of .830 was realised from the 19 items on the social networking usage questionnaire. Equally, Overbeek, Scholte, de-Kemp and Engels (2007) reported a validity co-efficient of .894. The reliability and validity estimates characterised by the SNUQ indicates that the questionnaire is one that, to some extent, can be relied on to collect valid data in order to

make sound and appropriate interpretations. The last section, Section 'C', as aspect of the instrument was made up of 20-items. These items solicited information on the extent of social media usage.

Since the instrument was developed in an environment different from where the current study is conducted, there was the need to pilot test questionnaire. This was done in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings of this study. A pilot testing was done using 50 students in Holy Child College of Education. Respondents of Holy Child College of Education were not going to participate in the main study. These respondents, however, had characteristics that are similar to the respondents who would participate in the main study, hence their consideration. The errors identified in the instrument after the pilot study was corrected with the help of my supervisors, lecturers, head teachers, and peers.

**Data Collection Procedure**

An introductory letter was taken from the School of Educational Development and Outreach (University of Cape Coast) to the principals of the selected colleges, which were used for the study before the day of the actual data collection to confirm the researcher's identity as a student of the said institution. Upon being given approval, data collection started. On the pre-arranged date, the purpose of the study was explained to the students, after which the questionnaires were distributed to them.

Regarding the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher with the support of three trained research assistants went to the three Colleges to locate students at their respective lecture halls and study centres. The students were briefed about the purpose and modalities of the study and assured of

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confidentiality after which their consent was sought orally. They were then given the questionnaires to respond to. Each respondent was given 15 minutes to respond to the instrument. The questionnaires were retrieved immediately. The questionnaires were also sorted to ensure that only valid and complete questionnaires were used for the analysis. This increased the return rate of the questionnaires administered. A period of one month was used to collect the data. A return rate of 81% was achieved.

In order to have access to students' (CGPA), the participants were entreated to write their index numbers on the questionnaires, to enable retrieval of their results from the Institute of Education (IoE), UCC, for the study. Permission was sought from the Director of the Institute of Education, UCC, with an introductory letter from the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) (UCC) (See Appendix B) to seek official permission to collect the required data, which in this case was the students' Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) which assisted in the conduct of the study.

**Ethical considerations**

All ethical issues underlying the conduct of research were duly adhered to. For instance, with ethical clearance, I personally applied to the Educational Development and Outreach, University of Cape Coast. Also, with respect to voluntary participation, all respondents were willingly allowed to participate in the data collection exercise. Also, the possible issues of right to privacy were realised by allowing respondents to answer the questionnaires on their own. The issue of anonymity was also attended to by restricting respondents from providing their names and contact numbers on the questionnaire.

Respondents were therefore assured that, none of their identities would be leaked to the public domain nor used for any purpose in the study. Finally, the study ensured confidentiality of information by assuring respondents that all information provided would be kept confidential. They were further assured that, none of their information would be used against them nor found in the public domain. In view of these, all major ethical issues/considerations were adhered to as far as the conduct of this study was concerned

**Data Processing and Analysis**

The data collected was coded and entered using the Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) software version 22.0. The data was screened and cleaned for errors and mis-keyed items. The data was analysed quantitatively using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. Data on Research Questions 1 was analysed using mean and standard deviation. Research question 2 was analysed using Pearson Moment Correlation Co-efficient. Research question 3 was analysed using independent samples t-test. All statistical analyses were done using 95% confidence interval.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter described the research methods used to conduct the study. It comprised research design, study area, population, sampling procedures, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, and data processing and analysis. The descriptive survey design was used to conduct the study in the Central Region using College of Education students. Through a multi-stage sampling technique, the questionnaires were administered to 331 students. Out of the 331 questionnaires, 267 of the questionnaires were completely responded to and returned. This led to a response rate of 81%.

Hence all the analysis were based on the 267 respondents. Means and standard deviations, Pearson correlation as well as one sample t-test were used to analyse the data to answer the research questions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students within Colleges of Education in the Central Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to find out what College of Education students use social media for, examine the relationship between the extent of social media usage and students' academic performance as well as investigate whether gender differences exist in College of Education students' extent of social media usage. Using a multistage sampling procedure, 331 Level 200 and Level 300 College of Education students were engaged in the study. Out of the 331 questionnaires administered, 267 of them were completely responded to and returned. This led to a response rate of 81%. Hence, all the analysis in this chapter was based on 267 respondents. This chapter presents a description of the sample characteristics, followed by the analysis of the main data and then the discussion of the result.

**Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

This section presents results on the demographic characteristics of respondents. The demographic characteristics of the respondents included gender, level of study, type of college, age-range as well as programme of study of the respondents. Details of the demographic information are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3***: Demographic Distribution of Respondents (n=267)*

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 139 | 52.1 |
| Female | 128 | 47.9 |
| Level of study | | |
| Level 200 | 159 | 59.6 |
| Level 300 | 108 | 40.4 |
| College | | |
| Komenda College of Education | 98 | 36.7 |
| OLA College of Education | 72 | 27.0 |
| Assin-Fosu College of Education | 97 | 36.3 |
| Age-range | | |
| Below 18 years | 8 | 3.0 |
| 19-24 years | 152 | 56.9 |
| 25-30 years | 104 | 39.0 |
| 35-40 years | 3 | 1.1 |
| Programme of study | | |
| General | 17 | 6.4 |
| Early Childhood Development | 83 | 31.1 |
| English and Ghanaian languages | 25 | 9.4 |
| R.M.E and Social Studies | 14 | 5.2 |
| Mathematics and Science | 56 | 21.0 |
| Mathematics and ICT | 37 | 13.9 |
| Mathematics and Technical Skills | 19 | 7.1 |
| Visual Arts and ICT | 8 | 3.0 |
| Home Economics | 6 | 2.2 |
| Agricultural Science | 2 | .75 |

N = 267, Source: Field survey (2020)

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As shown in Table 3, there were more male respondents (N = 139, 52.1%) than female respondents (N = 128, 47.9%). There were also more students in level 200 (N = 159, 59.6%) than students in level 300 (N = 108, 40.4%). The results in Table 3 indicate that most of the respondents, 98 (36.7%), were from Komenda College of Education, 97 (36.3%) were from Assin-Fosu College of Education while 72 (27%) were from Ola College of Education. Majority of the respondents (N = 152, 56.9%) were between the ages of 19-24 years. Thirty-nine percent (N = 104) of the respondents were between the ages of 25-30 years, 8 (3.0%) of the respondents were below 18 years of age while 3 (1.1%) of the respondents were between the ages of 35-40 years of age.

The results in Table 3 further revealed that majority of the respondents, 83 (31.1%), pursued Early Childhood development as a programme of study, 56 (21%) of the respondents pursued Mathematics and Science, 37 (13.9%) of the respondents pursued Mathematics and ICT, 25 (9.4%) of the respondents pursued English and Ghanaian Languages, 19 (7.1%) of the respondents pursued Mathematics and Technical skills. Regarding the programme of study, the least programme that was pursued was Agriculture Science. Thus, only 2 (.75%) of the respondents pursued Agriculture Science as a programme.

**Preliminary Analyses**

This part presents descriptive statistics on social media usage, extent of social media usage and academic achievement. These were further followed up with assumptions for the inferential statistics. Details of the descriptive statistics are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4***: Descriptive Statistics on Social Media Usage, Extent of Social*

*Media Usage and Academic Achievement*

| Variable | Score range | M | SD | Mdn | 5% Trim. M. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social Media Usage | | | | | |
| Academics | 6 – 24 | 16.10 | 3.39 | 16.00 | 16.20 |
| Socialisation | 6 – 24 | 16.55 | 3.29 | 16.00 | 16.67 |
| Entertainment | 4 – 16 | 11.94 | 2.80 | 12.00 | 12.06 |
| News headlines | 3 – 09 | 8.96 | 2.31 | 9.00 | 9.08 |
| Extent of SM Usage | 0 – 80 | 26.15 | 12.96 | 26.12 | 25.72 |
| Academic Achievement (CGPA) | < 1 – 4.0 | 3.02 | .49 | 3.00 | 3.03 |

N = 267

Source: Field survey (2020); 5% Trim. M. – 5% Trimmed Mean; Mdn –

Median; SM – Social Media.

Generally, the results in Table 4 indicate that respondents had high
usage of social media sites regarding the four purposes to which respondents
put social media use to. The topmost usage of social media among respondents
were as follows: using social media sites for socialisation purposes ($M$ =
16.55, $SD$ = 3.29), using social media for academic purposes ($M$ = 16.10, $SD$ =
3.39), using social sites for entertainment purposes ($M$ = 11.94, $SD$ = 2.80), as
well as using social media sites to reading news headlines ($M$ = 8.96, $SD$ =
2.31). From this, it can be said that respondents used social media sites for a
number of purposes, ranging from academic usage to reading of headline
news. In terms of the frequency/extent of social media usage, respondents

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used social media sites less frequently ($M = 26.15$, $SD = 12.96$). With respect to academic achievement, as measured by the CGPA, respondents' scores were good. This could be described to be in the second-class upper division ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .49$).

Results in Table 4 were further used to determine the normality of the data. As evident in Table 4, the mean, median, and 5% trimmed mean for all the variables were approximately the same. This implies that the data was normally distributed for all the variables. The normality was further confirmed using the normal Q-Q plots as shown in Appendix C. This suggested that parametric tests could be performed.

**Research Question 1**

**What do Colleges of Education (CoE) students use social media for?**

This research question sought to find out what CoE students use social media for. In analysing such information, 19-items were used; these items were divided into four dimensions, which were academic usage of social media, using social media for socialization purposes, entertainment use of social media and using social media to read headline news.

The items were measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale (Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Agree-3, and Strongly Agree-4) and composite scores were computed. Data for this research question was analysed using means and standard deviations. A mid-point of 2.5 was used as the baseline for comparison such that mean values above 2.5 indicated that most of the respondents were in agreement with the statement whereas a mean value less than 2.5 showed that most of the respondents were in disagreement with the

statement. The mean of means were also computed for all the dimensions. The

details of the results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5***: Students' Usage of Social Media*

| Statements | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| **Academic Usage** | | |
| I use social networking sites to do research work | 3.10 | .90 |
| I use social media to understand what I have been taught in class | 2.61 | .87 |
| I solely rely on information gotten from social media to do my assignments without consulting other sources | 2.07 | .85 |
| I use social media sites for collaborative learning | 2.66 | .98 |
| Group discussions on social media yield good results as far as my academics are concerned. | 2.69 | .86 |
| Engaging in academic forums on social media increases my understanding of topics discussed in class | 2.97 | .88 |
| **Overall Mean** | 2.68 | .89 |
| **Socialisation Usage** | | |
| I use social networking sites to become more sociable | 2.78 | .85 |
| I use social networking sites to create social identity | 2.54 | .92 |
| I prefer using social networking sites to attend social gatherings | 2.44 | 1.0 |
| I use social networking sites for strengthening interpersonal relationships | 2.74 | .89 |
| I use social networking sites to keep in touch with my relatives | 2.87 | .97 |
| I use social networking sites to get information regarding current social events | 3.18 | .94 |
| **Overall Mean** | 2.76 | .93 |
| **Entertainment Usage** | | |
| I use social networking sites for sharing pictures | 3.08 | .93 |
| I use social networking sites to look for funny sharing | 2.96 | .89 |
| I use social networking sites for watching movies | 2.97 | 1.02 |
| I use social networking sites to get relief from academic stress | 2.93 | 1.02 |
| **Overall Mean** | 2.98 | .97 |
| **Reading Headline News** | | |
| I use social networking sites for reading news | 3.19 | .85 |
| I use social networking sites to share new ideas | 2.95 | .94 |
| I use social networking sites for getting job related information | 2.82 | .99 |
| **Overall Mean** | 2.98 | .93 |

Source:  Field survey (2020), Standard Deviation = SD

The use to which students put social media was sought. As shown in Table 5, it was found that respondents generally used social media for academic purposes (M = 2.68, SD =.89). Reporting on the specifics of academic usage of social media, respondents agreed to the following statements: "I use social networking sites to do research work" (M =3.10, SD =.90), "engaging in academic forums on social media increases my understanding of topics discussed in class" (M = 2.97, SD =.88), "group discussions on social media yield good results as far as my academics are concerned" (M = 2.69, SD =.86), "I use social media sites for collaborative learning" (M = 2.66, SD =.98), "I use social media to understand what I have been taught in class" (M = 2.61, SD = .87). The respondents, however, disagreed to the fact that they solely relied on information gotten from social media to do their assignments without consulting other sources (M=2.07, SD=.85).

Regarding the socialisation usage of social media, respondents generally reported that they used social media sites for the purpose of socialisation (M=2.76, SD=.93). Specifically, most of the respondents reported that "they used social networking sites to get information regarding current social events" (M=3.18, SD=.94). The respondents also agreed to the fact that "they use social networking sites to keep in touch with their relatives" (M = 2.87, SD =.97). The respondents further reported that social networking sites was used for strengthening interpersonal relationships (M= 2.74, SD =.89). When respondents were, however, asked whether they prefer using social networking sites to attend social gatherings, most of the respondents were not in agreement to this statement relationships (M= 2.44, SD =.1.0).

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As shown in Table 5, all the students agreed to all the statements regarding entertainment usage of social media. Generally, the respondents agreed to the fact that they used social media for entertainment purposes (M= 2.98, SD=.97). Specifically, the topmost entertainment usage of social media were as follows: using social networking sites for sharing pictures (M= 3.08, SD=.93), using social networking sites for watching movies (M= 2.97, SD= 1.02), using social networking sites to look for funny sharing (M= 2.96, SD= .89), as well as using social networking sites to get relief from academic stress (M= 2.93, SD= 1.02).

The results in Table 5 further indicate that respondents generally used social media for the purpose of reading headline news (M= 2.98, SD= .93). Reporting on the specifics, most of the respondents reported that "they used social networking sites to read news" (M= 3.19, SD= .85). The respondents also supported the idea that "they used social networking sites to share new ideas" (M= 2.95, SD= .94). Using social networking sites to get job related information (M= 2.82, SD= .99) also received substantial response.

The findings of this present study provides enough evidence to support the fact that CoE students within the Central Region use social media sites for a number of purposes. These purposes can be categorised under four (4) main headings: academic usage of social media, using social media sites for the purpose of socialisation, entertainment usage of social media as well as using social media for the purpose of reading headline news. The findings of this study suggest that majority of CoE students within the Central Region are active users of social media sites since a number of the students used social media sites for one purpose or the other.

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The findings of this study was in harmony with the findings of Mehmood and Taswir (2013) who found that social networking sites were mostly used by students for entertainment and educational purposes. Mehmood and Taswir reported that student use social media for downloading music/videos, posting photos and chatting which was categorized as entertainment use. Also, few of the respondents indicated using social media for educational activities like publishing articles, participating in quizzes/poll, communicating with teachers.

The finding of this study was also consistent with the findings of Mingle and Adams (2015) who conducted a study to identify the usage of social media network sites among students. Mingle and Adams (2015) found that students used social media sites for entertainment purposes; students also used social media sites to discuss school matters with friends. Respondents also reported that they used social media sites to chat and make new friends. While the results from the present study confirmed that of Mingle and Adams, their study adopted a mixed method approach where both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered from the respondents. Although the present study adopted a quantitative enquiry, it is possible for the two studies to have similar results regarding what students use social media sites for, since students all over the globe have similar characteristics.

The findings of this study also corroborates with the findings of Helou and Rahim (2014) who conducted a study to find out Malaysian university students' use of social networking sites. Helou and Rahim (2014) found out that respondents used social networking sites for academic purposes like communicating with their supervisors and lecturers; respondents also used

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social networking sites for conducting academic related discussions. To support the findings of Helou and Rahim (2014), Yunus et al. (2012) indicated that students gained more vocabulary and improved writing skills as a result of their participation on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. Similarly, Asad, Mamun and Clement (2012) stated that the exchange of assignments, resources and discussions on academic work and other issues were done through the use of social networks among students.

**Research Question 2**

**What relationship exist between the extent of social media usage and students' academic performance within the Colleges of Education?**

The intent of this research question was to examine the relationship between the extent of social media usage and students' academic performance within the CoE in Central Region of Ghana. To analyse this research question, Pearson correlation coefficient was conducted to find out the relationship between social media usage and academic performance. The two variables, extent of social media usage and academic performance, were both measured on continuous basis. The academic performance of the respondents were measured using the CGPA of the respondents. The results of Pearson correlation coefficient are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6***: Relationship between Extent of Social Media Usage and*

       **Academic Performance**

|  | Extent of social media usage | CGPA |
|---|---|---|
| Extent of social media usage | 1 | -.201 |
| Sig. | - | .001* |
| CGPA | -.201 | 1 |
| Sig. | .001* | - |

*significant at .05 level; Source: Field survey (2020)

The results in Table 6 clearly show a linear relationship between extent of social media usage and students' academic performance. The study revealed a negatively weak correlation between extent of social media usage and students' academic performance (r = - .20); the correlation was, however, significant (p = .001). This implies that as the extent of social media usage increases, students' academic performance decreases. Similarly, as the extent of social media usage decreases, students' academic performance increases. That is to say there is an inverse relationship between the two variables: "extent of social media usage" and "academic performance." Thus, the relationship between both variable moves in the opposite direction. The results of this study suggest that students who frequently spend so much time on social media are less likely to perform academically. In the same vein, students who spend less time on social media are more likely to perform academically.

The findings of this study are in agreement with the findings of Maqableh, Rajab, Quteshat, Masa'deh, Khatib, and Karajeh (2015) who conducted a study to find out how and to what degree the use of social network sites affects the students' academic performance. The findings of the authors' study revealed a significant impact of social network sites on students' academic performance. Also, there was a significant impact of social network sites use per week on students' academic performance. To throw more light on the results, Maqableh et al. indicated that a multiple correlation coefficient R = 0.839 showed a positive correlation between the use of social networks websites and academic achievements.

While the results from the present study confirmed that of Maqableh et al. (2015), their study was conducted among undergraduate students in the University of Jordan. There is a difference regarding the level of education and the context in which the two studies were conducted. Again, although the current study reported a linear relationship between extent of social media usage and students' academic performance, this relationship was negatively weak as compared to that of Maqableh et al. (2015).

The findings of this study are, however, at variance with a number of studies (Junco, Heiberger, & Loken 2011; Negussie & Ketema 2014; Alwagait, Shahzad & Alim 2015). Junco et al. (2011) conducted a study to examine the impact of twitter on university students' engagement and GPA. The authors concluded that social media had no negative impact on students' academic performance if they learned to allocate their time effectively. Similarly, Negussie and Ketema (2014) found a non-significant relationship between times spent on social networks such as Facebook and students' grade point average (GPA). This was also consistent with a study conducted by Ahmed and Qazi (2011) in Pakistan among six universities. Ahmed and Qazi discovered that there was no much difference between times spent on social media networks and students' academic performance.

The findings of this study are also inconsistent with the findings of Alwagait, Shahzad and Alim (2015), who conducted a survey on university students in Saudi Arabia regarding social media usage and their academic performance. The results of Shahzad and Alim demonstrated that there was no linear relationship between social media usage in a week and GPA score.

**Research Question 3**

**What gender differences exist in Colleges of Education students' extent of social media usage?**

This research question sought to examine whether a statistically significant gender differences exist in students' extent of social media usage. An independent sample t-test analysis was conducted to answer this research question. The dependent variable was the composite score for the respondents' extent of social media usage. Prior to the analysis, assumptions underlying the use of independent t-test were checked. Results from the normal Q-Q plot revealed that the data did not violate the normality assumption (Figure 1).
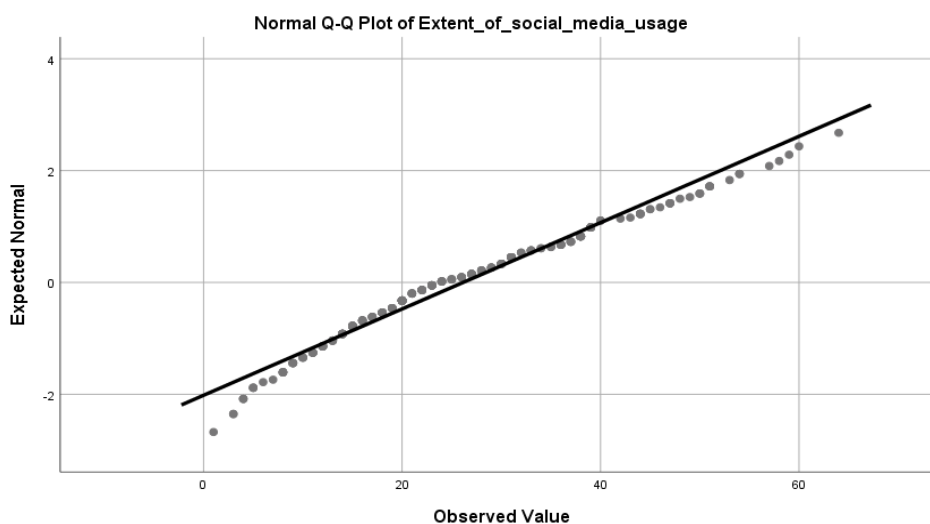


*Figure 1*: The normal Q-Q plot

The result was supported by further analysis which showed that the mean ($\overline{x}$=26.15) is approximately the same as the media (Md=26.12). The normality of the data was also confirmed by the histogram which showed that majority of the data score lied between ±2 standard deviation (see Appendix C). This gives a "green light' for a parametric test tool to be used for the analysis. Hence, the independent t-test was used.

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The equal variance assumption was also tested to find out whether the variances between the groups are the same. Results from the Levene's test for equality of variances revealed that the equality of variance assumption was not violated. Table 7 further presented the actual analysis testing the difference between the two groups with regards to the dependent variable.

**Table 7***: **Gender Differences in Students' Extent of Social Media Usage**

| Gender | N | Mean | SD | df | t-value | p-value |
|--------|-----|-------|-------|-----|---------|---------|
| Male | 139 | 23.87 | 10.49 | | | |
| Female | 128 | 28.64 | 14.80 | 265 | -.306 | .002* |

*significant at .05 level; source:  field survey (2020)

Results from the analysis (as shown in Table 7) reveal a statistically significant difference between male and female students' extent of social media usage, t (265) =-.306, p=.002. This implies that male and female CoE students differ regarding their extent of social media usage. That is to say the results in Table 8 reveal that the extent of social media usage among female students (M = 28.64, SD = 14.80) was higher than the extent of social media usage among male students (M = 23.87, SD = 10.49).

In order to find out the practical significance, the effect size was also computed to find out the magnitude of the difference. Cohen's *d* was used for the computation. A value of .377 was obtained for the effect size. Based on the criteria given by Cohen (1998) which states that values of .20 or less is small, values greater than .20 or less than .80 are medium and values of .80 and above are large effect size, the magnitude of the difference regarding the extent of social media usage between male and female is moderate.

The findings of this study provide enough evidence to support the fact that there was a significant difference in the extent of social media usage among male and female students. The results revealed that the extent of social media usage amongst female students was higher compared to that of male students. This suggests that male and female students within the CoE have approximately different level of social media usage. The results suggest that gender has an influence on the extent of social media usage among Colleges of Education students within the Central Region.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of Ularo (2014) who found that 70% of female teenagers use social media and that only 54 out of the 70 are active members and post photos on different social media platforms, as compared with males with 54 people were only 40 out of the 54 are active members. The findings of this study are also consistent with the findings of Zheng, Yuan, Chang and Wu (2016) who found that females used to put seductive profile pictures more than males because they believe that the attractiveness of the profile picture influences the number of online followers or friends they have. The study of Zheng et al. also showed that females gave emphasis to emotional expression while using social media. On the contrary, males enjoy showing that they are having fun while using social media.

The findings of this study are also in agreement with the findings of Mazman and Usluel (2011) who found significant differences in male and female extent of social media usage on the basis of maintaining existing relationships, making new relationships, using it for academic purposes and following specific agenda. While the difference on making new contacts was in favour of males, the differences on the other three user purposes were in

favour of females. That is to say females use Facebook for 'maintaining existing relationships', 'academic usage' and 'following agenda' more than males do; males, on the other hand, only use Facebook for 'making new relationships' more than the females. Although, Mazman and Usluel sampled Facebook users on an online survey, the results were found similar. This suggests that CoE students' extent of social media usage both in this present study and that of Mazman et al. (2011) was influenced by gender.

The findings of this present study also support the findings of Putzke, Fischbach, Schoder and Gloor (2014), who found that men listened to more pieces of music on social media platforms than women do. Putzke et al. were interested in examining the cross-cultural gender differences in the adoption and usage of the social media platform. Although Putzke et al. (2014) found a significant gender difference on the usage of social media platform, the significant difference in their study was higher for men than women. Comparing their findings to this current study, this study found a significant difference regarding the extent of social media usage; the difference was, however, higher for women as compared to men. Thus, women were more likely than men to use social media sites to a high extent.

The findings of this study, however, disagreed with the findings of Kirik et al. (2015), who found that gender made no significant difference in social media addiction and its usage among students between the ages of 13-19 years.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives a summary of the study, the conclusions drawn, suggestions and recommendations for further studies based on the findings.

**Summary**

**Overview of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students of the Colleges of Education within the Central Region of Ghana. In more specific terms, the study sought to: (a) find out what CoE students use social media for, (b) examine the relationship between extent of social media usage and students' academic performance, (c) investigate whether gender differences exist in CoE students' extent so social media usage. These objectives were transformed into three (3) research questions which guided the conduct of the study.

The study employed descriptive survey design (cross-sectional) with a quantitative approach in the conduct of the study. The study targeted Colleges of Education students within the Central Region who were in levels 200 and 300. A questionnaire on students' usage of social media was used in the conduct of the study. Through a multi-stage sampling technique, the questionnaire was administered to 331 students. Out of the 331 questionnaires, 267 of the questionnaires were completely responded to and returned. This led to a response rate of 81%. Hence all the analysis were based on the 267 respondents. Means and standard deviations, Pearson correlation coefficient as well as one sample t-test were used to analyse the data to answer the research questions.

**Key Findings**

The following were the findings of the study:

1. CoE students use social media sites for a number of purposes. Among some of these purposes include academic usage of social media, using social media sites for the purpose of socialisation, entertainment usage of social media as well as using social media for the purpose of reading headline news.

2. The study revealed a negatively weak correlation between extent of social media usage and students' academic performance (r = - .20); the correlation was, however, significant (p = .001). This implies that as the extent of social media usage increases, students' academic performance decreases.

3. The study revealed a significant difference in the extent of social media usage among male and female students. The results revealed that the extent of social media usage amongst female students was higher compared to that of male students.

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that CoE students within the Central Region are active users of social media sites. Thus, the topmost usage of social media sites by CoE students are as follows: entertainment usage of social media, using social media site for reading headline news, using social media sites for the purpose of socialisation as well as academic usage of social media sites. This suggests that students use social media for one purpose or the other. It can further be concluded that students who frequently spend so much time on social media sites are more likely to be

addicted to these social media sites, which could in turn affect their academic performance negatively. That is to say students who spend less time on social media sites are more likely to perform better academically than students who consistently spend so much time on social media sites. It can further be concluded that gender plays a significant role in students' extent of social media usage. Thus, female students spend more time on social media sites compared to their counterpart male students. This could be attributed to the fact that girls are more likely than boys to share personal information about their daily lives on social media.

**Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were made to guide the development of policy and practice:

1. It is recommended that counsellors and tutors in the Colleges of Education should guide and educate students on the dangers of being addicted to social media usage, since too much time spent on social media sites could affect students' academic performance. Such stakeholders should counsel students on the judicious use of social media sites.

2. Students of the Colleges of Education in Ghana are encouraged to convert most of their time spent on the entertainment usage of social media to academic usage of social media.

3. Counsellors, tutors and parents are entreated to encourage their female students on the effective ways of decreasing the high usage of social

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media sites. This they can do by advising female students to minimise the daily personal information they often share on social media sites.

4. Parents and guardians are encouraged to serve as watch-dogs to their children on the usage of the social networking sites; since abusive usage of such sites could have a detrimental effect on students' academic performance.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

The following are the suggestion for further studies:

1. Further research ought to include qualitative studies that would either compliment and/or challenge the findings and interpretations of this study. Since the researcher has the opportunity to do further probing on the responses given by participants in a qualitative study, there is the need for further studies to be conducted using the qualitative approach.

2. The current study focused on only one region; other studies can be carried out on a broader perspective by looking at two or more regions. This will facilitate easy comparison regarding the relationship between social media usage and students' academic performance.

3. This study could also be replicated in other regions and other higher tertiary institutions (like the universities) other than the Central Region.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of social media use on the academic performance. Your participation is essential to the success of this study. Information provided is solely for academic purposes. The information provided will be treated as a group, and for that matter, you will not be associated with any of the responses. Responses provided would be kept anonymous and confidential. Participation is voluntary and thus, you have the right to withdraw any time without any given response(s).

**SECTION A**

Kindly provide the right response by checking [√] in the blank spaces provided

1. Gender:        a. Male        [    ]              b. Female    [    ]

2. Level of study: a. Level 200 [    ]              b. Level 300 [    ]

3. College:        a. Komenda College of Education        [    ]

                   b. Ola  College of Education            [    ]

                   c. Assin-Fosu College of Education      [    ]

4. Age-range:

   Below 18 years [      ],  19- 24 years     [      ],  Above 40 years [      ],

   23-30 years     [      ],  35-40 years     [      ]

5. Programme of study: …………………………………………..

6. Kindly provide information regarding your index number. **Please do not write your name on the questionnaire**. Index Number: ……………………………………………

## SECTION B

Please read the following statements carefully and tick [√] the option that best applies to you using the following options: **SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree.**

| S/N | Statement | Options | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | SD | D | A | SA |
| 1. | I use social networking sites to do research work | | | | |
| 2. | I use social media to understand what I have been taught in class | | | | |
| 3. | I solely rely on information gotten from social media to do my assignments without consulting other sources | | | | |
| 4. | I use social media sites for collaborative learning | | | | |
| 5. | Group discussions on social media yield good results as far as my academics are concerned. | | | | |
| 6. | Engaging in academic forums on social media increases my understanding of topics discussed in class | | | | |
| 7. | I use social networking sites to become more sociable | | | | |
| 8. | I use social networking sites to create social identity | | | | |

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| 9. | I prefer using social networking sites to attend social gatherings | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. | I use social networking sites for strengthening interpersonal relationships | | | | |
| 11. | I use social networking sites to keep in touch with my relatives | | | | |
| 12. | I use social networking sites to get information regarding current social events | | | | |
| 13. | I use social networking sites for sharing pictures | | | | |
| 14 | I use social networking sites to look for funny sharing | | | | |
| 15. | I use social networking sites for watching movies | | | | |
| 16. | I use social networking sites to get relief from academic stress | | | | |
| 17. | I use social networking sites for reading news | | | | |
| 18 | I use social networking sites to share new ideas | | | | |
| 19. | I use social networking sites for getting job related information | | | | |

## SECTION C

Please indicate by ticking [√] inside the appropriate column the extent to which each of the question applies to you.

| S/N | Question / item | 1-2hrs | 3-4hrs | 5-6hrs | 7-8hrs | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | How many hours a day do you spend on your facebook page? | | | | | |
| 2. | How often do you visit your whatsapp page within a day? | | | | | |
| 3. | How many hours a day do you spend on your whatsapp page? | | | | | |
| 4. | How often do you visit your facebook page within a day? | | | | | |
| 5. | How many hours do you spend on your whatsapp page within a week? | | | | | |
| 6. | How frequently do you visit your facebook page within a week? | | | | | |
| 7 | How many hours do you spend on your facebook | | | | | |

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| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | page within a week? | | | | | |
| 8. | How frequently do you visit your whatsapp page within a week? | | | | | |
| 9. | How many hours a day do you spend on your instagram page? | | | | | |
| 10. | How often do you visit your instagram page within a day? | | | | | |
| 11. | How many hours do you spend on your instagram page within a week? | | | | | |
| 12. | How often do you visit your instagram page within a week? | | | | | |
| 13. | How many hours a day do you spend on your snapchat page? | | | | | |
| 14. | How often do you visit your snapchat page within a day? | | | | | |
| 15. | How many hours do you spend on your snapchat page within a week? | | | | | |

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| 16. | How often do you visit your snapchat page within a week? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. | How many hours do you spend on you-tube page within a week? | | | | | |
| 18. | How frequently do you visit you-tube page within a week? | | | | | |
| 19. | How many hours do you spend on you-tube with a day? | | | | | |
| 20. | How frequently do you visit you-tube page within a day? | | | | | |
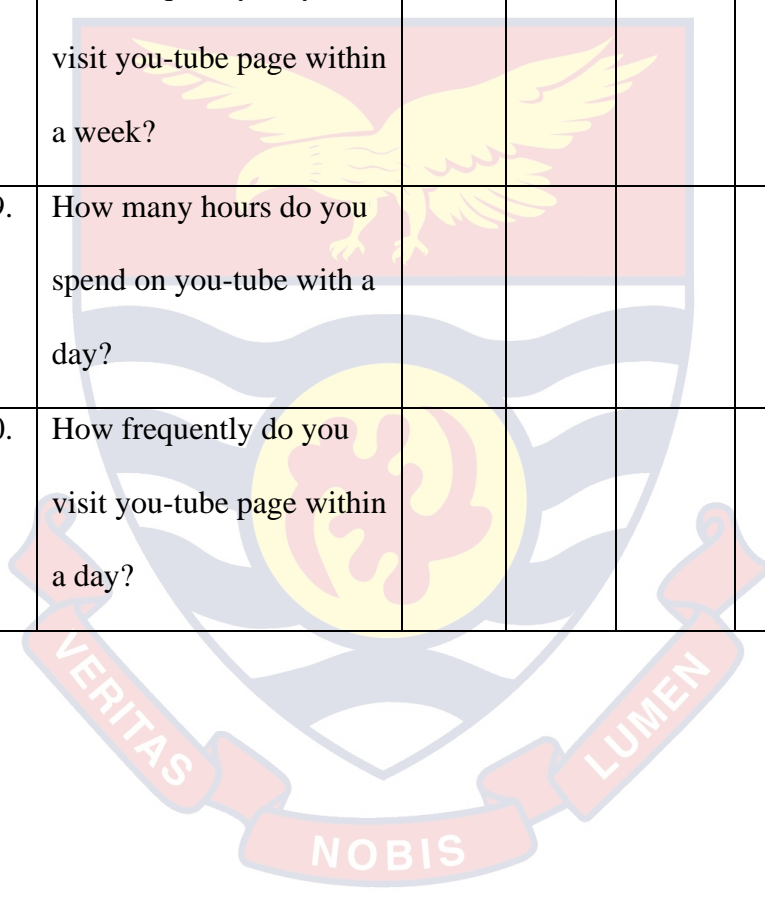
# APPENDIX B

# LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES**
**SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & OUTREACH**
**INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION**

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Our Ref: IEPA/104/Vol.3/314

5th November, 2019

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.....................................
.....................................
.....................................
.....................................

Dear Sir,

**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

The bearer of this letter **Mr. Vincent Roberts** is an M.Phil. Student of the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast. He requires some data/information from you/your outfit for the purpose of writing his thesis tiled, **"Investigating the Influence of Social Media with Academic Performance of Student in the College of Education "** as a requirement for M.Phil. Degree programme.

Kindly give the necessary assistance that **Mr. Roberts** requires to enable him gather the information he needs.

While anticipating your co-operation, we thank you for any help that you may be able to give him.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Jeanette Darkwaa Boham
PRINCIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
**For: DIRECTOR**

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## APPENDIX C

## TEST OF NORMALITY



Normal Q-Q Plot of Academic_usage



Normal Q-Q Plot of Socialisation_Usage

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### Normal Q-Q Plot of Entertainment_Usage



### Normal Q-Q Plot of News_Headlines



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Normal Q-Q Plot of CGPA



Histogram

Mean = 26.15
Std. Dev. = 12.96
N = 267