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## INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON THE INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON THE INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KWARA STATE,  
NIGERIA**

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## **Abstract**

Today, information has been seen as heavily stressed factor that shapes the society, particularly the introduction of social media technology. This study therefore examined the influence of social media usage on the information behaviour of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. Five (5) research objectives were formulated for this study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprised of undergraduate students in Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State University and University of Ilorin. Israel (2003) sample size model was used to calculate the sample size with precision levels of 5% and confidence level of 95% and the recommended sample size was three hundred and eighty-five (385). A simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample from the population. The self-designed questionnaire was divided into five sections. Content-related approach of validation was conducted to ensure validity of the instrument while Cronbach alpha was used to test the reliability of the instrument and the overall reliability coefficient of the instrument is  $r = 0.679$ . The collated copies of the questionnaire were analysed with the IBM SPSS version 21.0. The presentations of the data for the research objectives were done using frequency counts and percentage table. The findings of the study shows Facebook as the most preferred social media tools by undergraduate students. The findings further revealed that there is a high usage of social media among undergraduate students. The findings also showed that the major purposes of using social media by undergraduate students are to connect with friends and for academic activities. However, the findings generally show that there is a significant relationship between purpose of using social media and information behaviour of undergraduate students. Since the benefits attached to using social media cannot be overemphasized, among numerous recommendations based on the findings, the study therefore recommended that, university management should ensure that they integrate social media applications into their learning and teaching system.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Study

Social media is often lauded as a potentially transformative information resource. Information is the power house of the present emerging technological driven society. Today, information has been seen as heavily stressed factor that shapes the society. Information is a life blood of present society; it is accepted as a key issue in today's viable world (Prabhavathi, 2011). Over the last several years, information increased significantly in a large variety of formats. This information overload gave the foundation to the idea of studying the information searching or seeking behaviour of users or human information behaviour (Fasola&Olabode, 2013).

Information that is publicly available can be shared to enable people to perform various tasks in their private and official capacities (Davies, Rafique, Vincent, Fairclough, Packer, Vincent &Haq, 2012). The need to make choices among several information sources leads to variations in people's information behaviour. In judiciously making effective use of information, the society has exhibited a kind of behaviour known as information behaviour. Information behaviour has been drastically transformed by the arrival of the internet and, in recent years, of social media. Just as it is known, new technologies helps facilitate and provide flexibility in communicating and sharing of resources.

The 21st Century has been characterized with unprecedented increase in the technological advancement around the world. Among these are advances in Internet facilities, establishment of libraries, development of information technology, improvements in communications multimedia and sophistication. Adeniyi (2004) established that everybody needs information to reach his or her potential and that the more information that is available to a

system about itself and about its environment the more reliable it becomes and the greater its chances of survival.

On other hands, social media has become pervasive, playing a dominant role in the social structure of the society and changing the nature of social relationships (Al-Sharqi, Hashim&Kutbi, 2015). It has revolutionized the way we communicate, interact and socialize. This new approach to consuming and creating information is in particular attractive to youths as a platform and space for activities not possible in the face-to-face context (Leea, Chena, Lia & Lin, 2015). Social media plays a vital role in the sharing of information and is used to convey different types of information (i.e. sensitive, sensational, political and casual information) (Osatuyi, 2013).

Although the history of social media is not really new, but it has only recently become part of our mainstream cultural activities both in the social and business world, people have been using digital media for networking, socializing and information gathering almost exactly like now for over 30 years (Boyd &Ellion, 2008). Defining social media, in ClickZ, social media started as a concept many years ago but has evolved into sophisticated technology. The concept of social media can be dated back to the use of the analog telephone for social interaction. Facebook started as a local social network made for the students of Harvard. It was developed by a sophomore, Mark Zuckerberg. Facebook was actually made by hacking Harvard's data base containing identification images of students. The initial idea was actually to compare the faces of students with images of animals, for entertainment purposes. However, due to the potentially damaging contents of the site, the creators decided to put it down before it caught the attention of school authorities. The application was shut down, but the idea of creating an online community of students came to existence. The platform was then improved and sooner than they expected,

Facebook was released in campuses other than Harvard. Thereafter, high schools were already starting to get attracted to the idea of having online communities, thus opening the website to the younger population. In 2006, facebook.com ultimately offered the opportunity to the rest of the world. As 2007 approached, the registrants reached an overwhelming digit- roughly a million dozen .Facebook has grown to become the biggest and most popular social networking site today with a population of above 500 million active users (Facebook statistics, 2012).

Social media has increasingly influenced the information behavior of students in higher education over the past decade. Social media is a broad concept covering a wide range of the Internet applications that support social communication between individuals (whether direct or indirect, synchronous or asynchronous), with an emphasis on interaction between users (i.e. conversation or dialogue), user-generated content, and building of online relationships and communities (Turban, King & Lang, 2011). Social media is centered on enhancing the progress of communication in the society i.e. sharing of ideas, thoughts, and opinions among people.

Among the vast variety of online tools which are available for communication, social networking sites (SNS) have become the most modern and attractive tools for connecting people throughout the world (Aghazamani, 2010). It is also about allowing people to connect with others just as it has been for many years. According to Khoo (2010), social media applications have influenced all areas of our lives and are having a major impact on how we live, work, play, learn and socialize. Social media in its various manifestations present a golden opportunity and rich environment to study information behaviour, as much of the information (in text, image and video format) are recorded and stored in publicly accessible repositories and on personal devices (Khoo, 2010).

Basically, social media is a collection of interactive web-based applications integrated on Web 2.0 technology that enable active interactions between web multiple users to create and share information (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; O'Reilly, 2007). Although social media and Web 2.0 are distinct concepts they have been used interchangeably in the literature. However, Web 2.0 represents a newer platform foundation of the web which consists of a set of technologies such as Adobe Flash, Really Simple Syndication or RSS to enable richer content to be published on the web (O'Reilly, 2007). By contrast, the foundation of social media is based on user generated content (UGC), that is, various forms of media content created by internet users and available on the web based on Web 2.0 technology (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media applications include blogs and micro blogs (logger & twitter), wikis (Wikipedia), social networking (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn), multimedia sharing services (YouTube), content syndication (e.g. RSS feeds), podcasting and content tagging services (Anderson, 2007; Hansen, Shneiderman, & Smith, 2010).

Social media technologies are enjoying a phenomenal success, for example, Facebook, a social networking website, claims that its active users reached 1.8 billion worldwide, more than 50% of which log in every day (Facebook, 2017). In the same vein, Twitter, a micro-blogging website hosts 317 million users who post on average 500 million tweets per day (Twitter 2017); More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube each month, watching more than 6 billion hours of video (YouTube 2017), and at the same time it is estimated that there are over 181 million blogs worldwide (Nielsen 2012). Among the users of social media are students who use social media tools for many purposes such as access to information, group discussion, resource sharing and entertainment (Wang, Chen & Liang, 2011). This has generated speculation on their use and related positive and negative implications, in both the short and long terms.

The expediency of accessing remote information through social media has resulted in tremendous popularity for web, which has given a new dimension to the library and information centers. In light of this, the job role and concept of library and librarians is dramatically changing with the application of information and communication technologies (Quadri, 2012). The Internet has successfully entered all the areas and to a great extent is affecting the library and information centers. A wide range of public domain and commercial information sources are currently available on the internet such as bibliographical/full text databases, table of contents of journals, discussion forums, technical reports, preprints, biographies, directories, data archives, teaching and training material, library catalogues, software etc (Vijayakumar, 2015). Furthermore, Internet use has become a way of life for the majority of higher education students all around the world (Vijayakumar, 2015). Social media support all kinds of social interactions, mediated and captured by Internet applications including mobile applications (Khoo, 2015). The online communities that evolve exhibit social and collaborative information behaviour that can be studied.

In this modern society, information behaviour is a day-to-day activity that is essential to people in of all vocations and skilled occupations across various disciplines and professional groups (Yemisi, 2014). The proliferation of online social media has undoubtedly affected how students nowadays learn. Twenty first century learners, often considered critically engaged learners, are the technologically savvy students in today's classrooms (Moore et al., 2008). They also tend to be plugged into social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube and many more throughout the course of their everyday activities (Rhoades, Friedel, & Irani, 2008).



The term information behaviour is the currently preferred term used to describe ways in which human beings interact with information, in particular, the ways in which people seek and utilize information (Bates, 2010). In other words, information behaviour covers a wide range of user behaviour in relation to information and information systems, including information need generation, information creation, seeking, encountering, sharing, giving, assessment, management and use. These are studied in the context of different kinds of tasks in work, every day and play environments. All these aspects of information behaviour can be studied in the context of social media use.

George (2012) claimed that some of the challenges associated with use of social media stem from the risks inherent in student internet usage. Romero-Frías and Montano (2010) further argued that it exposes students to inappropriate material, un-wanted adult interactions and bullying from peers. Similar remarks were made by Romero-Frías and Montano (2010) that Web 2.0 is also a source of concern regarding issues such as, privacy, authorship and ownership rights, digital divide in the classroom or time management issues. Additionally, Thomas (2009) stated that information overload is another challenge, whereas Keen (2007), lamented quality of content as a major concern.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

There is no doubt that social media has gained wider acceptability and usability and is also becoming probably the most important communication tools among students especially at the higher level of educational pursuit. However, it has been observed that the rate at which students use social media is critically affecting their information behaviour either positively or negatively (Christopher, 2010). Additionally, several studies have been carried out by some researchers like Lenhart and Madden (2007); Boyd (2009); Madge, Meek, Wellens and Hooley

(2009); Christopher (2010); Virkuss (2010); Wang, Chen and Liang (2011); Kumar (2012); Ndaku (2013); Kumar and Kumar (2013); Eke, Omekwu and Odoh (2014) on the use of social media among undergraduate students. It is therefore evident that these studies were conducted on social media usage but focuses of those studies were mainly on adoption, utilization and challenges in using social media. However, there is more to explore in terms of influence of social media on information seeking behavior of university undergraduate students, particularly among undergraduate students in Kwara state. In line with this proposition, this study seeks to investigate the influence of social media on the information behaviour of undergraduate students in Kwara State.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to investigate the influence of social media on the information behaviour of undergraduate students in Kwara State. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. identify social media tools preferred by undergraduate students;
- ii. determine the extents of social media usage by undergraduate students;
- iii. examine the purpose of social media usage among undergraduate students;
- iv. study the information behaviour of undergraduate students on social media;
- v. investigate the influence of social media usage on information behaviour of undergraduate students.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- i. What are the social media tools preferred by undergraduate students?
- ii. What are the extents of social media usage by undergraduate students?

- iii. For what purpose do undergraduate students make use of social media?
- iv. What are the information behaviour of undergraduate students on social media?
- v. How does social media usage influence information behaviour of undergraduate students?

### **1.5 Research Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the purpose of using social media and information behaviour of undergraduate students.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of social media usage on the information behaviour of undergraduate students in Kwara State. Specifically, the scope of this study is limited to undergraduate students in three universities in Kwara state. These universities are Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State University and University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The variables of interest for this study are restricted to social media utilization and information behaviour.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

According to Ikoja-Odongo (2000), the importance of a study can be measured by the contributions that it makes to the people under investigation and the society as a whole. It is anticipated that this study will be useful in understanding the influence of social media usage information behaviour of undergraduate students in the surveyed universities.

It is hoped that the results of this study will assist the management of the university and library, to take note of the social media usage pattern of undergraduate students and how they can capitalize on it to achieve the institutional objectives.

Findings from this study will help tertiary schools administrators to understand the information behaviour of students and the use of social media; knowing this will help them in their policy making.

Also, findings from this study will add to the existing body of knowledge in social media utilization and information behaviour. Hence, it is expected that study will provide a rich source of empirical data for other studies that are related to social media and information behaviour.

### **1.7 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Information Behaviour:** Information behaviour encompasses information seeking as well as the totality of other unintentional or passive behaviours as well as purposive behaviours that do not involve seeking, such as actively avoiding information.

**Social Media:** Social media is generally defined as “forms of electronic communication as web sites for social networking and microblogging through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content such as pictures, videos etc.

**Social Media Tools:** These are technological products that allow ones to be able to use social media. Examples are: internet, smart-phones, modem, etc.

## **LITERATUREREVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews relevant literature to the study. Akinwumiju (2000) describes the review of related literature as involving the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem. The literature review also helps to avoid unproductive approaches, achieve methodological insights, find recommendations for further research and look for how to support grounded theory (Omopupa, 2016). Therefore, the literature review for this study will be focused on the following:

- 2.2 History of Social Media
- 2.3 Concept of Social Media
  - 2.3.1 Categories of Social Media
  - 2.3.2 Classification of Social Media
  - 2.3.3 Characteristics of Social Media
- 2.4 Academic use of Social Media
- 2.5 Extent of Social Media Usage by Undergraduate Students
- 2.6 Social Media Application Preferred by Students
- 2.7 Purpose of Using Social Media by Students
- 2.8 Overview of Information
- 2.9 Overview of Information Behaviour
- 2.10 Type of Information Behaviour on Social Media
- 2.11 Information Behaviour of Students on Social Media
- 2.12 Theoretical Framework
  - 2.12.1 Diffusion of Innovation Theory
  - 2.12.2 Uses and Gratification Theory
- 2.13 Conceptual Framework

## 2.14 Appraisal of Literature Review

## 2.2 History of Social Media

To understand social media we need to explore its history. The Internet started out as a massive Bulletin Board System (BBS) that allowed users to exchange software, data, messages, and news with each other (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In 1979, Duke University graduate students Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis teamed up with the idea of networked communication over computers for exchange of information. This idea was executed in 1980 (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) and “Usenet” was launched worldwide, which was the first genuine attempt at social networking. Various discussion groups were held covering a wide variety of topics from humanities, sciences, business, politics, computers, and other areas. The discussion forums on these websites were called “newsgroups” (Goldsborough, 2005).

By 1992, Internet became one of the most popular networking tools, which linked researchers and educators. Marc Andreessen headed a team at NSF centers which successfully developed a browser to develop NCA Mosaic or popularly known as Mosaic. In less than 18 months of its introduction, Mosaic became the browser of choice for almost over a million users. This set off an exponential growth in the area of decentralizing information and connecting people and led to the development of Microsoft’s Internet Explorer (Andreessen, 1993).

Founded in October 1998 by Bruce Ableson and Susan Ableson, “Open Diary” was the next attempt at social networking. This website brought together people from various fields who wrote diaries or blogs, as we now call them, on a common platform to share their views and perspectives on various topics (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). As the Internet matured and became more widely available in the late 1990’s, there was an explosion of Social Media websites.

In 1999, social media websites like Blogger and Faceparty appeared, and post-2000, Wikipedia, Picasa, Friendster, Flickr and other sites were created. The number of active monthly users each of these social media sites generates is given below. The social networking site Facebook is currently one of the leaders in social media, with video sharing site YouTube a close second. Growth of social networking, a revolution in social networking came with the advent of newer social networking websites, based on Web 2.0. In 2002, Friendster used the concept of degrees of separation. It promoted the idea of social networking by creating rich bonds among people who knew each other directly or via certain friends and provided a common platform for them for social interaction. With the success of Friendster, many other social networking sites followed. LinkedIn, launched in 2003, created a professional platform for work-based interaction. It is more than a mere playground for teenagers and classmates. LinkedIn is a serious platform for working people who want to connect with other professionals and to expand their contact networks. As of January 2014, LinkedIn reported 300 million registered users on its website (<https://www.linkedin.com/about-us>). MySpace, which was also launched in 2003, has almost 10 times fewer (36 million as on October 2013) monthly active users than LinkedIn.

However, Facebook, launched in 2004 for Harvard students and opened to the general public in 2006, is currently the most frequented social networking website. As of September 2014, Facebook claims 1.35 billion active users (<https://newsroom.fb.com/company-info/>). To put this number in perspective, if Facebook was a country it would be the second most populous nation, second only to China.

### **2.3 Concept of Social Media**

Over the years, many scholars have been able to distinctively define and clarify the concept of social media. In their definition and clarification, the concept of social media has been used interchangeably with social networking site. Likewise, in this section, the word will be used interchangeably. In defining social media, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) gave a general definition of social media in consideration of Web 2.0 and User-Generated Content. According to them social media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allows the creation and exchange of User Generated Content. They also went further to describe social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Nwanton, Odoemalumn, Orji-Egwu, Nwankwo and Nweze (2013) defines social media as those internet-based tools and services that allow users to engage with each other, generate contents, distribute and search for information online.

Parr (2010) defines social media as the use of electronic and Internet tools for the purpose of sharing and discussing information and experiences with other human beings in more efficient ways. On the other hands, Jantsch (2008) considers social media as the use of technology combined with social interaction to create or co-create value. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary (2017), social media is a form of electronic communication (as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos) while Dykeman (2008) acknowledged social media as “the means for any person to: publish digital, creative content; provide and obtain real-time feedback via online discussions, commentary and evaluations; and incorporate changes or corrections to the original content” (Dykeman, 2008).



Bryer and Zavatarro (2011) described social media as technologies that smooth the progress of social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies now include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms, and virtual worlds. Social Media Online (2011) defines social media as primarily internet-and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information by users. The term, according to Andreas and Michael (2010), refers to “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.”

Drury (2008) describes social media as online resources that people use to share content: video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humor, opinion, gossip, news. Safko and Brake (2009) further defined social media as “activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Kietzmann, Silverstre, McCarthy and Leylan (2012) describes social media as the platform that employs mobile and web based technology to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and community share, co-create, discuss and modifies user generated content. Social media, as defined by Bryer and Zavatarro (2011) are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies now include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms, and virtual worlds. Social Media Online (2011) defines social media as primarily internet-and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information by users.

The term social media, according to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) refers to “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (p. 61). Web 2.0 was

coined by Darcy DiNucci in 1999 to describe interactive social websites which allow users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue. Davis, Canche, Deil-Amen and Rios-Aguilar (2012) refer to social media technology (SMT) as web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage, and share new user-generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communication. Through this platform, individuals and organizations create profiles, share and exchange information on various activities and interests. An interesting aspect of social media is that, it is not limited to desktop or laptop computers but could be accessed through mobile applications and smart phones making it very accessible and easy to use. Examples of these social media platforms both on the web and mobile application include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Whatsapp, Instagram, blogs etc.

According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), “social networking sites are web-based service platform that enable individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and navigate their list of contacts and those made by others within the system” (p. 21). These sites are used to interact with friends, peers and others that are found in groups on these sites. The sharing of information ranges from news, debates, gossips, feelings or statement of mind, opinions, research etc. Curtis (2011) affirms that social media appear in many forms including blogs and microblogs, forums and message boards, social networks, wikis, virtual worlds, social bookmarking and video sharing.

According to Junco (2012), social media are collections of internet websites, services, and practices that support collaboration, community building, participation, and sharing. Nwangwa and Omotere (2014) simply regards social media as comprising online applications for

social networking sites, social bookmarking and sharing tools, social citation tools, blogging and microblogging tools, virtual worlds, e-conference presentation sharing tools, audio and video tools, e-project management tools, and research and writing collaboration tools; primarily developed to foster user-centered social interaction.

Social media can be seen as either web based or application based media of communication that allows registered individual to share ideas, thoughts, opinions, interact and collaborate with other registered users all over the world. The inclusion of application based media of communication is largely due to the ability to make use of social media on mobile gadgets such as Smartphones, Tablets, i-Phones, symbian and Java phones

The scope of social networking sites as information sources have been discussed by different scholars e.g., (Dugan et al., 2008; Skeels&Grudin, 2009; Steinfield, DiMicco, Ellison, & Lampe, 2009; Morris et al., 2010). They noted that:

- i. Only humans can provide certain types of information such as opinions, advice and recommendations.
- ii. The information sources are personally known to the user to a greater or lesser extent, and are therefore trusted sources and have cognitive authority.
- iii. Users can provide localized (geographically specific) information, and current or time-sensitive information.
- iv. Information provided by users are customized for the requestor.
- v. Social contacts can perform intermediary functions of researching, synthesis and packaging of information.
- vi. Users are able to broadcast a question to a known group of people • Users can obtain emotional and social support.

It includes web-based and mobile based technologies that are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue among individuals, organizations, and communities. Typical examples of social media platforms include websites such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube and the interactive options on these websites, such as the “re-tweeting” option on Twitter. These instruments are referred to as media because they are tools which can also be used for the storage and dissemination of information. However, unlike the traditional media like Television and Radio, most of the social media tools allow their users to interact as “re-tweeting” on Twitter and “comment” options on Facebook illustrate.

Looking at social media from a more practical point of view, Sweetser and Lariscy (2008) define social media as a “read-write Web, where the online audience moves beyond passive viewing of Web content to actually contributing to the content”. One thing that is common in the definitions of social media reviewed in this work is the view that it is based on user-generated participation. The opportunity to enjoy user-to-user interaction distinguishes social media from the traditional media which is characterized by top-down news dissemination arrangement (Clark & Aufderheide, 2009). Another attribute of the social media which distinguishes it from the traditional media is the choice it accords its users. Choice enables people to access the information they like to learn about through the social media, eliminating the gatekeeper role of traditional media. On one hand, the choice offered by social media reduces the shared experience that viewers of particular traditional media channels usually have; on the other hand, it creates a network of individuals with like interests and similar preferences.

Two primary tools that have enabled people to socialize and connect with each other online are social networking sites and electronic messaging. More than half of America’s teens and young adults send electronic messages and use social networking sites, and more than one-

third of all internet users engage in these activities (Jones & Fox, 2009). In Nigeria, internet users are estimated, as at October 2014, at 67,101,452 with 16% growth rate when compared with the 2013 figure, and is 2.30% of the country's share of the world internet users (Internet Live Stats, 2014). Nigeria is also the third most active African country on twitter (Mejabi&Fagbule, 2014). Most people who use social media tools access them mainly through computers and mobile devices such as phones and Tablet PCs.

Analysts suggest that majority of phone purchases in the coming years will be more for using online networks rather than making phone calls (Baekdal, 2008). Politicians in Nigeria are joining the online community to communicate with their audiences because they believe they are a key demographic who shape and influence perception. Thus, phone communication is now tending toward one-to-many sharing rather than the usual one-to-one conversation. Nevertheless, there is no comprehensive knowledge of their activities as well as how this form of media can impact on citizen's mobilization and participation in Nigeria electoral process.

### **2.3.1 Categories of Social Media**

There are already thousands of social media applications and new ones are emerging. Social media is constantly evolving and its uses are changing and expanding (Cohen, 2011). In addition, "social media is different things to different people" (Ham, 2011). All these factors make it difficult to categorize social media applications. Considering that social media come in diverse forms, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) tried to classify social media into six distinct categories:

- i. Collaborative projects (for example Wikipedia)
- ii. Blogs and Microblogs (for example Twitter)
- iii. Content communities (for example YouTube)

- iv. Social networking sites (for example Facebook)
- v. Virtual game worlds (for example World of Warcraft)
- vi. Virtual social worlds (for example Second Life)

Out of these six categories of social media tools, three categories (blogs and micro blogs, content communities, collaborative projects and social networking sites) are the most relevant application of social media used among higher institutions. On other hand Mangold and Faulds (2009) described social media more broadly. According to them, social media can encompass every software program or website with which a person shares ideas, thoughts, pictures, audio, music, video and other content. They have subcategorized social media into fifteen different categories, which includes the following (Mangold & Faulds, 2009):

1. Social Networking Sites (e.g. MySpace, Facebook, Faceparty)
2. Creative works sharing sites:
  - i. Video sharing sites (YouTube)
  - ii. Photo sharing sites (Flickr)
  - iii. Music sharing sites (Jamendo)
  - iv. Content sharing combined with assistance (Piczo)
  - v. General intellectual property sharing sites (Creative Commons)
3. User-sponsored blogs (Cnet.com)
4. Company sponsored websites/blogs (Apple Weblog)
5. Company-sponsored cause/help sites (click2quit.com)
6. Invitation-only social networks (ASmallWorld.net)
7. Business networking sites (LinkedIn)
8. Collaborative websites (Wikipedia)

9. Virtual Worlds (Second Life)
10. Commerce Communities (eBay, Amazon, Craigslist, iStockphoto)
11. Podcasts
12. News delivery sites (Current TV)
13. Educational material sharing (MIT Open Course Ware, TED)
14. Open Source Software communities (Linux, Mozilla)
15. Social bookmarking sites allowing users to recommend online news stories, music, videos etc.

### **2.3.2 Classification of Social Media**

Just as much as multiplicity in social media definitions, there are also diverse classes of applications and platforms that symbolize social media. Therefore, it is necessary to summarize some general types of social media in order to set boundaries between what belongs to social media and what is not. According to Mayfield (2008), there are basically seven kinds of social media, including social networks, blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, content communities and microblogging. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) propose a similar classification of social media which includes collaborative projects, blogs and microblogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, virtual social worlds. In this study, the classification by Mayfield will be considered as the criterion in evaluating whether a platform belongs to social media or not.

#### **2.3.2.1 Social Network Sites (SNSs)**

Social network sites or social network services allow people to establish personal webpages and then connect with friends for the purpose of sharing information and communication (Mayfield, 2008). Just like the majority of social media applications and

platforms, the bonds made on social network sites are primarily based on user's social networks in real life and users are encouraged to provide real personal information. In that sense, social networks sites along with other social media tools merely provide platforms for real world friends to communicate in the virtual world. Nevertheless, social network sites nowadays are far more than just platforms rather it has gradually been integrated into people's daily life.

The original version of social network sites dated back to 1995 where community such as classmates.com tried to help people find back their old friends and school mates by having people's email addresses linked to each other. It was not until early 2000s, with the development of user profile functions, social network sites entered the second stage and the new generation of social network sites emerged and became popular soon (Taprial&Kanwar, 2012). The best examples are Friendster in 2002 and MySpace in 2003. The real fever of social media sites started with the birth of Facebook founded by Mark Zuckerberg and his colleagues in 2004. By the end of December 2013, it had 1.23 billion active users monthly worldwide. Almost all the basic functions of social network sites can be found in Facebook and it keeps delighting people with new features and innovation (e.g. timeline, maps).

### **2.3.2.2 Blogs**

The term 'blog' appeared as both noun and verb in 1999 which is shortened form of 'Web log' (Andrew, 2009). Blogs are online journals and it is most often arranged in the chronological order containing text, data, images and other media objects recorded and retrievable through a web browser. There are number of features that distinguish blogs from portal website and other general websites. Blogs tend to write in a personal tone and



conversational style. There is usually a topic before bloggers start to write. Blogs are flexible and extensive in the way that bloggers can create links and make references from other sources which enable both readers and bloggers track back while they are reading blogs. Blogs also allow comments and subscription which promote online interaction and form of community groups. Bloggers and wikis are the most two popular blog platforms.

### **2.3.2.3 Wikis**

Wikis are websites that allows people to add, modify or delete contents in collaboration with others (Mayfield, 2008). Usually a wiki is supported by a database that keeps track of all changes, allowing users to compare changes and also revert to previous version. All previous contributions are stored permanently and all actions are visible and reversible in wikis (Andrew, 2009). Different from the traditional printed encyclopaedias, the open-access authoring environments of wiki causes the content to be divergent without a standard style or format. This means wikis require rigorous version control afforded by the system (Emigh& Herring, 2005). The most popular wiki is Wikipedia, an online encyclopaedia that was started in 2001. It has now more than 4.5 million articles in English alone as well as articles in other nine languages (Mayfield, 2008).

### **2.3.2.4 Podcasts**

The definition of podcast by Merriam-Webster dictionary is a program (as of music or talk) made available in digital format for automatic download (Merriam-Webster.com, 2017). Audio and video files are published on the internet that allows users to subscribe to. The feature of subscription truly represents the sociability and community characteristics of social media. People have long been able to upload video and audio files on the internet, but with the

subscription feature, each individual is doing their own marketing by notifying subscribers as soon as they have updates.

This enables everyone to build their own audiences and communities which is the basic formation of social media. Apple's iTunes is the most widely used podcast platform around the world. The podcast can be either listened to on the computer or downloaded onto mobile devices with iTunes application.

#### **2.3.2.5 Forums**

The internet forum is also known as community bulletin board or message board. The formation of forum starts with a group of people who share the same interests or would like to discuss a specific topic. Forum can be considered as the longest form of online social media. Not surprisingly, forum has a strong sense of community with one or several administrators serve the role as moderators that regulate improper posts on the forums. The discussion on the forum is called thread in which different forums members participate for the purpose of online debate, enquiring advice or seeking help, etc. The threads do not necessarily started by the administrator and unlike blogs which is owned and managed by the bloggers, threads are started by any members in the forums who want to discuss and share something with others (Mayfield, 2008).

#### **2.3.2.6 Content Communities**

Content communities can be regarded as a combination of social network sites and podcasts. It shares some common features from these two social media forms. However, content community has a particular focus on sharing a certain type of content such as photo, video, music and bookmarks (Mayfield, 2008). Examples of popular content communities are Flickr,

Instagram (both focusing on sharing photography), YouTube (world's largest video sharing service), delicio.us (bookmarks)

### **2.3.2.7 Microblogs**

Literally, microblogs are supposed to be mini versions of blogs. However, microblog is more than just a blog. It combines the basic elements of blogs with the functions of instant messaging and social networking from other social media platforms. Twitter is no doubt the dominant player in the mirco-blog field with over 200 million active users. Tweets are the messages send by users through various platforms including twitter websites, mobile device applications and SMS. Messages are limited to 140 characters which is the most obvious feature of 'micro' blog. Different users treat twitter for different purpose but the fundamental aim is to simply keep in touch with own networks and share thoughts or start conversation even though nowadays following celebrities have become a trend.

### **2.3.3 Characteristics of Social Media**

With the mature of Web 2.0 technology, social media has reached almost everyone around the world as long as you have electronic devices connected to Internet. It has already been integrated into part of our daily life. Nevertheless, when people are discussing the widely-circulated term social media, very few have truly understood the essence of social media. Understanding the characteristics of social media is not only important for individuals but also crucial for students.

Even though thousands of articles and blog posts have been discussing social media from different aspects, there is quite little theoretical literature which systematically describes the properties of social media. To my delight, several articles still give great description of social media characteristics. Mayfield (2008) pointed out five fundamental characteristics that shared

by almost all social media platforms: participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. Taprial and Kanwar (2012) identify five properties that are more powerful and distinguish the social media from the traditional media. They are accessibility, speed, interactivity, longevity and reach.

Based on the literature on social media, nine characteristics of social media can be summarized as follow:

#### **2.3.3.1 Community**

Community in social media share same features with other online and virtual communities, which are formed based on people who share the same interests or background. However, there are differences in which the network formed in social media is often an extension of the network in the real world and trust in social media network is usually higher than other communities.

#### **2.3.3.2 Connectedness**

Social connectedness is defined as interpersonal, community, and general social ties (Teixeira, 1992). From Mayfield's point of view, connectedness is closer to integration in the sense that sites, resources, and people are connected through links and shared by users on various social media platforms.

#### **2.3.3.3 Openness**

Almost all the social media platforms are free to join and anyone can use social media as medium to create, edit, communicate, consumer and comment contents (Mayfield, 2008). Social media creates an atmosphere that encourages participation and sharing information.

#### **2.3.3.4 Speed**

One of the advantages of online social network compared with real life network is the communication and spread speed. In contrast of traditional WOM, where opinions may disappear into thin air, online WOM spreads consistently results in viral effect. Contents published on social media platforms are instantaneous and are available to everyone in your network as soon as they are published. (Taprial&Kanwar, 2012)

#### **2.3.3.5 Accessibility**

Like the traditional media which relies on technology and platforms to function, the same applies to social media which is the product of web 2.0 technologies and user generated content. The development of different electronic devices, anyone can access social media anywhere and anytime as long as it is connected to internet.

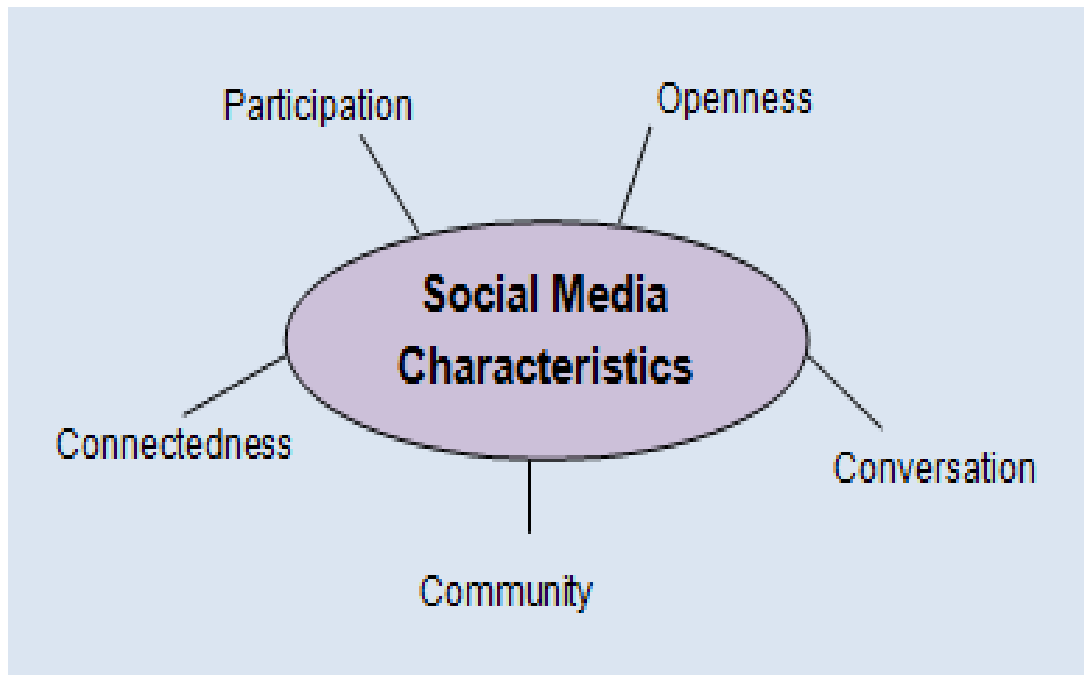
#### **2.3.3.6 Participation**

Burgoon et al. (2000) defines participation as the extent to which two or more parties are actively engaged in the interaction in contrast to lurking, passively observing or monologues. As mentioned before, social media encourages participation and feedbacks. One party creates content and shares on the platform to arouse the interest of the other party so that they will actively contribute and give feedbacks. From this point of view, the line between media and audience becomes blurred as everyone can become creators, communicators, readers and consumers of contents on the platforms and each individual's identity is shifting all the time (Mayfield, 2008).

#### **2.3.3.7 Conversation**

Traditional media communicates in one way in which content is created by media and distributed to audience while social media is based on user-generated content which means everyone becomes the source for communication. This means two-way or multi-way

communication is formed in the social media which aims at fostering interaction among users and other parties.



**Figure 2.1: Social Media Characteristics**

## **2.4 Academic Use of Social Media**

Many scientists have addressed different regions of using social media networking at various academic and social levels (Lange-Ros, 2011). The advantages of social media designed for academic gains seem to become a market for a lot of scientists in education and social sciences. Mazman and Usluel (2010) described educational usage as an important benefit of social- networking sites. They portrayed Facebook, a popular social-networking site, as a useful educational tool due to its structure and various utilities, such as providing users with intentional or spontaneous learning opportunities by bringing people together around shared interests, exchanging information, sharing ideas, discussion topics and collaborating. Social networks are pedagogical tools because people can use them for connectivity and social support, collaborative

information discovery and sharing, content creation, and knowledge and information aggregation and modification (Mazman&Usluel, 2010).

Proponents argued that contemporary college students have become habituated to a world where social media is the norm; thereby, as an educational tool, social media enriches the learning experience by allowing students and instructors to exchange ideas, foster collaboration and discussion, and engage and interact using such emerging social platforms (Lederer, 2012; Turkle, 2004).

The accessible literature on social media submits helpful suggestions for applying in greater education. This clearly indicates that, the usage of social media by Students University is an interesting area of research for educationists and social scientists (Al-Rahmi& Othman, 2013). Similarly, Hamid, Chang and Kurnia (2009) added that, the accessible literature consists of advantageous styles and designs of utilizing it at University level. It describes the development of contents and fewer focuses regarding how to share, interact, collaborate and socialize by its use.

Dabner (2011) opined that, certainly there are prospective benefits of institutions that might be acquired by using social media networking for hooking up with current and prospective students. However, Kear (2010) says that, the rapid pace from the change has brought to a lot of institutions not creating strategies for using social media prior to using of programs. According to Chretien, Greysen, Chretien and Kind (2009), student's engagement signifies both time and effort students purchase educationally purposeful activities and indicates that because peers are extremely influential to student learning and values development, educational intuitions should

make an effort to harness and shape this influence to ensure that it's educationally helping to strengthen academic anticipation.

The primary potentials of using social media to aid learning and teaching won't be fully achieved until there's a much better knowledge of the way the social character of those social media assets may be used to lure low engaged or disengaged students to have interaction in educationally purposeful ways using their high-engaged peers and teachers to ensure that it adds to the prosperity of a lot of students (Kuh, Kinzie, Cruce, Shoup&Gonyea, 2007).

## **2.5 Extent of Social Media Usage by Undergraduate Students**

According to Lenhart, Purcell, Smith and Zickuhr (2010), about 57% of social network users are 18-29 years old and have a personal profile on multiple social media websites. In a study by Pempek, Yermolayeva and Calvert (2009), the amount of time spent daily on social network sites varied greatly. However, an analysis of the data indicated most participants spent approximately 30 minutes a day socializing, mostly during the evening hours between 9pm to 12am. Students spent an average of 47 minutes a day on Facebook. More than 50% of college students go on a social networking site several times a day (Sheldon, 2008).

Quan-Haase-Haas and Young (2010) found that 82% of college students reported logging into Facebook several times a day. Younger students tended to use Facebook more frequently than older students to keep in touch with friends from high school or from their hometown, Pempek, Yevdokiya and Calvert (2009).

Oluwatoyin (2011) stated that users of SNSs spend an average of two to six hours studying while non-users spent between eight and seventeen hours studying per week. Schulten (2000) opines that Student spend an average of 40 to 50 minutes a day surfing on Facebook.



Many students find that they actually spend 3 to 4 minutes during each visit to check updates, making several visits a day and others spend 8 hours a day on the website (Rouis, Limayen&Sangari, 2011).

Ahmed and Qazi (2011) argued that students manage their time efficiently and fulfill their study requirements effectively; hence, use of SNSs does not have an adverse impact on their academic performance. In the study conducted at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota, both males and females, time spent on SNS decreased as the age of the respondent increased and results revealed that female college students spent more time on SNSs than male students (Tham, 2011).

According to the study done by Manjunatha (2013), 80 percent of the students spending considerable amount of time on using social networking sites regularly. Majority of Indian college students (62.6%) spent up to 10 hours per week of their time on using social networking and reportedly 17.5% of students spent more than 10 hours per week.

According to new research released by Ipsos Open Thinking Exchange (2013), American youths spend average 3.8 hours a day on social networking from a computer, mobile phone and/or tablet.

## **2.6 Social Media Tools Preferred by Students**

In recent years, social networks have experienced a massive growth in membership (Barker, 2009), particularly among university students (Lenhart& Madden, 2007). Over 90% of young adults (18-25 year olds) of university age are reported to have an active profile on a social networking site in the United Kingdom (Comscore, 2011). Similarly, Salaway and Caruso (2008)

stated that social-networking sites now constitute an integral part of daily communication practices for many university students. In a survey conducted by Bagget and Williams (2012), students contracted that social media is a means of connection amongst individuals and is used as means to share common interests, ideology, thoughts and perceptions about issues. Social media represents useful tools for communication and education, and provides an opportunity for networking in any profession. With time constraints and demanding class schedules, social media helps students to multitask because they do not want to spend time creating multiple individual messages (Al-Sharqi, Hashim&Kutbi, 2015).

The frequent use of Facebook could cause addiction toward the site and influence students' daily life at large. A study by Zainudin, Omar, Bolong and Osman (2011) was conducted to identify the relationship between female students' motives for Facebook use and Facebook addiction. The five motives established were social interaction, passing time, entertainment, companionship, and communication. The findings of the study showed that there are significant relationship between female students' motives for Facebook use and Facebook addiction. The research concluded that the five motives established were among the major contributors to the addiction of Facebook.

Madge, Meek, Wellens and Hooley (2009) report on a study conducted with first year undergraduates at a British university using an online survey. Students reported that they specifically joined Facebook pre-registration as a means of making new friends at university, as well as keeping in touch with friends and family at home. The survey data also reveal that once at university, Facebook was a social element that helped students settle into university life. Students thought Facebook was used most importantly for social reasons. Liu (2010) studied students' use, attitudes and perceptions of 16 different social media tools through an online

questionnaire involving 221 students. The top four reasons that prompted students' use of social media tools were found to be social engagement (85%), direct communications (56%), speed of feedback/results (48%), and relationship building (47%).

An infographic revealing a user activity assessment of popular social networking sites posted online May 2, 2012 by Go-Gulf, the report shows that Facebook has the most used social network with 901 million users. This is followed by Twitter (555 million), Google+ (170 million), LinkedIn (150 million), and Pinterest (11.7 million). In terms of unique monthly visitors, Facebook had more than 16 times the number of visitors of the other social networking sites combined. Pinterest had more unique monthly visitors (104.4 million) than did LinkedIn (85.7 million) and Google+ (61 million). The Pew Research Center's 2014 Internet Project survey of 1,445 Internet users found that Blacks tend to use Facebook most (73%) followed by Instagram (34%), Twitter (25%), Pinterest (21%), and LinkedIn (18%) (Krogstad, 2015, n.p.).

The American Press Institute's 2015 online article, "How millennials use and control social media," found that most (88%) get their news from Facebook followed by YouTube (83%) and Instagram (50%). About a third (36%) get their news from Pinterest and Twitter (33%) (para. 7). A 2014 social media comparison infographic by Leverage New Age Media (See Figure 1) shows that Facebook remains the clear leader among social networks with more than one billion active users. LinkedIn ranks second with 300 million users most (79%) of whom are 35 or older. Twitter and Instagram rank third and fourth with 241 million and 200 million users respectively. Pinterest has one-tenth the number of users that Instagram has and most of them (83%) are female (n.p.).

Kumar and Kumar (2013) found that Facebook was the most popular social media among post graduate and research students in an Indian university. Twitter was second most popular

among those students. Barnabas and Nduka (2013) studied online social networking and undergraduate mathematical achievement in Rivers state, they found out that 52(88.1%) prefer Facebook, 5(7.9%) favour Twitter, 1(1.6%) prefer Blackberry and 1(1.6%) prefer others. However, 4(6.3%) prefer none. This indicates that Facebook was the most preferred online social network among others.

This is significant since Lenhart et al. (2010) found that 71% of young adults have a Facebook account. The current study indicated that Facebook and e-mail were the social network websites of choice, with 99% of college students using Facebook and 90% using e-mail. This finding also shows that Facebook is the most popular form of social media.

Idubor (2015) investigated social media usage and addiction levels among undergraduates in University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The study revealed that majority of the respondents affirmed Facebook and Twitter as the only social media networks which they have access to with response rates of 751 (90.2%) and 646 (77.6%) respectively. Also, about half (388 or 46.6%) and close to four-fifth (307 or 36.9%) of the respondents attested to their accessibility of Youtube and Blogger respectively.

## **2.7 Purposes of Using Social Media by Students**

The popularity of social media among people of the world grows rapidly on daily basis. These social media have become valuable means of sharing ideas and feelings among their users. Thus, they are beginning to get more attention from educational institutions. Gardner (2009) opined that institutions are taking drastic steps to educate students on the use of the sites, especially in the areas of the privacy, legal issue and potential socio-economic and psychological dangers. Gross (2004) noted that “students use social networking sites not only for leisure and personal socialization but also as a platform for more meaningful and serious

deliberations, and students are using social networking for making friends, sharing links, online learning, finding jobs to accomplish their economic, educational, political and social being.” In a study conducted by Camilia, Ibrahim and Dalhatu (2013) on the effect of social networking sites usage on the studies of Nigerian students, the study revealed that 51% of respondents use the SNS to keep in touch with friends and family members, 28% use it to while away time, 5% of the respondents say they use the SNS just to belong while 16% use it to solve their social problems.

In a study exploring how students use social media, Wang, Chen and Liang (2011) report that most college students spent vast number of hours accessing social media sites. Ninety percent of students surveyed spent their time on entertainment. While eighty percent of the sample admitted that they posted or responded while completing homework, not too many college students preferred using social media to do their homework. Considering the overall results of collected data analysis, there was a negative attitude towards social media when college students used them. The analysis also indicates that an approach is needed to better balance the relationship between social media and academic study.

Research by George and Dellasega (2011) found that social media applications provided platforms that enabled novel moments of learning to occur. In the classroom, tools such as Skype and YouTube enriched learning by connecting students both with external experts and novel educational content. Outside the classroom, Twitter and blogging applications sustained and augmented learning conversations, enabling real-time dialogue to take place between instructors and students; his ultimately made homework assignments a more dynamic experience, while encouraging creativity on mediums familiar to a generation of students facile with such

technology. It is shown that most college students prefer to use social media in order to help them academically, emotionally, etc.

Wang (2013) found that Facebook use in instruction assists students in achieving better grades, higher engagement, and greater satisfaction with the university learning experience. Thus, the use of Facebook as an educational communication and interaction also enables faculty to assume a more active and participatory role in teaching and learning.

Sin and Kim (2013) found in a survey of international students at an American public university that nearly 70% used social networking sites for everyday life information either “frequently” or “very frequently.” The top five everyday life information need areas were found to be finance, health, news of one’s home country, housing and entertainment.

Eke, Omekwu and Odoh (2014) in their study on the use of social networking sites among the undergraduate students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka. They found out that those students use social media for communicating with friends, online learning, finding friends online, academic purpose etc. This is similarly to Tukru et al. (2013) who reported that university students in Turkey use Facebook more for communicating with friends, getting information about people and events, entertainment and relaxing as well as messaging. Choi and Kang (2014) examined the students’ motive of using social media in their learning process. 1010 students participated in the study and data were collected using online survey. The findings indicated that 71.2% of the respondents used social media to solve assignments with friends, 75.5% to search information, 49.3% to ask questions, 61.4% to publish contents, 39.4% to receive feedback and 44.5% to revise, edit and republish information.

Another study in India was conducted by Kumar (2012), who investigated the perception and use of SNS among Sikkim University students. The study showed that a good number of

university students use SNS for academic purposes in addition to entertainment. Facebook was the most used social networking site followed by Orkut and Twitter.

Singh and Kumar (2013) from Punjab University conducted a study to measure the usage of social networking among their research students. The findings of the study shows that majority of the respondents were found to be aware and making use of social media in their research work. Their study also reveals that Facebook is the most popular social networking sites among the research scholars

Idubor (2015) investigated social media usage and addiction levels among undergraduates in University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The study revealed that majority of the respondents attested to making friends 651 (78.2%), getting news 566 (67.9%), communication 554 (66.5%) and online learning 450 (54.0%) as the major purposes for which they make use of social media networks. This implies that undergraduate students in University of Ibadan make use of social media network mainly for the purposes of making friends, getting news, communication and online learning.

## **2.8 Overview of Information**

The term information has been defined, described, understood and diversely interpreted across various disciplines, vocations and professions. According to Nkechi (2011) concept of information is very complex and difficult than ordinarily meets the eyes, this is evident in the various definition and attributes of the concept notwithstanding the fact that information is as old as man, and that it affects and is affected by all aspects of human activities. In collaboration, Olorunfemi (2009) asserts that people differently interpret the concept of “information”. Aforementioned, Olorunfemi (2004) had opined that information is knowledge obtained from investigation, study or instruction. The lecturers, students, decision-makers such

as politicians, governments, educational administrators and so on perceive information as the process by which event of the external world are conceived and thus provides opportunity to form judgments and make decisions on economic, education, moral and legal issues.

In a clearer way, Folorunsho and Ibrahim (2005) sees information as a fact, an opinion or an idea from any source, which can give support to making adequate decisions. Information has also been defined as “a property of matter, any message, document, or information resource; any publicly available symbolic material; or any data” (Smith & Mostert, 2004). No wonder Walonick (2004), opines that better information usually leads to better decisions. Reitz (2005) posited that information and ideas are creative of the human intellect and imagination that have been communicated either formally or informally in any form. Here, information is a critical resource that can productively enhance individual knowledge and development for different useful purposes.

Popoola (2006) defined information as facts, news, opinions, messages, symbols, signals and processed data that are capable of improving the knowledge state of a user on a random phenomenon. Information is an important resource for individual growth and survival. Information is that which is transmitted by the act or process of communication (Ukachi, 2010). Uttor (1999) as cited by Ajiboye and Tella (2007) defined information as data value in planning, decision making and evaluation of any programme. Uttor (1999) recognized information as a data that have been subjected to some processing functions capable of answering user’s query be it recorded, summarized, or simply collected that would help decision making. It is well understood in terms of books, journals, magazines, public and private sector documents of all kinds, whether published for mass circulation or unpublished and restricted or confidential in nature, results of research efforts which are made available to colleagues in form of reports,



books articles and non-printed materials. In the same context, Ajiboye and Tella (2007) conceives information as something that students need during their studies when they create meaning about their subjects in their erudition process. Meanwhile, Mostert (2004) identified information as “a property of matter, any message, document, or information resource; any publicly available symbolic material; or data”, which can confer useful meaning that can help to arrive at a decision.

Mostert and Ocholla (2006) opines that information is “ideas, facts, and imaginative works of the mind and valuable data, which is potentially useful for decision making and the tools that answer questions that lead to a state of knowing”. The state knowing tend to make information to be a vital resources that everyone need to access for the social development and life oriented plans to succeed in ones chosen careers. Also, Das and Karn (2008) proposed that, information is a vital resource because it stimulates the educational development of the society, leading to a situation where the people are well informed and well aware of right and wrong in a society. With relevant information, people in various professional groups such as lawyers, engineers, and health professionals make concrete decisions that help them to efficiently perform their daily activities.

With the above definitions, information can be said to be major backbone in any decision making, it serves as a source of confidence when decision are being made. Information makes someone to transcend from a state of unknown to known. To students information is very importance to their academic sources; it serves as a basis for them to create meaningful academic assertion on subjects.

## **2.9 Overview of Information Behaviour**

Information behaviour is a broad term encircling the ways individuals systematically articulate their information needs, seek, evaluate, select, and use information. Information behaviour is a product of a need in executing a defined mission and it is purposive in nature. According to Case (2002), information behaviour encompasses information seeking as well as the totality of other unintentional or passive behaviours (serendipity), and purposive behaviours that do not involve seeking, such as avoiding information. In a latter view, Case (2006) states that information behaviour “encompasses information seeking as well as the totality of other unintentional or passive behaviours as well as purposive behaviours that do not involve seeking, such as actively avoiding information”. To Pettigrew, Fidel and Bruce (2001), it is the study of how people need, seek, give, and use information in different contexts, including the workplace and everyday living.

According to Wilson (2000), information behaviour is the totality of human behaviour in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking, and information use. Information seeking behavior involves personal reasons for seeking information, the kinds of information which are being sought, and the ways and sources with which needed information is being sought. Information seeking behavior is expressed in various forms, from reading printed material to research and experimentation. Scholars, students and faculty actively seek current information from the various media available in libraries, e.g. Encyclopedias, journals and more currently, electronic media.

By definition, Ingwersen and Järvelin (2005) defines information behaviour as the human behaviour dealing with generation, communication, use and other activities concerned with information, such as, information-seeking behaviour and interactive information retrieval. Again, Bates (2010) defines information behaviour as the preferred term to describe the many ways in

which humans interact with information, in particular, the ways in which people seek and utilize information.

Information behaviour encompasses information-seeking as well as the totality of other unintentional or passive behaviour (e.g., glimpses, encounters) and avoidance of information (Case, 2007; Wilson, 2000). Case (2002) stated that information behaviour begins with uncertainty and it then represents the activity used to find information. Ikoja-Odongo (2002) noted that information seeking involves the manner in which an individual goes about looking for information to address some problem. Marchionini (1995) describes information seeking as a process which is closely related to learning and problem solving. Heinström (2003) opined that the information seeking process is basically dynamic and changeable. Within the LIS context, the information seeking process is often dependent on a task (Byström 2000), a discipline (Ocholla 1999) or the stage of the research process (Kuhlthau 2004). Eisenberg, Lowe, and Spitzer (2004) noted that when seeking information, students had failed to explain their questions, retrieve information, and evaluate the information. Liu (2013) stated that information seeking is a complex communication process that involves the interaction between the information seeker, the information, and the information provider.

Case (2007) claims that the Internet might be used as a metaphor for information behaviour. For example, for a doctor, searching for information on patient care using the Web is different from searching for information in traditional books and journals. Dee and Stanley (2005) used questionnaires, interviews and observations to investigate the information-seeking behaviour of nursing students and clinical nurses. The results showed that nursing students and clinical nurses were most likely to rely on colleagues and books for medical information

Owolabi, Jimoh and Okpeh (2010) in their study of information seeking behaviour of polytechnic students discovered that 285 (59.4%) of their respondents needs information in relation to their academic. It shows that students use information primarily for academic purposes. The study concluded that students at the polytechnic seek information to improve their academic performance. In a different study carried out by Fatima and Ahmad (2008), the findings show that 30 (50%) of the respondents seeks information on career development and other reason include seeking information for problem solving, keeping up-to-date and the need to write an article or research paper.

Patel (2005) investigated to explore information needs and seeking behavior of the teacher of the teachers training colleges of University of Gujarat State. The objectives of this study were to identify need and purpose of information seeking of teachers in teachers training colleges. The result of the study shows that 96.47% of respondents read regularly for satisfied their information needs. 64.42% respondents reading newspaper, 99.36% reading magazines, 72.44% used library for study purpose only and 36.54% used library for entertainment. The study also show that major respondents needs current information in their fields. 88.46% of respondents used library for reading magazines.

Students in Oklahoma, USA behaved differently when seeking information for research projects (Denison and Montgomery, 2012). Denison and Montgomery concluded that most college students found the process of information searching and retrieval difficult and frustrating. George, Bright and Hulbert (2006) explored graduate students' information behaviour at Carnegie University, America. The results showed that people indeed play an essential role in graduate students' information seeking exercises. Karlsson, Koivula, Ruokonen, Kajaan, Antikainen and Ruismaki (2012) conducted an observational study at the University of Helsinki

in Finland to investigate the information-seeking competencies, practices, and knowledge of university students. The aim of the study was to determine the processes of the different ways of searching for scientific information. The results of the study revealed three types of information seekers namely; the novice who uses random information seeking style of trial and error; the survivor who will use natural language when searching, has difficulties to form search statements and does not master search techniques like Boolean logic and; the experts in information retrieval who have knowledge of information sources and have mastered search techniques like Boolean logic.

Callinan (2005), in a comparative research of information seeking behaviour between first and final year biology students posited that the level of study of a students would also influence how they sought information. It was discovered in the study that final year students made more use of electronic resources than final year students. The paper establishes the importance of a cross-sectional study in understanding the difference in students' information needs in different years of their studies. Nwobasi, Uwa and Ossai-Onah(2013) also carried out a comparative study of two universities students' information need and Information seeking behaviour. They discovered that students had high awareness of the information resources in the library, both print and electronic, several challenges such as poor internet facilities, inadequacy of the materials, lack of current and relevant materials and unfriendly attitude of library staff. These factors posed great challenges to the information seeking behaviour of the students of the two universities.

Kerins, Madden and Fulton (2004) researched the information seeking behavior of engineering, and law students in Ireland. According to the results of their research, students learned the approaches in information seeking strategies from the educators excluding the library

staff, or libraries. Students of engineering chose the information channels by accessibility. Martin (2008) studied the information seeking behavior on a convenience sample of 200 undergraduate majors at the University of Central Florida to find out where they found the information for their academic research, and to examine if the instructions received at the library had any impact on the types of sources used. Results from his study indicated that the Internet has been used for the class-related research by almost three fourths of the students, although 79% of the students considered that academic library resources (such as books, and journals) were more credible than the internet sources: 78% of the respondents have chosen the freely available internet instead of the library's resources.

Ajiboye and Tella (2007) used a questionnaire to study the information seeking behaviour of 2000 undergraduate students of whom they randomly selected from across six faculties in the University of Botswana. It was found that the respondents preferred the internet as their number one major source of obtaining information. This is followed by lecture notes and hand-outs, school library, textbooks, thesis/dissertations and newspapers. The study also revealed the lesser used of electronic resources, consulting colleagues notes, university bookshop, and print journals.

Ossai (2011) have conducted a study on how the law students of University of Benin, Nigeria utilize the information resources in the law library. She reported that most of the law students have been identified to make full use of the available library resources in complying with their academic programs. Nonetheless even though they utilises the library resources, her study reveals that most of the law students have difficulty in locating and finding the suitable library information sources for legislation, case law and journal articles. She further stated that the university authority should be obligated to make information research skill training as a part

of legal training to enhance their information research abilities. This would enable the law students to make full use of the available IT resources and services which will then lead to an increase in their IT skills and better usage of the information retrieved (Ossai, 2011).

In a study carried out by Bagget and Williams (2012) on student behaviors and opinions regarding the use of social media, mobile technologies, and library research, the students agreed that social media is a means to connect between individuals and is used as means to share common interests. Social media represents useful tools for communication and education, and provides an opportunity for networking in any profession. With time constraints and demanding class schedules, social media helps students to multitask because they do not want to spend time creating multiple individual messages. They commonly use Facebook, watch television or a video, talk, email friends and family, and write papers or conduct research all at the same time.

## **2.10 Type of Information Behaviour on Social Media**

The following types of information behavior are discussed

- i. Everyday life information behaviour, for non-work and non-school information needs
- ii. Browsing, monitoring and asking, rather than searching
- iii. Opportunistic information acquisition, including serendipitous information encountering and environmental awareness, rather than purposive information seeking
- iv. Information publishing, giving and sharing, as much as information seeking
- v. Intermediary roles undertaken by users voluntarily, including information seeking by proxy, information summarizing and information forwarding
- vi. Social information behaviour and development of information communities
- vii. Information use and evaluation.

An interesting subtype of information sharing behaviour that is gaining the attention of researchers is information forwarding, including reposting and retweeting, and propagation of information in online social networks (e.g., Kim, 2014; Sutton, Spiro, Johnson, Fitzhugh Gibson & Butts, 2014). These types of information behaviour are traditionally under-studied. Social media sites afford researchers an opportunity to redress the imbalance, to develop a more rounded and holistic understanding of information behaviour. Researchers have attempted to construct typologies of social media posts and their content. The major dichotomies are questions (i.e. requests for information) versus answers (i.e. providing information in response to questions), and informational versus socioemotional support. The proportions of posts belonging to the different categories vary depending on the type of social media, the topic and the user community.

## **2.11 Information Behaviour of Students on Social Media**

Kellar (2006) conducted a study on “An examination of user behaviour during Web information task” with 21 participants in order to understand the characteristics of information seeking tasks on the web and how the tools of current web browsers are being used within information seeking tasks. The result of the study was that there are several differences in how users interacted with their web browser during different tasks. The information gathering tasks takes longer time than the fact finding tasks but both were search-based with the heavy use of Google. Survey has been conducted on information forwarding that includes reposting; retweeting as well as propagation of information in the social networks presents online (Kim & Tsai, 2014). Social media sites have given the researchers an opportunity to develop a rounded as well as holistic understanding of the information behaviour.



Hsieh (2006) in the article “Research on Web Search Behaviour” which is a review of the studies conducted between 1995 and 2000 on Web search behaviour. The reports of the studies were both on children as well as on adults on their information seeking behaviour on the web. The findings were that most of the studies on children described their interaction with the web and research on adult searchers focused on describing search patterns, and many studies investigated effects of selected factors on search behaviour, including information organisation and presentation, type of search task, web experience, cognitive abilities, and affective states.\*It shows that as users gain more experience with the web, their need will expand The growth of the amount of information on the web has affected information seekers’ use of the web. It shows that 57% of internet users search the web each day and searching is the most popular activity after e-mail. A study of university faculty and students found that 83% of the respondents used the internet for gathering information related to academic studies, and 73.85 used it for non-academic work. Therefore, it shows that the internet has become one of the most important information sources for many users.

Thompson (2003), in his study on information seeking behavior of undergraduate students noted that they preferred to start research with search engines and students preferred to seek help from peers or from faculty and not consult library staff or seek assistance from library web sites. Similarly, Van-Scoyoc and Cason (2006), in their study to examine undergraduate students’ information seeking behaviour at the University of Georgia also found that students used search engines and web portals at 76 percent of the time and class websites was used almost as frequently at 71 percent of the time.

Moreover, another empirical study which is related to this work is a research conducted by Folorunso, Vincent, Adekoyo and Ogunde (2010), at University of Agriculture Abeokuta,

Ogun State, Nigeria. They studied ‘Diffusion of Innovation in social Networking sites among university students.’ One of the major findings of the study shows that the respondents had attempted to try social networking sites before adopting its uses. Thus, the users of the sites often examine it and probably know the gratifications they could derive from the media before accepting to use any of them Folorunso, et al, (2010).

In addition, Haridakis and Hanson (2009) examined one of the social media, Youtube, in a study entitled, “social interaction and co-viewing blending mass communication reception and social communication”. The major finding of the researchers was that, “...while people watch videos on you Tube for some of the same reasons identified in the studies of television viewing, there is a distinctly social aspect to Youtube use that reflects its social networking characteristics”. Therefore the study reveals that the viewers of the YouTube medium perceived it as sharing certain features with television but in addition it has some social media properties.

## **2.12 Theoretical Framework**

Two key theories formed the foundation for this study. They are:

- Diffusion of Innovation Theory
- Uses and gratification theory

### **2.12.1 Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DIT) developed by E. M Rogers in 1962, is one of the oldest social science r. It originated in communication to explain how over time an idea or product gains momentum, and diffuses (spread) through a specific population or social system. Doing something differently than what they had previously. The key adoption is that the person must perceive the idea, behavior or product as new or innovative. It is through this that diffusion is possible. Diffusion is the process of spreading a given idea or practice over time, via

specifiable channels, through a social structure such as Neighborhoods. (Katz Blumer&Gurevitch, 1974). Their work on the diffusion of innovations records that for a new idea or innovation to diffuse, there must be;

Awareness stage

- i. Interest stage
- ii. Evaluation stage
- iii. Trial and adoption stage.

Different types of innovations require different kinds of adoption units; Bittner (1989) recognizes that the media can lead someone into getting aware of the existence of an item. From there he gets interested in, makes attempt to evaluate it, and gives it a trial touch before making up his mind to acquire it. The diffusion of innovation theory by Rogers (1983) was set to examine how new ideas are spread among people through media. It is a theory that seeks to explain how, why and at what rate new ideas and technology spread through cultures. Adoption of a new idea, behavior, or product does not happen simultaneously in a social system; rather it is a process whereby where by some people are more apt to adopt the innovation than others. Everett Rogers, a professor of rural sociology popularized the theory in his 1962 book; Diffusion of innovation. The categories of adopters are; innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Rogers, 1962).

The change agent center's around the conditions which increases or decreases the likelihood that a new idea would be adopted or not. That is to say, they help the audience in deciding on the best idea to adopt by influencing their option about a particular situation. Good hart et al 1975 and Bar wise et al 1982 thinks that a great deal of media use is actually habitual and unselective. It relates the usefulness of the media and to what extent it can affect man.

### **2.12.2 Uses and Gratification Theory**

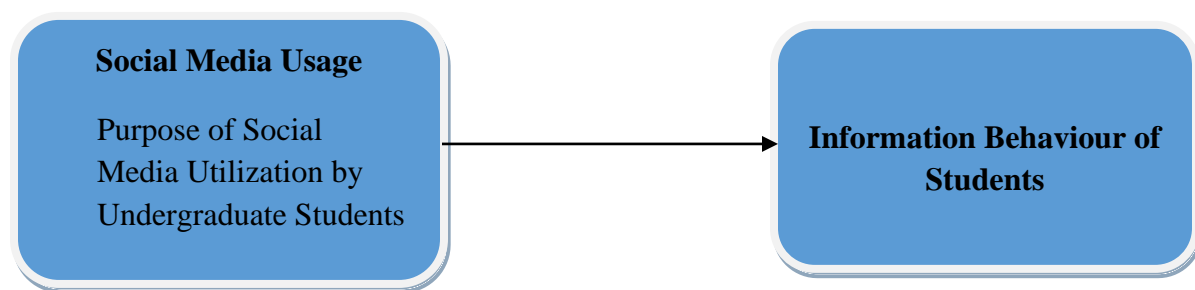
Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) is an approach to understanding why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs. It was originated in the 1970 by Blumler and Katz as a reaction to traditional mass communication research emphasizing the sender and the message. It focuses on the question, 'what media do to people' but rather 'what people do with the media'. It discusses how users deliberately choose media that will satisfy given needs and allow one to enhance knowledge, relaxation, social interaction, diversion or escape.

Uses and Gratification theory also called functional theory is concerned with the social and psychological origin of needs, which generate expectation of the mass media which leads to different patterns of media exposure, resulting in need gratification and other consequences, mostly unintended ones. (Katz, 1974). It is purely audience centered and addresses needs like surveillance, excitement, guidance, relaxation, tension release, socialization, escape and integration. To be able to gratify these needs, it must be able to realize that the mass media audience may belong to the low, middle or high post brow group. (Savary&Carico, 1971). These uses (exposure to the media) and gratification (benefits) are determined by the needs of members of the audience. Such needs may include information, entertainment, self-esteem and prestige. Through the uses and gratifications research, communication scholars have shown that everywhere, people selectively expose themselves to mass media content, choosing only those media messages that would serve the function of satisfying or gratifying their needs (Rosengren 1985).

Therefore, uses and gratification approach emphasizes audience members motive for making specific consumption choices and the consequences of that intentional media use. That's

to say, they choose the content, make meaning of it and act on the meaning. It embraces the interactive nature of media and its audience. It is audience centered and addresses needs such as surveillance, identity, and socialization and information acquisition. Therefore, people's needs are generated by their individual differences. It could be based on sex, ethnic group, and educational qualification. Because the needs are determined by who or what they are, and people use the mass media for the purpose of gratifying these needs (Okunna, 1988).

## 2.12 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 2.2: Self-Constructed Conceptual Model**

The above self-constructed model in figure 2.2 seeks to examine the relationship between the independent variable, social media applications and dependent variable, the information behaviour of students.

## 2.14 Appraisal of Literature Review

The reviewed studies indicate that Facebook is the widely used social media network (Lenhart et al., 2010; Kumar & Kumar, 2013; Idubor, 2015). Interestingly, the purposes for the usage of social media are for communicating with friends, colleagues, academic information (Kumar, 2012; Wang, 2013; Choi & Kang, 2014; Idubor, 2015). However, as students seek for information, they have the consciousness of their information needs which are primarily academic related (Martin 2008; Owolabi, Jimoh&Okpeh, 2010). The reviewed literature also

shows that students learned the approaches in information seeking strategies from the educators excluding the library staff, or libraries (Kerins, Madden & Fulton, 2004). Internet was identified as the major sources of information (Martin 2008; Ajiboye&Tella, 2007) and this validates this study because social media applications require the Internet for their connectivity and usage.

According to Bagget and Williams (2012), the students agreed that social media is a means to connect between individuals and is used as means to share common interests. There is dearth of concise literature on information behavior of undergraduate students; however, empirical study conducted by Folorunso, Vincent, Adekoyo and Ogunde (2010) is related to this work. In the usage of social media, the users of the sites often examine it and probably know the gratifications they could derive from the media before accepting to use any of them Folorunso, et al, (2010).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Research methodology is described as the overall research design and strategy (Johnson & Christensen, 2012) that a researcher uses to execute research. Research methodology is a discipline specific approach and process of research (Kinash, 2006). Creswell (2009) explained that research method involves the technique of data collection, analysis and interpretation that researchers propose for their studies. Based on these definitions, research can be understood to be a systematic way of finding answers to questions, and the scientific way of attaining the accuracy of a given situation.

This chapter contains the general procedure for the conduct of the study. It therefore gives detail information on the following: research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instrumentation, psychometric properties of the instrument, validity of research instrument, reliability of research instrument, procedure for administration of the instrument, procedure for scoring and method of data analysis.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design is the logical sequence that connects empirical data to the research questions and research conclusions. Research design is an approach to thinking about doing research, which is the summary of the procedure for conducting a study that includes when, from whom, and under what conditions the research data was obtained, as well as, how a study was conducted. It is the theoretical aspect of the study that specifies how a study was carried out and the manner in which it answers the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Ikoja-Odongo, 2000).

The research design that was adopted for the study is the descriptive survey method. Descriptive survey method is considered appropriate for this study because it arrives at dependable solution to problem through systematic analysis and interpretation of data collected

from the respondents on the subject matter, thereby making it possible for generalization (Neuman, 2011).

### **3.3 Population of the Study**

Best and Kahn (2006) defined population as any group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common distinguishing the group from other individuals. The research population is described as the entire group of people on whom the results of a study are intended to be applied (Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Nkomo, 2009; Fraenkel&Wallen, 2000).

The study is being undertaken to examine the impact of social media usage on the information behaviour of students of tertiary institutions in Kwara State. Therefore, the population for this study comprises of undergraduate students in three selected universities in Kwara state, namely; Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State University and University of Ilorin. These are institutions that have been in existence for more than five (5) years. According to the data collected from the Directorate of Academic Planning in the three universities, the population of undergraduate students is presented in table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Population of the Study**

S/N	University	Population
1.	Al-Hikmah University	7000
2.	Kwara State University, Malete	8520
3.	University of Ilorin, Ilorin	45013
	Total	60533

### **3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

Researchers use various sampling techniques to collect data when the population is large and when studying all its elements is not possible (Bosire, 2011; Nyandemo, 2007). Sampling



technique is the approach used in taking a small group from a larger group, investigate it, and draw an accurate conclusion that can be generalized onto the larger group (Rea & Parker, 2005).

The overall sampling consists of the undergraduate students in the five (5) universities in Kwara State. However, three universities were selected as the sample frame for this study, the sampling frame consists of undergraduates students in Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State University and University of Ilorin. The selection of the universities was based on the type of ownership.

Based on the aforementioned, this study adopts simple random probability sampling technique to select undergraduate students in Kwara State. According to Aina (2002), simple random sampling is the basic sampling method of survey research and it aims at giving each person in the sampling frame an equal chance of being selected in the sample. Thus, the sample size comprises of the portion of the population for the study. This ensures that samples are representative to enable generalization of the population (Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Creswell, 2009; Best & Kahn, 2006).

In order to accurately take a sample from the population, the Israel sample size model (2003) was used to determine the sample size. The model states that, a given total population of  $N$ , if  $\pm 5\%$  is taken for precision levels where the confidence level is 95% and  $P=.5$ , the sample ( $n$ ) should be  $= X$  (Israel, 2003). Based on Israel's (2003) sample size model, the total population is 60533; by taken  $\pm 5\%$ , the expected sample size should be 385.

**Table 3.2: Population and Sample Size Distribution of the Respondents**

S/N	University	Population	Sample Size
1	Al-Hikmah University	7000	46

2	Kwara State University, Malete	8520	54
3	University of Ilorin, Ilorin	45013	285
	Total	60533	385

### **3.5 Data Collection Instrument**

According to Kiplang'at and Ocholla (2005) data collection instruments are expected to provide accurate and adequate data in line with the objectives of the study. For this study, questionnaire titled “Influence of Social Media Usage on the Information Behavior of Undergraduate Students in Selected Universities in Kwara State Questionnaire” was used as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher in accordance to the research objectives. The questionnaire was divided into five sections. Section A of the questionnaire focused on the demographic information of the respondents. Section B of the questionnaire focused on identifying the social media tools used by undergraduate students. Section C of the questionnaire which is to determine the extent of social media utilization by undergraduate students was divided into two sub-sections, the first sub-section was to determine the frequency of social media usage while the second sub-section was to determine the average time spend by undergraduate students when using social media. Section D of the questionnaire investigated the purpose of social media usage by undergraduate students. The section has ten (10) items using four (4) Likert scale of agree (A), strongly agree (SA), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SA). Section E of the questionnaire focused on the information behaviour of undergraduate students on social media. The section has 11 items using four (4) Likert scale of strongly disagree (SA), disagree (D), Agree (A) or strongly agree (SA).

### **3.6 Validity of the Instrument**

Validity of the instrument shows how well the research instrument measure what it is supposed to measure (Bosire, 2011). The self-structured questionnaire was validated using content-related approach. To achieve this, four copies of the questionnaire were given to lecturers of the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Ilorin and the project supervisor. The four copies of the questionnaire given to the validators were retrieved and necessary suggestions rendered were used in designing the final instrument.

### **3.7 Reliability of the Instrument**

Reliability of an instrument is the consistency of an instrument in measuring what is meant to measure. Maree (2011) opined that reliability has to do with consistency of a measure or an instrument like questionnaire and that high reliability is obtained when the measure or instrument gives the same results if the research is repeated on the same sample. In order to ensure consistency of scores obtained, this study was subjected to reliability test by administering fifty (50) copies of the questionnaire to undergraduate students of Landmark University, Omu-Aran. However, forty-four (44) copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and were subjected to Cronbach alpha to determine the overall reliability of the questionnaire. For the purpose of this study, the reliability of the scaled items are presented in table 3.3.

**Table 3.3 Reliability Test of the Scaled Variables**

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<b>Reliability Tests</b>
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<b>Variables</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Pilot Alpha</b>
Purpose of Social Media Utilization	10	44	0.724
Information Behaviour of Undergraduate Students on the Usage of Social Media	11	44	0.634

Table 3.3 shows that the reliability coefficient for the scaled item “Purpose of Social Media Utilization” had a correlation coefficient of 0.724 while “Information Behaviour of Undergraduate Students on the Usage of Social Media” had a correlation coefficient of 0.634. However, the average reliability coefficient of the scaled variables had a correlation coefficient of 0.679.

### **3.8 Administration of the Instrument**

The questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher. For the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher moved around the three (3) selected university main campuses to administer questionnaire to the students. The researcher at the point of administration gave enough time to the student to respond to the questionnaire without any interference. The researcher also ensured that the students responded to the administered questionnaire and the completely filled questionnaire was collected from the students. The administration of the data collection instrument took two (2) weeks for its completion.

### **3.9 Method of Data Analysis**

Frequency counts and simple percentage was used to analyze the five objectives of the study. The data collected were coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM-SPSS) version 21.0The presentations of the data for the research objectives were done using tables while Spearman Rank Order Correlation was used to test the formulated hypothesis

and regression analysis was used to determine the influence of social media on information behavior of undergraduate students.

### **3.10 Ethical Consideration**

The researcher was conscious of disclosure of confidential information which could lead to security issues and problems. In order to reach a reliable and rich conclusion, the researcher approached every aspect of the research with caution, objectivity, truthfulness and fairness. This research was duly referenced in order to avoid plagiarism which could result in serious ethical concern.

## **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter present and discuss data analyses and interpretations of the data. This study investigated the influence of social media usage on information behaviour of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kwara state, Nigeria. Five (5) research objectives were formulated for this study. The presentations of the data for the research objectives were done using table. Spearman Rank Order Correlation was adopted for the testing of the hypothesis. A total of three hundred and eighty-five (385) copies of questionnaire were administered to undergraduate students in Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State University and University of Ilorin. While a total of three hundred and thirty-eight (338) participants responded and completed the survey questionnaire giving a response rate of 88%.

In the analysis, strongly agreed and agreed are merged to form agreed while disagreed and strongly disagreed are merged to formed disagreed. That is  $SA+A=Agreed$  and  $D+SD= D$ .

## 4.2 Demographic Distributions of the Respondents

**Table 4.1: Name of Institutions of the Respondents**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Al-Hikmah University	42	12.4
Kwara State University	47	13.9
University of Ilorin	249	73.7
Total	338	100.0

Table 4.1 shows that majority of the respondents were University of Ilorin Undergraduate students with 249 (73.6%) followed by Kwara State University with 47 (13.9%) and Al-Hikmah with 42 (12.4%).

**Table 4.2: Academic Level of the Respondents**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
100 Level	62	18.3
200 Level	118	34.9
300 Level	95	28.1
400 Level	36	10.7
500 Level	27	8.0
Total	338	100.0

Table 4.2 reveals that highest number 118 (34.9%) of the respondents were in 200 level, this is follow by the 300 level students' constituting 28.1%. The least percentage (8.0%) of the respondents were in 500 level. This implies that 200 level students constituted the highest number of the respondents.

**Table 4.3: Age of the Respondents**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
15-19 Years	88	26.0
20-24 Years	139	41.1
25-29 Years	111	32.8
Total	338	100.0

Table 4.3 shows that highest number of the respondents i.e. 139 (41.1%) were within age range of 20-24 years, followed by 25-29 years with 111 (32.8%) while the least were respondents within the age range of 15-19 years with 88 (26.0%).

**Table 4.4: Gender of the Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Female	160	47.3
Male	178	52.7
Total	338	100.0

Table 4.4 indicates that 160 (47.3%) of the respondent were female while 178(52.7%) were male. Thus, majority of the respondents were male.

### **4.3 Research Question One: What are the social media tools preferred by undergraduate students?**

**Table 4.5: Social Media Tools Used by Undergraduate Students**

<b>Social Media Application</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Facebook	324	95.9	14	4.1
Twitter	260	76.9	75	23.1
Instagram	302	89.3	36	10.7
LinkedIn	158	46.7	180	53.3
2go	168	49.7	170	50.3
Eskimi	190	56.2	148	43.8
Youtube	257	76.0	81	24.0
Skype	193	57.1	145	42.9
Google +	236	69.8	102	30.2

Table 4.5 reveals that majority of the respondents use Facebook (95.9%), Instagram (89.3%), Twitter (76.9%), Youtube (76.0%), Google+ (69.8%), and Eskimi (56.2%). While the least used social media tools among the respondents are LinkedIn and 2go, only 46.7% and 49.7% indicated yes respectively. This implies that Facebook is the most used social media tools among undergraduate.

### **4.4 Research Question Two: What are the extents of social media usage by undergraduate students?**



**Table 4.6: Frequency of Social Media Usage**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Never	4	1.2
Fairly	35	10.3
Occasionally	54	16.0
Frequently	155	45.9
Very Frequently	90	26.6
Total	338	100.0

Table 4.6 shows the frequency of use of the social media among the respondents. The table specifically shows that less than half (45.9%) of the respondents indicated frequently while more than one quarter (26.6%) of the respondents indicated very frequently. Surprisingly, only 1.2% of the respondents never use social media. Thus, it can be concluded that more than seven-in-ten (72.5%) of the respondents use the social media frequently and very frequently.

**Table 4.7: Extent of Social Media Usage**

<b>Hour</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 1 hour	42	12.4
1-2 hours	57	16.9
3-4 hours	89	26.3
4-5 hours	70	20.7
6-7 hours	64	18.9
8-9 hours	16	4.7
Total	338	100.0

Table 4.7 shows hourly basis in which the respondents utilize social media, the table shows that highest number 89 (26.3%) of the respondents uses social media between 3-4 hours daily, follow by 70 (20.7%) of the respondents who usually spend between 4-5 hours when using

social media. However, only 16 (4.7%) of the respondents usually spend between 8-9 hours when using social media.

#### 4.5 Research Question Three: For what purposes do undergraduate students make use of social media?

**Table 4.8: Purposes of Social Media Usage by Undergraduate Students**

Statement	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I uses social media to:								
facilitate my learning	191	56.5	72	21.3	41	12.1	34	10.1
get relevant information pertaining to my studies	134	39.6	115	34.0	40	11.8	49	14.5
make new friends	153	45.3	151	44.7	18	5.3	16	4.7
connect with friends	189	55.9	137	40.5	12	3.6		
solve social issues	50	14.8	27	8.0	162	47.9	99	29.3
connect with my course-mate	158	46.7	131	38.8	25	7.4	24	7.1
update my knowledge with my course of study	165	48.8	161	47.6	9	2.7	3	0.9
update my knowledge outside my course of study	147	43.5	128	37.9	38	11.2	25	7.4
while away time	132	39.1	168	49.7	26	7.7	12	3.6
transact business	66	19.5	59	17.5	107	31.7	106	31.4

Table 4.8 shows the purposes of social media usage by undergraduate students, the shows that majority 326 (96.4%) of the respondents indicated that they use social media to connect with friends and update knowledge with their course of study. However, the distribution further shows

that 304 (90.0%) use it to make new friends, 300 (88.8%) use it to while away time, 289 (85.5%) use it to connect with course-mate, 275 (81.4%) use it to update their knowledge outside their course of study, 263 (77.8%) use it to facilitate their learning while 249 (73.6%) use it to get relevant information pertaining to their studies. However, the table revealed that 261 (77.2%) and 213 (63.1%) of the respondents disagreed to the statement that they use social media to solve social issues and transact business respectively.

#### **4.6 Research Question Four: What are the information behaviour of undergraduate students on social media?**

**Table 4.9: Information Behaviour of Undergraduate Students on the Usage of Social Media**

Statement	Strongly Agreed		Agreed		Disagreed		Strongly Disagreed	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I joined social media because of my friends	212	62.7	94	27.8	19	5.6	13	3.8
The way I source for information on social media is different from the way I source for information in the library	154	45.6	168	49.7	6	1.8	10	3.0
Whenever I see any course related information on the social media, I usually confirm its authenticity	152	45.0	146	43.2	22	6.5	18	5.3
I see social media as a place where I can get my information needs either academic or non-academic	146	43.2	164	48.5	14	4.1	14	4.1
In sourcing for my information on social media, I usually make use of comment interface to ask question	118	34.9	167	49.4	16	4.7	37	10.9
I get bored sourcing for information using social media	105	31.1	145	42.9	54	16.0	34	11.1
My information needs determine the kind of social media website I visits	183	54.1	145	42.9	3	0.9	7	2.1
Sometimes my decisions are made based on the information I get on social media	159	47.0	152	45.0	22	6.5	5	1.5
If I did not get the information I need in a particular social media, I usually make use of another social media site	150	44.4	159	47.0	15	4.4	14	4.1
I am always curious to verify any posted information on social media	103	30.5	159	47.0	24	7.1	52	15.4
I follow up any information I see on social media	150	44.4	88	26.0	59	17.5	41	12.1

Table 4.9 reveals the information behavior of undergraduate students on the usage of social media, the table shows that (90.5%) of the respondents joined social media because of their friends, (95.3%) agreed that the way they source for information on social media is different from the way they source for information in the library, (88.2%) agreed that whenever they see any course related information on the social media, they usually confirm its authenticity,

(91.7%) agreed that they see social media as a place where they can get their information needs either academic or non-academic, (74.3%) agreed that when sourcing for their information on social media, they usually make use of comment interface to ask question and (74.0%) agreed that they when get bored sourcing for information using social media.

#### 4.7 Result of the Hypothesis

The hypothesis formulated for this study state that“There is no significant relationship between the purpose of using social media and information behaviour of undergraduate students.”

**Table 4.10: Correlation Analysis on Purpose of Social Media Usage and Information Behaviour**

This section presents the results of the hypothesis formulated for this study and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 was employed for running the analysis.

		<b>Correlations</b>		
			Social Media Purpose	Information Behaviour
Spearman's rho	Purpose of Using Social Media	Correlation	1.000	.331**
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	338	338
	Information Behaviour	Correlation	.331**	1.000
		Coefficient		
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.	
	N	338	338	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 4.10, Spearman Rank-Order Correlation was run to determine the relationship between purpose of social media usage and information behavior of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kwara state, Nigeria. The correlation value of rho=0.331

indicates a weak correlation between purpose of social media usage and information behavior of undergraduate students. Also since p-value .0000 is less than 0.05 (significant level), the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is a significant relationship between purpose of social media usage and information behavior of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kwara state, Nigeria. This implies that there is a significant correlate between purpose of social media usage and information behaviour.

**Table 4.11: Influence of Social Media on Information Behaviour of Undergraduate Students**

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.405	.084		16.716	.000
	Purpose of Using Social Media	.271	.044	.316	6.099	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Information Behaviour

In Table 4.11, the result showed the relative contributions of the independent variable, social media on the dependent variable, information behavior where  $\beta = 0.316$  and  $p < 0.05$ . The implication is that social media influence information behaviour of undergraduate students.

#### 4.8 Discussion of Findings

This study investigated the influence of social media usage on information behaviour of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kwara state, Nigeria. The findings of this study were discussed based on the five (5) research objectives formulated for this study.

#### **4.8.1 Social Media Tools Preferred by Undergraduate Students**

Findings from this study revealed that Facebook is the most preferred social media tool among undergraduate students. This finding corroborates with the findings of Lenhart et al. (2010), Kumar (2012) and Idubor (2015). These studies found Facebook as the most used social media application. Aside Facebook, Instagram is the second most used social media application among undergraduate students. Instagram popularity can be attributed to its wider usage among the socialites in Nigeria. However, there is low usage of LinkedIn and 2go among undergraduate students.

#### **4.8.2 Extent of Social Media Utilization by the Undergraduate Students**

Finding from this study shows that majority of undergraduate students in Kwara state uses social media frequently while higher percentage of the respondent spent 3-4 hours daily. However, very few undergraduate students never made use of social media. This finding is similar to Ipsos Open Thinking Exchange (2013), who reported that American youths spend average of 3.8 hours a day on social networking. However, the findings in this study contradict Pempek, Yermolayeva and Calvert (2009), who reported that most students spent approximately 30 minutes a day on social media.

### **4.8.3 Purposes of Social Media Utilization by Undergraduate Students**

Among many purposes of using social media, findings from this study revealed that majority of the undergraduate students use social media to connect with friends. This finding corroborates previous studies (Madge, Meek, Wellens& Hooley, 2009; Idubor, 2015). These studies reported that students use social media to connect with friends. The students also attested that they make use of social media for educational purposes like updating knowledge in their field of study, get relevant information pertaining to their studies, facilitate e-learning and connect with course-mate. This finding is similar to previous studies (Tukru et al. (2013; Eke, Omekwu&Odoh, 2014) where it was reported that students uses social media for varieties of purposes such as communicating with friends, online learning, finding friends online, academic purpose etc.

### **4.8.4 Information Behaviour of Undergraduate Students on Social Media**

The undergraduate students joined social media because of their friends. There is difference in the way the undergraduate students' source for information on the social media and library. In using social media for academic, the undergraduate students always find the authenticity of any information they sourced for online. This finding is similar to the findings of Thompson (2003); Van-Scoyoc and Cason (2006) who reported that undergraduate students prefer to start research with search engines and students preferred to seek help from peers or from faculty.

### **4.8.5 Influence of Social Media on Information Behaviour of Undergraduate Students**

Finding from this study shows that there is a significant relationship between purpose of using social media and information behavior of undergraduate students in selected universities in



Kwara state, Nigeria. This implies that the purpose of using social media by undergraduate students determine their information behavior.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a summary and conclusions drawn from the findings of the study. The chapter also provides recommendations based on the findings. This study investigated the influence of social media usage on information behaviour of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kwara state, Nigeria.

### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

Based on the results emanating from the answers to research question and test of the hypothesis, the major findings of the study as revealed by the analysis are as follows:

1. Most of the social media application are being used by the students, although, there is degree in the variation of their usage. However, the undergraduate students are frequent users of social media applications.
2. Among the varieties of social media application used by undergraduate students, Facebook has the highest usage. However, there is low usage of LinkedIn and 2go.
3. Undergraduate students in Kwara state majorly uses social media to connect with friends. However, they also use social media for educational purposes like updating knowledge in their field of study, get relevant information pertaining to their studies, facilitate e-learning and connect with course-mate.
4. Based on the findings, the information behaviour of undergraduate students on social media are eventful. There are different behavioural attitude exhibited by undergraduate students which include both psychological and emotional.

5. There is a significant relationship between purpose of using social media and information behavior of undergraduate students in selected universities in Kwara state, Nigeria.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

In addition to the available empirical evidences, this study has been able to established empirical evidence on the influence of social media usage on information behaviour of undergraduate students in Kwara state. Specifically, the type of social media application used by undergraduate students, the extent of use, purpose of use, information behaviour on social media and the influence of social media on information behaviour of undergraduate students were established. Therefore, it is believed that establishing this evidence would result in understanding the information behaviour of undergraduate students on social media thereby contributing to the initiation of policies that has to with their socio-educational activities.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations directed at the management of universities, government agencies, students and the library staff are made:

1. The benefits of social media can never be overemphasized; therefore university management should ensure that they integrate the social media applications in library service delivery and learning system. For instance, the library can offer reference services on library social media platforms.
2. Students should embrace the use of social media for academic purpose such as sharing of ideas, communication and searching for academic information.

3. The library management should embrace the use of social media for current awareness services, selective dissemination of information and other services in the library.
4. If possible, library should create a unit of social media librarian that will be receiving and answering queries via library social media handles.

### **5.5 Contributions to Knowledge**

This study has been able to provide empirical evidence that there is high usage of social media among undergraduate students. Specifically, this study shows that there is a significant relationship between purpose of using social media and information behavior of undergraduate students.

### **5.6 Suggestion for Further Study**

This study hereby suggested that other researcher should consider the following title:

1. Influence of new media technology on the information behaviour of undergraduate students.
2. Perception of undergraduate students towards university library social media handles.
3. Analysis of university library social media handles.

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