University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)　　　　Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

2014

The Use of Social Networking Sites among the Undergraduate Students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Helen N. Eke Miss
University of Nigeria,Nsukka, helen.eke@unn.edu.ng

Charles Obiora Omekwu Prof
University of Nigeria, Nsukka, charles.omekwu@unn.edu.ng

Jennifer Nneka Odoh Miss
University of Nigeria, Nsukka, nneka.odoh@unn.edu.ng

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

The Use of Social Networking Sites among the Undergraduate Students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Charles O. Omekwu (Ph.D)* Charles.omekwu@unn.edu.ng
Helen N. Eke*   helen.eke@unn.edu.ng
Nneka Jennifer Odoh* nneka.odoh@unn.edu.ng

*University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Abstract

This study was carried out to investigate the use of social networking sites among the undergraduate students of university of Nigeria Nsukka. In the context of today's electronic media, social networking sites have come to mean individuals, using the Internet and web application to communicate in previously impossible ways. This is largely the result of a culture-wide paradigm shift in the uses and possibilities of the internet itself. The objectives of the study are to ascertain the various categories of social networking sites used by UNN Undergraduates, to examine the extent of usage of social networking sites by UNN Undergraduates, to examine their (UNN Undergraduates) purposes of using social networking sites, to determine the benefits of using social networking sites and to identify the dangers associated with social networking and to proffer strategies to ameliorate such dangers. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design which was employed to derive responses from a sample size of 150 undergraduate students of university of Nigeria Nsukka who were selected via random sampling techniques. Data were collected from this population using questionnaire. The 150 respondents completed and returned the questionnaire correctly representing 100% response sate. Means (x) were used to analyze the six research questions that guided the study. The result of the study reveals that mostly all the student were using the social networking sites in interaction with friends, connecting to their class mates for online study and for discussing serious national issues and watching movies etc. There are also laudable benefits of using social networking sites and dangers associated with social networking and such dangers can be ameliorated using the strategies available in the work. Drawn from the findings, it was recommended that university Authorities should organize seminars to enlighten students on the not-so good aspects of social networking sites etc. In addition useful suggestions for further research were equally made.

Background of the Study

Social networking sites are fast becoming very popular means of both interpersonal and public communication in Nigeria. Social networking sites are modern interactive communication channels through which people connect to one another, share ideas, experiences, pictures, messages and information of interest. Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social networking sites as:

> ''Web based services that allow individuals to construct a Public or semi-public profile within a bounded system (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and (3)view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.(pp.78-100.)

They are interactive networks which information and communication technology (ICTs) bequeath to the modern society through the instrumentality of the Internet and the telecommunication gadgets. The Internet makes it possible to expand the networks and to increase the possibilities for communicating with wider audiences on the globe. The interactive aura of the new media confers an unprecedented popularity on them. Also the ubiquity of the social networking sites within their short period of arrival is unparalleled in the annals of media industry. Awake (2011) buttresses this point by noting that ''social networking has become hugely popular. Similarly, it took 38 years for radio to reach 50 million users, 13 years for television to attract the same number and 4 years for the Internet to do so, but it took Facebook 12-month only to gain 200 million users. Social networking sites provide various interactive platforms based on the intentions of their founders. There are for instance, social, political, academic, businesses, sports, romantic and religious platform. In other words, the social networking site by their nature has the capabilities of educating, informing, entertaining and inflaming the audience. Onomo (2012) acknowledged this ability of the media by remarking that social networking sites has become ''a widespread tool for communication and exchange of ideas, helping individuals and organizations with just causes to reach a phenomenally vast audience that could hitherto not be reached by traditional media.''

Thus, since inception, social networking sites like Facebook, twittser,2go, My Space, Skype etc. have mesmerized millions of users, many of whom have been made to use these sites as parts of their daily activities. Currently, there is a plethora of social networks with various features meant to suit the different interests of their followers. Some are accessed via computer alone while others can be used with mobile phones. The first identifiable social networking sites was launched in 1997, six degree. It allowed its users to create profiles, list their friends and in 1998, introduced the friends list where users had the freedom to search for old and new friends. This however was devoid of the provision for users to upload their profile pictures. Other social networking sites like classmates were founded to aid social interaction among their users but did not have many features like six degrees. Other social networking sites like Friendster and myspace created virtual community, which would help its members locate old and new ones, shape their personal profile via the Internet and socially idea or opinion under the sun. Two years later, Jack Dorsey Launched Twitter as an online blogging site, while the most recent 2go was founded in 2008 by Michael S. Egan. Therefore, just like radio and television, social networking has spread everywhere in Nigeria and are bound to be sprouting as the new media for are still obscure. In other words, from the analysis carried out by the researcher from the world Internet statistics (2012) it was found that out of the total population of 170,123,740 Nigeria, 5,860,240 numbers of people used Facebook as of 2012. Comparing Burundi and Chad with a similar population of 10,557259k and 199 75,648 respectively, the data shows that 37,040 and 36, 940 number of people respectively used Facebook as of 2012. This result showed that chad with a lesser population, use Facebook more than Burundi. Also out of the total population, of 83,688,164 Egyptians, 11,764,880 numbers of people used Facebook as of 2012. Comparing this with the number of Nigerian Facebook users, it shows that Egyptians has the highest number of Facebook users while Nigeria becomes the second in Africa. Similarly, Florunso, etal (2010) reviewed that:

> *In Africa, social media networking sites are becoming widely*
> *Spread than it has ever been before and it appears that people's*
> *Perception of this technology is diverse. pp.326).*

Furthermore, as a novel phenomenon, it is necessary to examine how UNN students use the new means of communication. This is because student's contribution as youths can make or transform any nation. Essoungou (2010), explain that the new communication technology is one of few ways that young Africans can bypass the inefficiencies in the system that allow the status quo to hold on. It lowers the barriers to entry for everyone to get involved and be heard. A study like this shall help to ascertain whether Students use of the media could be regulated or not. This is obviously because the disposition of people of a given community could shape the media in existence there, just like a cerebral media scholar, Anim(2007)aptly notes that societies greatly influence the operations and functions of the media that operate within those societies.'' The manner in which the social media were used and the role they play in the recent uprising which rocked the middle- East popularly referred to as ''Arab Spring'' could be deciphered as credence to the above academic observations.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, social networking sites have metamorphosed from few-user-based sites into phenomena that have become niches for billions of users. The growth and popularity of social networking sites have generated concerns among school authorities, communication experts and socio-psychological researchers about the benefit and potential risks facing undergraduates, as they engage in online social networking to cater for their social and information needs rather than oral or face-to-face communication.

Throwing further light on the risk of social networking sites on oral communication among their users, Sherry Turkle (2012), the founder and director of the MIT initiative on technology and self, asserted that the convenience the social networking sites give users to communicate with one another can damage their interpersonal communication. Also, social networking sites make the users see one another as "objects" to be accessed and only for the parts that the users find useful, comforting amusing.

What is more, addiction to social networking sites can establish feelings of loneliness and increase feelings of insensitivity to disconnection, according to John J. Cacioppo, a neuroscientist at the University of Chicago (Cacioppo, 2009). Hence, there is the need to fashion out some means of selecting and using the right social networking site responsibly. This study is concerned with the trend of use of the sites, what benefits students derive from using the sites, the dangers associated with them and ways to avert such dangers.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to find out the place of the use of social network sites by undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria Nsukka. The specific purposes of the study are as follow:
1. To examine the various categories of social networking sites
2. To examine the extent of usage of social networking sites by the undergraduate students of the UNN.
3. To examine the purpose of the usage of social networking sites by UNN undergraduates
4. To determine benefits of using social networking sites.
5. To identify the dangers associated with social network sites.
6. To proffer strategies of ameliorating the dangers of social networking

Research Question

  The following research questions are formulated to guide the study.
1. What are the various categories of social networking sites?
2. To what extent do the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria use the social networking sites?
3. What are the purposes for using social networking sites?
4. What are the benefits of using social networking sites?
5. What are the dangers associated with social networking?
6. What are the strategies of ameliorating the dangers of social networking

Significance of the Study

  It is expected that the output of this research will benefit students and the administration of university of Nigeria Nsukka as will show the level of the students' use of social networking sites. This shall help them to understand how best to sustain the students attention on using social networking sites. Also this work will be of immense benefit to the field of Library and information sciences as it will be on addition to existing literature. And shall also add to the available academic literatures on social networking.

  Also the findings could be used by academic advisers and counselors proffer professional advice to the university authorities on how to regulate the social network usage among undergraduate students in UNN.

  Again, the findings of this study would provide facts that will enable the ministry of communication technology to know what arises from students' use of the social networking sites. This will help the ministry, to know how to control social network usage

 Upon successful completion of this research, it shall be very relevant to various people, across Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

  Content scope: this study is limited to the use of networking sites by undergraduate students of university of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Geographical scope: it covers the extent of the use of social networking sites by the undergraduate students of university of Nigeria Nsukka, categories of social networking sites benefits of using social networking sites, purposes of using social networking sites and dangers involved in the use of social networking sites.

Literature Review

Social networks are online services, platforms or sites that focus building and reflecting social relations among people, who, for example, share interests and or activities. Social networking sites are websites that allow those who have account with them to communicate with a selected group of friends (Awake,2011). Social networks comprise a representation of each user (often a profile), his or her social links, and a variety of additional services (wikipedia, 2011). Most of the social networks are web-based and provide mean for their users to interact via the Internet, such as e-mail and instant messaging; social networks allow activities, events and interact within their individual networks.

The inception of social networking sites, to facilitate new forms of computer-mediated social interaction, evolved from early suggestions. Measure and efforts to support social networks via computer-mediated communication (CMC) were made in many early online services; include unset, bulletin board service like America online, prodigy, and CompuServe. Early social networking on the World Wide Web began in the form of generalized online communities such as the glob.com (1995), Geocities (1994) and Tripod.com (1995) (wikipedia, 2011). Characteristically, many of these early communities focused on bringing people together to interact with one another through chat rooms and encouraged users to share personal information and ideas via personal web pages by providing easy-to-use publishing tools and free or inexpensive web space. Some network such as classmates.com, Facebook, Twitter etc. took a different approach by simply having people link to each other through e-mail addresses.

New social networking methods were developed at the end of the 1990's and many sites began to design more advanced features for users to find and manage friends. This newer generation of social networks began to blossom with the emergence of six degrees.com in 1997, followed by make out club in 2000, freinster in 2002 and myspace in 2003. Social networking sites have become a new means through which individuals can interact and communicate with friends in distance places. As at September, 2011, facebook had a total number of 800 million active users (wikipedia, 2011). Today, it is estimated that there are now over 200 active social networks using a wide variety of social networking models.

In Nigeria, the number of social network users is on the high side. According to social bakers, a facebook statistics site, Nigeria ranks 35th in the world in the number of facebook users. According to the site, facebook has an estimate of over 4 million Nigeria users, with the males dominating 65% while the females have a 33% domination.

The purposes of using social networking sites

The popularity of social networks grows rapidly by the second. These social sites have become effective (to an extent) means of communicating 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.

In addition, social networking enhances a student's sense of community, sharing and collaboration, brings an additional responsibility and workload, which some students find inflexible and rather "forced" (Minocha, 2009). This technology uses web cams or voice-only soft ware to hold virtual seminars online. This is extremely useful for collaborations where, the partners live in different parts of the globe. Through the use of social networking sites students are able to express themselves, communicate and collect profiles that highlight their talent and experience. Accoding to Konetes and McKeague in 2011, came up with certain revelations about the uses of the social networking sites especially, facebook, The researchers reported that, "students are using Facebook and other channels to develop their identities, beliefs and stances on various issues such as politics, religion, economy and workm, as well as to pioneer and develop intimate relationships." Also, 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." Researchers have fast realize the need to incorporate this into the educational faculties, as a resource to support the educational communications between student

and faculties, even though institutions of higher learning have tried preventing students from accessing technologies which is of less important to their academic benefit.

Examining the various categories of social networking sites

According to wikipedia, the main social networks are those that contain category places (such as former school year or classmates), means to connect with friends (usually with self-description pages), and a recommendation system linked to trust. In Hudson's (2011) view, social networks and niche social network, General social networks are another types of social networks and to corroborate this Chris (2010) opined that:

> *Some social networking websites such as facebook, fall in the "general, category, they accommodate folks of all interest and backgrounds on this type of social networking websites. Members can after include their interest… and then locate members with similar interests by searching for key words and key phrases. The main purpose of general social networking websites is to serve as a special platform where people can reunite with old friends; stay connected with current ones, and even make new acquaintances. (pp.235)*

Social networking sites can also be classified based on people's areas of interest. Harson (2009) stresses that:

> *Other social networking websites have tight, niche focuses, and cater for specific groups of people. Social networking websites can revolve around sports, dating, culture, hobbies, ethnicity, education, romance, entrepreneurship and more.(pp.442)*

In addition, social network can be categorized based on ownership of the websites and they are founded to achieve some specific goals which are determined by the owners. In view of this, Wikipedia (2011) documents that:

> *… The major social networking sites includes academic.edu. Asian Avenue, Ahtlinks, Audiomated, Black planet, Blogster, Bolt.com, catemom, care2, cellufun, Daily booth, Dol 12 Day, Explore, facebook faceparty, face.com, flister, friends, frienster, Gather.com, Google Buzz, linkedin, MEET, in my space, Netlog, Orku, Pingsta, Twitter, Yoruneo, Xing(pp.253)*

The most recently added social network is 2go. It is a mobile social network founded by a south African, Michaels. Egan, in 2008.

Also social networks can be classified based on formats. These formats have to do with the extent to which they incorporate new information and communication tools. Shrader (2009) contributes by asserting that:

> *… types of social networking sites. Forums-forums are typically comprised of people with similar interest. Blogs-originally called web-logs, these person journals still exist while other blogs discuss*

> *a particular niche or interest. Micro-Blogging-similar to blogs, this is a micro-journal of what is happening right now. Multimedia sharing social networking site are known for sharing information, in this case, photo … video sharing-you Tube is the video sharing site that almost everyone has seen … professional networking allows people to connect with people and, by this connection, meet other professionals that person knows. Social-social networking site are about being social, so there are site purely for allowing users to stay in touch with people whom they know.(pp.163)*

Jason (2010) sums it up by asserting that "social networking sites are classified based on the nature of their communities. "in his own eyes, these network include social news, social measuring, micro blogging, social Q&A, video, sharing, photo sharing, professional networks, niche communities, social E-mail, comment communities, broadcasting communities, blog networks, product-based, networks, presentation sharing and review and recommendation sites.

The Benefits of Using Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites can be a great way to make connections with people with related interests and goals, like a virtual meeting place where friends hang out. There is evidence of a broad range of benefits to student or users associated with the use of Social networking sites. These are just some of the several positive things that have contributed to social networking popularity among scholars because they can discuss different topics, share information and exchange files and pictures. However, from the study carried out by Konetes and Mc sKeague (2011) came up with certain revelations about the uses of the social networking sites especially, Facebook, The research reported that, ''students are using Facebook and other channels to develop their identities, beliefs and stances on various issues such as politics, religion, and work, as well as to pioneer and develop intimate relationships.''

In support of the benefits that social networks have on interactions among students and teachers, wikipedia document that:

> *Social networks focused on supporting relations between teachers and students are now used for learning, educators, profession development, and content. Ming for teachers, learn central, teacher-street and other sites are being built to foster relationships that educational blogs, eportfolios, formats and adhoc communities, as weel as communication such as communication such as chats, discussion threats, and synchnnous for a. these sites also have content sharing and rating features.*

Also according to Brennan (2001) and Notle (2010) social networking help in the school and universities to leverage and complement formal education activities and enhance learning outcomes. In other words, Social networking can provide opportunities for new relationships as well as strengthening existing relationships. These are some breakdown of benefits of using social networking sites.

Joseph Barker (2013) noted that social media offers plenty of opportunities for learning and interactivity and it is not too hard to see how students and its users benefits from using social media. Joseph said that they are learning and adapting to the world using a relatively new form

of communication. Joseph Barker (2013) went further to discuss the following benefits of using social networking as:

Web engagement: Students use social networking sites day in day out to interact with their peers and even teachers about class-related subjects. In a word where online engagement is important for businesses, these students are becoming experts at developing a sense of internet presence. Not only do they know how to interact with others on the Internet, they know how to use basic and even complex functions in order to do so.

Informal knowledge and skill: Social Networking sites can facilitate learning and skill development outside formal learning environments by supporting peer- to peer learning of knowledge and skills collaboration and diverse cultural expression. Also, Nottey(2007) reviewed that because of persolization involved, social networking sites can be particularly important learning interests and needs such as online marketing.

Education: According to Brennan(2001) and Notley(2010) social networking help in schools and universities programmes. Such social networking sites e.g, blogs help to leverage or complement formal educational activities and enhancing outcomes. While learning frameworks are now integrated into most educational settings; the use of SNS is less comprehensively utilized. (Notley, 2009) noted that "access to social networking sites varies according to state and educational level, with some states banning accessing to social networking sites services together''. SNS is also being used to extend opportunities for formal learning across geographical contexts. For example, within the linking latitudes program established by Tasmania's Sacred Heart School and pularumpi School on Melville Island, learners from both schools use instant messaging and skype to share information about their cultures and work, collaboratively. It is important to note that the educational benefits of SNS are not experienced equally by all young people. Certain groups of learners, such as indigenous young people, those from low socio-economic backgrounds and those living in remote areas, face persistent challenges of Internet access and literacy (MCEETYA 2006; ABC, 2007; The Smith family, 2008; ACMA 2009). Maximizing the benefits of SNS for these groups specifically requires addressing access and digital literacy. That is why (Banchard, et al 2007) noted that "yet where access and skills are promoted, SNS and social media can enhance the interactions of marginalized young people with their teacher and increase their confidence in educational activities.

Furthermore, as for informal knowledge and skills; social networking services can facilitate learning and skill development outside formal learning environments by supporting peer-to-peer learning of knowledge and skills, collaboration, diverse cultural expression; the development of skills valued in the modern workplace, and a more empowered conception of citizenship (Ito, et al, 2006; Jenkins, 2007). The knowledge and skill young people are learning through SNSs are directly relevant to the 'participatory web' in which 'user generated content is now integral in a rapidly developing online business model that capitalizes on the social networks, creativity and knowledge of its users; and this means that new business models are expected to emerge (see OECD 2007) (Notley, 2009) noted that this has led some to claim that the learning enabled via social media will have a direct bearing on their economic futures. Although it cannot be pressured that daily use of technology outside of formal education contexts translates into meaningful use for learning, SNS will provide the most benefit in terms of learning when there is integration of social networking users in educational settings and their everyday lives.(kennedy,et.al,2008).

Individual identify and self-expression

Boyd (2007) noted that ''SNS are increasingly important for the expression of identity. This articulation is not merely narcissistic, but supports critical peer-based sociality. Because SNS are essentially flexible and designed to promote individual customization'' Valtysson(2010) uses SNS to experiment as well as find legitimacy for their political, ethic, cultural or sexual identity Coleman & Rowe(2005): Montogamery et al (2004) Hillier and Harrison(2007). SNS can also reinforce parts of their identity, such as ethnicity or cultural background Blanchard, et al.(2008), particularly its important for people with chronic illness, newly-arrived migrants and minority ethnic groups (Stephens-Reicher, et al 2010).

Social networking sites can provide users with a space to work out identity and status, make sense of cultural cues and negotiate public life. Boyd(2007).Citing part of the results of the studies carried out by Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, in 2009; Konetes and McKeagu(2011), state that:

Self- esteem, personal validation and value are positively affected by the use of Facebook for many users, especially those who have a low self-worth. Among SNSs Facebook in particular has been found to increase user's sense of personal belonging. Also, this sense of personal belonging has in and of itself been positively correlated with academic performance.

Strengthening interpersonal relationships

Having positive interpersonal relationships is an important predictor of well being (Hartup & Stevens, 1999) and can buffer individuals from many of the key stressors that characterize the transition from childhood to adulthood (Bukowski, 2001: Hartup, 2000). Social networking generally, has been found to strengthen individual interpersonal relationships (Valentine & Holloway, 2002; ACMA 2009:8; Besley 2008: Gross, 2004; Subrah Manyam, Kraut, Greenfield, & Gross, 200: Valkerburg & Peter, 2006). Email, instant messaging and social networking can address new barriers people may face to forming and maintaining public places together, limited transport to get there, and time free of structured activities such as school and sport.

To summarize the benefit of social networking, from the views of Joseph Barker (2013), and Philippa Collin, Raphilly Ingred Richardson, Amanda third (2010) the social networking is becoming a vital part of everyday business, providing endless potential which can be of benefit to students in their academic performance and daily life activities in a variety of ways as outlined above. If anyone does not currently have an account with any social networking site, that person is missing out on the increased communication on offer.

Dangers that associated in using social networking sites

On the other hand, social networking sites have caused some problems for their users, individuals, families, groups and students. Most of their users , these days, prefer to communicate via the sites rather via face-to-face contact or oral communication, thus, making social network their preferred socializing forces. This Benniger (1987) opined "has gradually replaced interpersonal communication …" "According to Sherry Turkle, the founder and director of MIT initiative on Technology and self, via wikipedia (2011), stated:

Networked, we are together, but so lessened are our expectations
of each other that we feel utterly alone. And there is the risk that
we come to see each other as objects to be accessed and only for
the parts that we find useful, comforting or amusing.

Ahmed(2011) reported that one of the dangers of social networks ; cyber or E crime encourages copyright infringement which has always remain a serious case in dealing with social

Networking sites especially about the video clips for instance in the YouTube. Users without considering the terms can easily upload download or watch any kind of video clip. YouTube for instance was sued several times on these issues. For example Viacom sued YouTube claiming one billion dollar for uploading 160 thousand videos belonging to Viacom without their permission as did the French independent labels collecting society.

Another drawback to social networking is that some users simply share too much information; people can lose their jobs or a friendship over leaking information on social networking. Even if a user of a social site has her privacy settings of highest level, their information can still be passed on by someone on their friends list. It doesn't take much for an angry follower to copy and paste a status or download a picture if they are looking for revenge. On the following note there are a number of scammers on social networks who may try to steal or use your personal information; information that can be used for potential crime such as identity theft or fraud.

Furthermore, there has been a recent spike in phishing attacks associate with social media sites Fisher(2011). Many people view social media sites on cell phones or other mobile devices. This makes it harder to distinguish real and fake web sites.   Additionally, social media enables attackers to send phishing messages that appear to come from someone that the victim knows. Having obtained long information for a few accounts, scammers will then send out messages to everyone connected to the compromised accounts, often with an enticing subject line that suggests familiarity with the victim Baker (2009).

Additionally, social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter create the illusion of familiarity and intimacy on the internet. The result is that people may be inclined to share information on which they would have preferred to keep private.

Again, cross site request forgery (CSRF) is an attack which causes an end user's web browser to execute actions of the attacker's choosing without the user's knowledge. By embedding a malicious link in a web page or sending a link via email or chat, an attacker may cause the users of a web application to perform unwanted actions. More specifically, the attack causes the user's browser to make requests to a web site to which it has been authenticated, without the user's or the web sites knowledge. These actions may result in compromised end user data operations, or even an entire server or network.

Also, Amaka Eze (2012) noted that social networking have become perilous as a result of the activities of criminals. Recently Nigeria was faced with one of the worst dangers that the social network sites can generate. The death of Cynthia Onwkogu who fell victim of one of the social network hazards through "facebook". This habit of adding friends or sending message without having a second thought about the consequences had lead so many people in fallen victim of fraud and armed robbery a young lady and student of the university of Nasarawa, in Nassarawa state.

Another danger found with use of social networking sites are predators and stalkers. When teens complete their online profile, they have typically given away much of their personal information. Any of their "friends" can have access to their full name, birth date, school and even their erect location. Not only is it possible for someone to hack your profile, they could also steal your identity.

In addition, as social networks have risen in popularity over the past years, people have been spending excessive amount of time on the Internet in general and social networks in specific. This has led researchers to debate the establishment of Internet addiction as an actual clinical disorder (wikipedia, 2011). Social networking can affect the extent to which a person

feels lonely. In a Nesweek article, Johannah Cornblatt elucidates that "social networking sites like facebook and my space may provide people with feeling alone". John T. Cacropo, a neuron-scientist at the University of Chicago, claims that social networks can foster feelings of sensitivity to disconnection which can lead to loneliness. This, he calls the social media contagion effect (wikipedia, 2011).

Strategies for ameliorating the dangers of social networking

Several authors have suggested many strategies for the amelioration of the danger of social networking. According to SANs, N.D. (2009) reviewed the threat from insufficient authentication controls could be mitigated by the password security portion of an organizational security policy. In many social media applications of data is distributed in various locations. So, password security would help offset these risk. Passward security is a crucial part of a recommended security policy. Good password security would make it much harder for an attarcker to gain access to a protected account or database. Another important aspect of password policy is using strong password(SANs, n.d) users should be taught to choose strong passwords that they can memorize without having to write them down on a sheet of paper near their computer, where they could be exposed. In a study by Acunetix, 42 percent of Hot mail accounts had poor passwords (Timm and Perez,(2010). There are well- known techniques for creating strong memorizable passwords. For example, Byte interactive good passwords web sites(http://www.good passwords.com) assists in generating strong passwords, up to 60 characters in length that are aligned with the keys on a standard keyboard to assist in recall. Another application is password safe, available from http://source forge. Net/ projects/ password safe/ which enables a user to maintain an encrypted database of passwords on their computer or to generate secure passwords on request. To aid in memorization, users might also consider grouping passwords by category of sites or application. For example, a strong core password might be reused but with variations in beginning or ending characters.

On the other hand, Timm & Perez(2010) suggest that users should be aware of phishing attacks. Timm& Perez noted that in social networking sites, users are often quit to accept messages purporting to be from friends or acquaintances at face value without validation. Such messages often have enticing subject lines or contents leading users to perform actions desired by the attacker, such as opening attachments or running applications.

Timm&Perez (2010) Reviewed that In orders to avoid disclosing   information to an imposter users should follow   some prudent practices when communicating on social networking sites. Primarily, users should exercise basic caution when communicating and sharing information with online friends. Similarly, Rosman(2009) Noted, that security in social networking site starts with knowing to whom one is communicating. Many people have friends and following online, but do not really know who their online friends are or whether they are even whom they claim to be. It is relatively easy for an attacker to impersonate someone in a social media sites for financial gain.

Furthermore, users should also carefully control what information they post on social networking sites accounts and to whom this information is available. Even if users try to protect their privacy by restricting the visibility of their personal information and posts on social networking sites should be cautious of what they post in social media sites, for example, in 2009 Facebook changed its terms of service to allow users to retain archived copies of user content, even if the user had removed the content from their profile(Wikipedia, 2011).

Empirical Framework

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Some empirical studies have shown that student refer social networking sites as an interactive site were people communicate and interact with one another. An empirical study conducted by Idakwo (2011), among other things upholds the fact that the use of social media as a means of communication has been adopted in Nigeria. The study examines "the use of social media among Nigerian youths. From the title, it is crystal clear that some findings of the study shall be relevant here, as many youths fall within the age bracket of most students in the universities this study covered. In his study, Idakwo, among other things discovered that most people use Facebook more than other social media channels in Nigeria. Also, most respondents concurred to the fact they use the social medial especially Facebook, as an alternative to other conventional communication media. In the words of the researcher, "with regard to the use of Facebook as an alternative mode of communication, 74% admitted to using Facebook as an alternative to other kinds of communication". In a nutshell, the author summarizes other key points of his findings as follows:

Social media have become a mainstream activity and have become a major mode of communication especially for youths who form about 50% of the world population on facebook. Social media have moved from being just interactive to a form of mass media. Social media have been predicted as a strong force in shaping public opinion especially in issue of politics, social causes and sexuality. Social media have also been an expression of the complexities between the media and society (Idakwo, 2011:23).

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).

According to Kim (2011) As much as individuals get immersed in the endless flow of free videos on youtube potentially sacrificing real world relationships, they continuously redefine the notion of community by constructing alternative ones that promote active interactions with others virtually or physically. This is seen in the case of school-girls' and stay-home mothers' capability to form activist communities for the candlelight movements. For example, soul Dresser, a Korean women's online taste community on fashin exemplified how the virtual community transformed itself as a real world force of people power by amassing resources such as money and protesters based on its existing networks. In the finding of Kim above, another different picture was being Rainte, maintaining that as people deepen themselves in viewing videos on you Tube, they build a form of community that encourage an active interaction physically or cyberspace-wise with other users.

In addition, Haridakis and Hanson in 2009 examined one of the social media, you Tube, 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 you Tube use that reflects its social networking

characteristics". Therefore the study reveals that the viewers of the you Tube medium perceived it as sharing certain features with television but in addition it has some social media properties.

Theoretical Framework

This study can be explained, using the media systems dependency (MSD) theory. The media systems dependency theory was first proposed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melivin Defleur in 1976, and consists of a complex system in which the media, individuals, their personal environment, and the social environment have dependency relationships with each other. Each component depends on the others components in a system by drawing on resource in order to satisfy goals. Particular attention is given to the resources of media systems in modern society and the consideration conditions which will increase or decrease individuals reliance on media system. In another way, media systems dependency theory is a relationship in which the capacity of individuals to attain their goals is contingent upon the information resources of the media systems (wikipedia, 2012).

According to Baran and Davies (2009), media systems dependency theory assumes that the more a person depends on having his or her needs met by media use, the more important will be the role that the media play in the person's life, and therefore, the more influence the media will have on the person. People turn to the media to communicate or make sense of what is happening, as the world becomes complex. Little-John (2002) also explained that people will become more dependent on the media that meet a number of their needs than on the media that touch only a few needs. The more an individual relies on the media for the expression of thought and sharing of ideas, the more that individual is influenced by the media.

Again, the more we depend on social media, the more our attitudes, cognition, emotional states or behavior will change (wikipedia, 2011). As individuals develop expectations that the media system can provide assistance toward goal attainment, individuals generally develop dependency relations with the media or medium perceived to be the most helpful in the goal pursuit. Media systems dependency theory also rests on the fact that industrialization have decreased the influence of inter personal communication and, therefore, increased the role of media system (wikipedia, 2011).

Gratifications theory stresses how and why the audience use the media Klapper(1963) as cited by Haridakis &Hanson (2009). Also, expatiating on the theory, McQuail (2010) has it that '' the central question posed is: why do people use media, and what do they use them for? He further posits that:

Functionalist sociology Wright, (1974) viewed the media as serving the various needs of the society-e.g. for cohesion, cultural continuity, social control and a larg circulation of public information of all kinds. This, in turn, presupposes that individuals also use media for related purposes such as person guidance, relaxation, adjustment, information and identity formation.

The theory recognizes an maintains that the audience has various needs that prompt themselves to any media or media content. Therefore, the focal point is that the theory is of the notion that there are distinct benefits the media message consumers envisage to get from any medium they would expose themselves to. Once the medium does not deliver to the people those purposes, needs and or benefits they anticipate from the organ, the tendency is that they(audience) may desert the very channel or content that does not satisfy them. The import is that the media audience is not an 'idle' soccer spectator that accepts what his football team plays; failure of a medium to satisfy the audience's basic desire regularly will give them room for searching for another medium. Lazarsfeld and Stanton, (1944;1949) cited by McQuail (2010) has

it that the first research conducted on the uses and gratifications theory ''dates from the early 1940s, and focused on the reasons for the popular appeal of different radio programmes, especially ''soap operas' and quizzes, and also looked at daily newspaper reading.''

Research Method
The research design for this study is the descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey seeks to find out certain facts concerning an existing phenomenon. According to Aina (2006) descriptive survey is a study which sues the sample data in any systematic investigation to describe and explain what is existent or non-existence on the present status of a phenomenon being investigated. This method is used because the study intend to elicit the opinions of the respondents on use of social networking sites among undergraduates students of University of Nigeria Nsukka.

The area of the study is University of Nigeria Nsukka. The choice of the area was for proximity and to ensure effective distribution and collection of data through the use of a questionnaire. The population of this study comprises the entire undergraduate Students of University of Nigeria Nsukka. The population figure of undergraduates at the university of Nigeria Nsukka campus is fifteen thousand and seventy (15070), based on the statistic provided by the Academic planning unites, office of the vice-chancellor University of Nigeria, Nsukka April, 2012. The population was derived from various faculties. See the illustration in Appendix 3.

The sample size is 150 representing a percentage of 1% of total population (15070) undergraduate students. This is supported by Nwanna cited in Agbonmiewalen(2007)'' when he recommended that when the population runs into few hundred use 40% or more, when several hundred use 20%, when thousand use 10% and when several thousand use 5% or less.'' Simple random sampling on the other hand, is a method of drawing a sample from the population so that each member of the population is given an equal and independent chance of being selected. Iyela(2002). See appendix 2.

The instrument for data collection was a self constructed questionnaire. It was titled the use of social networking sites among undergraduate students of University of Nigeria Nsukka. The questionnaire consist of two broad parts; Part A and part B. part A is on background and characteristics of the respondents while part B was divided into six (6) clusters.   Cluster   1 contain various networking sites used by the respondent with sixteen items while cluster 2 deals with the extents of used of social networking sites by the respondents with sixteen items. Cluster 3 is all about the level of agreement as to the purpose of using social networking sites with eleven items while cluster 4 is on level of agreement as to benefits of social networking sites with seven items. Cluster 5 is the dangers encountered in using social networking sites with nine items while cluster 6 is on strategies for ameliorating the dangers of social networking with six items.
        The questionnaire was homogeneously keyed in a 4-poing scale and the subjects were guided to respond to each items thus: SA-Strongly Agree; A-Agree; SD-Strongly Disagree; D-Disagree. VGE-very great extent; GE-Great extent; LE-Little extent; NA-Not at all.

One hundred and fifty copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondent (undergraduate student of UNN) by the researchers and were collected by the researcher to ensure an accurate return rate.

The researchers used mean scores (X) to analyze each item in the questionnaire for the purpose of answering research questions.

Data Analysis and Presentation
This chapter deals with the analysis of data collected from the field. They are presented according to the research questions, and the responses were organized using rank weighted means and simple percentage frequencies.
Research question one: what are the various categories of social network sites and there uses? Table 1: The mean responses on the various categories of socials network sites used.

S/N	Items	4 SA	3 A	2 D	1 SA	$\overline{X}$	Remark
1	Facebook	108	42	0	0	3.72	Accepted
2	Twitter	18	60	42	30	2.44	Rejected
3	Badoo	0	6	48	96	1.40	Rejected
4	Frienster	0	6	60	84	1.48	Rejected
5	My space	0	24	66	84	1.92	Rejected
6	2go	54	66	18	12	3.08	Accepted
7	Whatsapp	42	84	6	18	3.00	Accepted
8	Googl+	54	54	30	12	3.01	Accepted
9	Bebo	0	0	60	90	1.40	Rejected
10	Linkedin	6	0	66	78	1.56	Rejected
11	My life	0	18	66	66	1.68	Rejected
12	Live journal	6	18	60	66	1.76	Rejected
13	You Tube	54	54	30	12	3.01	Accepted
14	Delicious	0	24	48	78	1.64	Rejected
15	Yahoo	60	72	18	0	3.28	Accepted
16	Orkut	0	12	48	90	1.48	Rejected

From table 1, majority of the respondents representing 2.50-4.0 in the items accept Facebook, 2go, whatsapp, googl+, you tube, yahoo as the various categories of social network sites used by the undergraduate student of University of Nigeria Nsukka. From 2.44 -1.0 that are rejected are the various categories of social network sites that are not used by the undergraduate students of University of Nigeria Nsukka.

A respondent specified the following categories of social networking sites:
i. skype
ii. Black bery messenger (BBM)
iii. Blog

Research Question One: To what extent do the undergraduate students of the University of Nigeria Nsukka use the social networking sites?
Table 2: The mean responses on the extent of using social networking sites.

S/N	Items	4 VGE	3 GE	2 LE	1 NA	$\overline{X}$	Remark
A	Facebook	84	12	54	0	3.2	Accepted
B	Twitter	18	48	30	54	2.2	Rejected
C	Badoo	0	6	24	120	0.52	Rejected

		0	18	12	120	1.32	Rejected
D	Friendster	0	18	12	120	1.32	Rejected
E	My space	0	18	24	108	1.40	Rejected
F	2go	42	48	36	24	2.72	Accepted
G	Whatsapp	36	48	30	36	2.56	Accepted
H	Googl+	66	24	24	36	2.80	Accepted
I	Bebo	6	6	12	126	1.28	Rejected
J	Linkedin	0	0	24	126	1.16	Rejected
K	My life	6	18	6	120	1.40	Rejected
L	Live journal	6	18	18	108	1.48	Rejected
M	You Tube	24	48	36	42	2.86	Accepted
N	Delicious	0	18	12	120	1.32	Rejected
O	Yahoo	30	84	18	18	2.84	Accepted
P	Orkut	0	0	15	132	1.88	Rejected

From table 2, majority of the respondents use the following sites more than others: Facebook (3.2),Goole+(2.80),whatsapp(2.56),2go(2.72) yahoo (2.84), youtube (2.86) while other sites like Badoo, friendster, live journal, linkdin, my life, delicious, orkut, bebo, my space ranked low in extent of utilization. In other words, from 0.52-2.44 that are rejected are used in low extent by undergraduate student of University of Nigeria Nsukka.

Research Questions Three: What are the purposes for using social networking sites?
Table 3: Mean responses on their purposes of using social networking sites.

S/N	ITEMS	4 SA	3 A	2 D	1 SD	$\overline{X}$	Remark
1	I Use social networking sites for communicating and interacting with friends.	114	36	0	0	4.56	Accepted
2	I Use social networking sites for online learning.	48	90	12	0	3.24	Accepted
3	I Use social networking sites for finding friends online.	54	66	30	0	3.16	Accepted
4	I Use social networking sites for leisure and personal socialization.	84	66	0	0	3.56	Accepted
5	I use social networking sites for professional activities (searching for job).	30	78	36	6	2.88	Accepted
6	I use social networking sites for academic purposes such as group discussion and getting study partners online.	36	78	36	0	3.02	Accepted
7	I use social networking sites for watching movies.	36	48	60	6	2.84	Accepted
8	I use social networking sites for connecting and interacting with business partners.	30	60	30	30	2.60	Accepted
9	I use social networking sites for	30	60	54	6	2.76	Accepted

S/N	ITEMS	96	48	6	0	3.60	Accepted
	communicating, mobilizing and organizing national issues like politics, economy and religious matters.						
10	I use social networking sites for private messaging, uploading photos and online profiles.	96	48	6	0	3.60	Accepted
11	I use social networking sites for updating profile information's.	66	78	0	6	3.36	Accepted

From table 4, the decision shows that all items were accepted as to the purpose of using social networking sites.

Research Question four: What are the benefits of using social networking sites?
Table 4: mean Responses on the benefits of using social networking sites.

S/N	ITEMS	4 SA	3 A	2 D	1 SD	$\overline{X}$	Remark
1	It encourages virtual meeting with co-research scholars	42	54	48	6	2.85	Accepted
2	It increases self-esteem and well being.	36	60	48	6	2.84	Accepted
3	It helps in research and learning.	60	66	18	6	3.20	Accepted
4	It support collaborative and peer to-peer learning.	54	90	0	0	3.24	Accepted
5	It helps in strengthening interpersonal relationships.	84	54	12	0	3.48	Accepted
6	It promote read and write web skills.	48	72	30	0	3.12	Accepted
7	It helps in developing an e-portfolio for future employment.	30	78	30	6	2.80	Accepted

From table 4, the decision shows that all the items were accepted as the benefit of using social networking sites. A respondent specified the following benefits.
1. Individuals meet their spouses through social networking sites.

Research Question five: What are the dangers associated with social networking sites?

Table 5: Responses on the dangers associated with social networking sites.

S/N	ITEMS	4 SA	3 A	2 D	1 SD	$\overline{X}$	Remark
1	E-crime e.g. identity theft, theft of valuable data, interruption of business, financial loss.	66	42	30	12	3.08	Accepted
2	Internet addiction	78	54	18	0	3.40	Accepted
3	Laziness	60	60	24	6	3.16	Accepted
4	Standard crimes e.g. kidnapping, fraud, murder.	36	60	24	6	2.52	Accepted
5	Immoral Act e.g. prostitution, pornography.	36	60	36	18	2.52	Accepted
6	Lack of privacy	24	72	48	6	2.76	Accepted
7	Child abuse	12	66	54	18	2.50	Accepted
8	Waste of time	48	72	18	12	3.04	Accepted
9	Cyber-bullying	0	54	72	24	2.4	Rejected

Table 5 shows that only one item was rejected-that is item 9 and other items were accepted as to the dangers associated with social networking.

Research Question Six: What are the strategies for ameliorating the dangers of social networking?

Table 6: Responses on the strategies for ameliorating the dangers of social networking sites.

S/N	ITEMS	4 SA	3 A	2 D	1 SD	$\overline{X}$	Remark
1	By not storing information you want to protect on any device that connect to Internet.	78	48	18	6	3.32	Accepted
2	By being careful on the kind of information you share about yourself, family and friends.	108	42	0	0	3.72	Accepted
3	By changing your passwords periodically and not reuse old passwords.	48	60	36	6	3.01	Accepted
4	By not posting anything that might embarrass you later, or that you don't want a stranger to know.	90	54	6	0	3.56	Accepted
5	By not sharing your username, passwords, social security numbers, credit cards, bank information's, salaries with friends.	90	54	6	0	3.56	Accepted
6	By being thoughtful and limiting personal information you share.	96	54	0	0	3.64	Accepted

Table 6 equally shows that all items were accepted as to the strategies for ameliorating the dangers of social networking sites. A respondent specified the following strategies.

i. By being careful of the kind of people you add as your friends.

Discussion of Findings

In this Chapter, the research findings were discussed in line with the research questions and literature review.

Various categories of social networking sites used by undergraduate students of University of Nigeria Nsukka.

The mean response score representing the rate of agreement in the questionnaire reveal that the Categories of social networking site used by undergraduate student of university of Nigeria Nsukka include Facebook,2go, Whatsapp, Googl+, YouTube, Yahoo, Skype, Blackbery messenger, Blog. The study carried out by Chris (2010) revealed that some social networking sites such as Facebook, fall in the ''general'' categories, they accommodate folks of all interest and backgrounds. On this type of Social Networking Websites, members can often include their interest and they Locate members with similar interests by searching for key words and key phrases. The study further revealed that the main purposes of general social networking websites is to serve as a social platform where people can reunite with old friends; stay connected with current ones and even make new acquaintances. Similarly, Wikipedia (2011) documents that: … The major social networking sites includes academic.edu. Asian Avenue, Ahtlinks, Audiomated, Black planet, Blogster, Bolt.com, catemom, care2, cellufun, Daily booth, Dol 12 Day, Explore, facebook faceparty, face.com, flister, friends, frienster, Gather.com, Google Buzz, linkedin, MEET, in my space, Netlog, Orku, Pingsta, Twitter, Yoruneo, Xing(pp.253)

Extent of use of social networking sites by UNN undergraduate students.

The response score on the extent of the usage of social networking sites by undergraduate students of University of Nigeria Nsukka, favour Facebook,2go,Yahoo,Whatsapp,Googl+,Youtube,Skype,Blackbery messenger.

Responses have it that these social networking sites are used in great extent. Haneeta and Sumitha(2011)noted that the large number of undergraduate students use the social networking site Facebook, and that a great percentage make their profile publicly available with the resultant reveal of personal information that entails and also that youth is recorded the highest population that make use of Facebook and even other social networking sites like Twitter, googl+, youtube.

Purposes for using social networking sites by UNN undergraduate students.

Respondents responded positively on purpose of using social networking sites. The findings of this study show that UNN undergraduate students use social networking sites for different purposes and the sites often favour them. The investigation revealed that UNN undergraduate students use the social networking sites to communicate with friends, watching movies, for discussing national issues like politics, economy and religious matters, and for academic purposes. With respect to Research question three, it was revealed that one of the purposes which UNN Undergraduates use social networking site to achieve is watching movies(film).The revelation here is similar to the findings of Haridakis and Hanson (2009) who submitted after their study entitled ''Social interaction and co-viewing with YouTube: blending social connection and mass communication,'' that the group they studied viewed YouTube for purposes of leisured entertainment….characterised by two specific motives; social interaction and co- viewing. So, here it has been found out that one of the students' purposes of using

social networking sites is watching movies. This was seen as accepted with the statement: 'students use social networking sites for watching movies(films)'.Besides, in the next item used to answer research question three, it was revealed that the students use the social networking sites because they discuss serious national issues like politics, economy and religious matters on the new media. This finding is encouraging as it shows that students do have brainstorm on national issues via the social networking sites. This will be used for them to generate ideas that can be implemented for the good of the nation. So, the social networking sites provide a similar forum for the people to discuss relevant national matters, just like McQUail (2010) observed that the mass media as a whole do when he remarks that, ''mass media often provide topics of conversation for discussion and thus help to lubricate social life in families work places. From the study greater respondents accepted the statements ''students use social networking sites for discussion of serious national issues like politics, economy and religious matters. This means that the social networking sites are platforms for the students to discuss and share ideas and information on national matters, thereby educate themselves on such issues. This further justified the application of uses of gratification theory to this study, as the finding proves that the social media give the students room for getting essential information and education; this is one of their reasons for using the media. So, the findings here for research question three showed that the UNN students use the social networking sites for entertainment, communication and educational purposes.

Benefits of using social networking sites.

The responses gathered from questionnaire reveal the following as benefits of using social networking sites: it encourages virtual meeting with co-research scholar; self-esteem and well being; Research and learning; strengthening interpersonal relationship; read and write web skills etc. In this study with respect to research question four, it was revealed that one of the benefits of using social networking sites is that it helps in research and learning. This is in line with the view of Brennan(2001)and Notley(2010) that 'social network help in the school and universities to leverage and complement formal education learning outcomes. The researchers reported that ''students are using facebook and other sites to develop their identities, beliefs and stances on various issues such as politics, religious and work, as well as to pioneer and develop intimate relationship. ''Also citing part of the results carried out by Greenhow, Robelia and Hughes,(2009); Konetes and MC Keagu(2011) that 'self-esteem, personal validation and value are positively affected by the use of facebook for many uses especially those who have a low self worth.

Dangers associated with social networking sites.

On the dangers associated with social networking sites and from the responses gathers from questionnaire, E-crime, Internet addiction, laziness, standard crime like, fraud, murder, kidnapping; Immoral act like, pornography, prostitution, cyber-bullying where identified. In line with the research question five, the findings revealed that one of the Dangers of social networking sites includes cyber crime. Ahmed(2011) reported that one of the cyber crimes perpetrated through the social networking is copyright infringement. According to Almed, copyright infringement also remains a serious case in dealing with social Networking sites (SNSs) especially about the video clips for instance in the YouTube. Users without considering the terms can easily upload, download or watch any kind of video clip. YouTube for instance was sued several times on these issues. For example Viacom sued YouTube claiming one billion dollar for uploading 160 thousand videos belonging to Viacom without their permission as did the French independent labels collecting society(SPPF) in 2009 over disputed 100 music clips

claiming to be originally theirs but uploaded onto YouTube. Also according to Wikipedia(2011),Social Networking causes Internet addiction.

Strategies for ameliorating the dangers of social networking.

In line with this research question it was revealed that one of the strategies which was profered to ameliorate the dangers of social networking is by not posting anything that might embarrass you later or you don't want a stranger to know. Similarly, Wikipedia, (2011) revealed that ''users should be cautious of what they post in social media sites. In other words, another item in the research question revealed that the dangers of social networking can be reduce by being careful on the kind of information you share about yourself, family and friends. Just like what Timm & Perez(2010) reviewed, ''in order to avoid disclosing information to an imposter, users should follow some prudent practices when communicating on social networking sites. Primarily, users should exercise basic caution when communicating and sharing information with online friends'

Conclusion

The results obtained from this study have shown that a reasonable number of UNN Undergraduate students use the social networking sites. Therefore, The popularity of the social networking usage by undergraduate students of university of Nigeria Nsukka and the benefits it has on the student –users have been confirmed from the findings of this study. There are also various purposes for which the students use the social networking sites to achieve and that have been investigated.

Finally, from the results of the study the researcher sees the reason why a famous media scholar argued that technology can be used in ways beneficial and otherwise. Technology is a double-edged sword. Its power for bad and good resides in the users Baran(2010).Based on this, it is instructive to note that the relevant government authorities and other sponsors of the students, have to take good measures to ensure that they(student) are made to be aware of how and why they use the social networking sites.

Implication of the Study

From the research finding, the social Networking sites have been seen as a source of direct response to the need to offering adequate information, Communication, disseminate, discussing and mobilizing vast quality of information. It is important at this point to encourage the federal Ministry of information and the National Orientation Agency to address the various Dangers that are associated with social networking as that will go a long way to enhancing the services offered by the social Networking Sites.

Recommendations

Based on the findings drawn from this study, the researcher has made the following recommendations to the university authorities, the ministry of Communication Technology and the students:

Recommendation to University Authorities

1. Regulation of the use of GSM Phones during lectures: Hence the students access the various social networking sites through their mobile phones, it is advisable that university of Nigeria Nsukka Governing councils and the University senate has to enact laws, making

students' use of phones during lectures an offence which shall attract drastic punitive measures for the culprits.

2. Tertiary institutions should organize a seminar to enlighten students on the not too-good aspects of using social networking sites as media of interaction. This can be done by exposing students to the importance of face to face communication in the creation of real communication or message sharing. Seminars would be helpful here.

3. Motivation to bravura and scrupulous users of the social Networking sites: One of the most popular social networking sites, facebook(which is one of the most successful business enterprise in the world) was said to be developed by Boyd and Ellison(2007).He founded facebook by hacking Harvard's database containing identification images of students. From this UNN students have to be motivated that any of the students who invents a useful device through the usage of the social Networking sites will be rewarded by the university.

4. Provision of laws on the content of social media: There has to be laws guiding the students' use of the social networking sites and what they disseminate through the media.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Communication Technology

The social networking sites fall within the ambit of the Ministry of communications Technology of the federal Republic of Nigeria. This is the Ministry saddled with the duty or responsibility of initiating and co-ordinating all the policies and programmes towards the use and development of information and communication Technologies (ICTs) in Nigeria. Social networking is part and parcel of the ICTs, as such from the findings. From this work; these recommendations are made to the ministry:

1. The ministry has to liaise with Nigerian Communications commission: to mandate all the social service providers Nigeria to make it mandatory that the condition for one to open an account on any of the social networking sites is having a GSM SIM card duly registered in Nigeria. The service providers have to keep the personal details of each of their account owners including their GSM phone numbers; and make the information available to an appropriate government Agency if the need arises.

2. Enactment of social media use act: The ministry has to propose to the national assembly to enact a new law that would guide the users of the social network sites with the do's and don'ts. This is quite necessary now, as one of the findings of this study shows that some of the students use the social networking sites to engage in cyber crimes. Such act shall provide the legal framework that would help Law courts to adjudicate on cyber crime cases in Nigeria, as the federal ministry of information and communication Technology ICT policy draft (2012) states that the ''major challenges facing the country in the area of ICT development include cyber crimes.'' It will equally give the universities the legal back-up to check their student's uses of the social networking sites.

3. The federal ministry of information and the National Orientation Agency should draft regulatory measures to control the workings of social networking sites that are accessible by Nigeria students.

Recommendation to Students

1. Students who are heavy users, should moderate the use of the sites to avoid addiction and create a balance between their offline and online lives while using the sites.

References

ABS (2007). *Household use of Information Technology, Australia 2005-06.* Camberra: Australian Bureau of statistics –(2010) 4102.0 Australian social trends 2008, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

Anderson, P. (2007). *What is web 2.0? Ideas, technologies and implications for education;* A report for JISC Technology and standards watch.

Anim, E. (2007). The influence of geo-political affiliations on newspapers' coverage of national issues*. In international Journal of Communication: an interdisciplinary Journal of communication.*

Awake! "What should you know about social networking?" (2012, February) Awake, 3-9.

Awake, (2011, July). *What Should I know social networking*? Part 1, pp. 24.25.

Bahney, A. (2006, March 9). "Don't talk to invisible strangers. "*NewYorkk Times.* Retrieved December 16, 2011 from http://www.nytimes.com/2006/0/3/09/fashion/thursdaystyles/09 parents.html.

Baker, Adam. (October, 2009). Phishing Scams Continue to Plague Social Media Sites. Wise Bread. Retrieved April 22, 2011, from World Wide Web. http://www.wisebread.comphishing-scams-continue-to-plague-social-media-sites.

Ball-Rokeach, S.J. (1985). "The origins of individual media-systme dependency: a sociological framework" *Communication Research,* 4,485-510. retrieved December 16, 2011 from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=media-system-dependency-theory&oldid=46479890.

Ball-Rokeach, S.J., Defleur, M.L. (1976). A dependency model of mass-media effects. *Communication Research,* 1, 3-21. retrieved December 16, 2011 from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=media-system-dependecy-theory &oldid=46479890.

Baran, S.J. (2010*). Introduction to mass communication: media literacy and culture* (6th ed.), New York: McGraw-Hill.

Barkhuus, L., & Tashivo, J. (2010). *Student Socialization in the age of Facebook in Proceedings of the twenty-eights annual SIGCHI Conference on human factors in computing systems*, Atlants, USA, April 10-15, 2010 (pp. 133-142): http://cseweb.used.edu/barkhuus/harkhuus-chi2010,pdf.

Besley (2008). Cyberbullying: An Emerging threat to the "always on" generation. In Canadian Teacher Magazine, 18-20.

Blanchard, M. Metcalf, A; Burns, J.M. (2007). *Bridging the digital divide*: creating opportunities for marginalized young people to get connected report for the inspire foundation and orygen youth Health Research Centre, University of Melbourne, Melbourne.

Blanchard, M., Metcalf, A., Degney, J., Hermann, H. & Burns, J.M. (2008). *Rethinking the digital divide: finding from a study of marginalized young people's information communication technology (ICT) use.* In youth studies Australia 27(4): 35-42.

Boyd, D. & Ellison, M. (2007). "Social networking sites: definition, history and scholarship" retrieved December 16, 2011 from http://jcmcindiana;edu/vol13/issue//boyd.ellison.html.

Boyd, D.M., Ellison B.N. (2007), Social Networking Sites: definition of history and scholarship: *journal of computer –mediated Communication,* 13(1) (2007), pp. 210-230.

Brodie, Cindy. (January 2009). The Importance and Security Awareness Training. SANS Institute Reading Room. Retrieved April 8, 2011, from World Wide Web: http://www.sans.org/readingroom/whitepapers/awareness/importance-security-awareness-training33013.

Bruns, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second life, and Beyond:* from production to produsage, Peter Lang, New York.

Burgess, J.E., Foth, M. & Klaebe, H.G. (2006). Everyday Creativity as Civic Engagement: A Cultural Citizenship view of New Media. *Paper presented at communications policy & Research forum,* Sep 25-26, Sydney.

Cacioppo, J.T., Fowler, J.H. & Christakis, N.A. (2009). "Sensitivity analysis contagion effects in social networks". *Sage Journals,* 1552-8294.

Christian Arno, (2012), December 26), world wide social media usage Trends in 2012: http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2167518/worldwide.

Coleman, S. & Rowe, C. (2005). *Remixing Citizenship:* Democracy and young people's use of the internet a report for the carnegre young people's initiative.

Dominick, J.R. (2009). *The dynamics of mass communication:* Media in the discourage. (10th edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

Ellison, N.B,. (2007), Benefits of Facebook 'friends': Social capital and College Students' use of Online Social Network Sites*: Journal of Computer-mediated communication,* 12(4) (2007).

Essoungou, A.M. (2011). *Nigeria's April elections set new records in use of social media.* Retrieved from: http://nigerians abroad live.com/nigerias-april-of-social-media/.Accessed on December 17, 2011.

Evans, Michael (July 2009). Wise of Sir. John Saweress, the Future Head of MI6, in Face Book Security Alert. Times Online. Retrieved May 11, 2011, from World Wide Article 6644199.ecc.

Fisher, Dennis. (May, 2011) Phishing, Social Networking Attacks on the Rise. Threat Post. Retrieved July 11, 2011, from World Wide Web. http://threatpost.com/enUS/blogsPhishing-social-networking-attack-rise-05/2011.

Folorunso, O. Vineent, R.O., Adekoya, A.F. & Adewal, O.O. (N.d). diffusion of Innovation in Social Networking Sites among University students. *In International Journal of Computer Science and Security* (JCSS), (4) 3, Pp. 361-372.

Folorunso, O., Vincent, R.O., Adekoya, A.F & Adewale, O.O. (2010). Diffusion of innovation in social networking sites among university students. *In International Journal of Computer Science and security* (IJCSS), (4)3, pp.361-372.

Gross, E. (2004). Adolescent Internet use: what we expect, what teens report. *In Journal of Applied developmental Psychology 25(6):* 633-649.

Hartup, W.W. & Stevens, N. (1999). Friendships and Adaption Across the life span. *In Current Direction in Psychological Science 8(3): 76-79.*

Hillier, L. & Harrison, L. (2007). Building realities less limited than their own: young people practicing same sex attraction on the internet. *In sexualities: studies in culture and society 10(1):* 82-100.

Idakwo,L.(2011).The use of media among Nigeria youths. Retrieved from:http://www.slideshare. net/ goldlami/the-use-of-social- media- among- Nigeria-youth2. Accessed on December 17, 2011.

Ito, M., Okabe, D., & Matsuda, M. (2006). *Personal, Portable, Pedestrain,* MIT press, Massachu Settes.

Jason, R. (2006). "Types of social networking sites" Retrieved June 12, 2011 from http://onblogging-well.com/23types-of-social-networking-sites/.

Jenkins, H. (2007). *Confronting the Challenges of participatory Culture:* media education for the 21st century, macarther foundation, Chicago.

Kaplan Andreas, M., Haelein Michael, (2010), Users of the world. Unite: The Challenges of Opportunities of social media Business Horizons, vol. 53 *Issue I* (page 67).

Karidakis, J. (2008). *The Structured Trans Formation of the Public Sphere*. Great Britain: Polity Press in association with Black well publishers.

Karidakis, P. & Hanson, G. (2009). "Social Interaction and Co-Viewing with youtube: blending Mass Communication reception and social connection". *Journal of Broadcasting and electronic Media, pp. 317-335.*

Kennedy, G.E., Judd, T.S., Churchward, A. & Bray, K. (2008). First year learners' experiences with technology: Are they really digital natives? *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology,* vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 108-122.

Kim, G. (2011). Online Video, every day pedagogy, and female Political agency, "Learning from youTube" revisited. *In Global Media Journal,* (11) 18, pp. 1-15.

Media Systems Dependency Theory. (n.d). "in wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia. Retrieved December 17, 2011 from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=media-system-dependency-thoery&oldid=46479890.

Notley, T.M. & Tacchi, J.A. (2005). "online youth Networks: researching, the experiences of peripheral" young people in using New Media Tools for creative participation and Representation. In 3 media: *Journal of community, Citizen's and Third sector Media and Communication, (1).* Pp. 73-81.

Notley, T.M. & Tachi, J.A. (2005). Online Youth Networks*: Research the Experiences of peripheral young people in using New Media Tools for creative participation and representation. In 3 cmedia: *Journal of Community, Citizen's and Third Sector Media and communication, (1).* pp. 73-81.

OECD (2007). *Participative web and user-created content:* web 2.0, wikis & social networking a report for the OECD working party on the information economy & OECO Directorate for science, Technology and industry.

Onomo, A.A. (2012, January 15). People power.. 15 social media. The Guardian, pp. 38.

Perez, Sarah. (February 2009). Top & Web 2.0 Security Threats. Read Write Enterprise. Retrieved March 9, 2011, from World Wide Web: http://www.readwriteweb.com/enterprise/2009/02/top-9-web-20-security-threat.php.

Rachna, J. (2010). 4 ways social media is changing your relationships". Retrieved December 17, 2011 from http://www.socialmediaexamines.com/4-ways-social-media-is-chaning-your-relationships/.

Rosman, Katherine. (August 2009). Sarah Palin's Facebook Alter-ego gets found out. The Wall Street Journal. Retrieved May 3, 2011, from World Wide Web. http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2009/08/13/sarah-palins-facebook-alter-ego-gets-found-out/

Sans Institute (2006). Infosec Acceptable use Policy. Retrieved May 11, 2011, from World Wide Web: http://www.sans.org/security-resources/policies/acceptable-use-policy.pdf.

Social Networking Service. Retrieved December 17, 2011 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/social_network.

Technological Determinism. (n.d). in wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Retrieved May 10 10, 2012 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/technologica-determinism.

Technological Determinism. (n.d). *spring 2001 Theory workbook.* Retrieved May 10, 2012 from www.uky.edu/drlane/capstone/mass/determinism.htm.

Timm, C & Perez, R. (2010). Seven Dead, est Social Network Attacks. Burlington, MA: Syngress Publishing, inc.

Trukle, S. (2011). "Alone together: why we expect more from technology and from each other". (2012, February 12). Retrieved http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/sherry_turkle....

Valentine, G. & Holloway, S. (2002). Cyberkids? Exploring Children. Sidentities and social networks in online and worlds. *In Annuals of the Association of American Geographers 92(2):* 302-309.

Valkernburg, P.M., Peter, J., & Schouten, A.P. (2006), Friend networking sites and their relationship to adolescent well being.

Valtysson (2010). Access culture: webk 2.0 & cultural participation. *In international Journal of Cultural Policy 16(2):* 200-214.

Wikipedia, (July, 2010): Criticism of Facebook. Retrieved July 11, 2011, from World Wide Web: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/criticism-of-facebook#terms-of-use-controversy.

Wikipedia. List of social networking websites. Retrieved February 12, 2012 www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/social-networking-service...

Will, M. (2011). "Africa Facebook Phenomena Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa." Retrieved December 16, 2011 from http://www.afrinnovator.con/blog/2011/01/04/af..,

Wogu, J.O. (2008). *Introduction to mass communication theories.* Nsukka; University of Nigeria Press Limited. www.sans.org/reading../reducing-risks.socialmedia.organization3374...

Zeller, Bill (September 2008). Popular Websites Vulnerable to Cross-Site Request forgery Attacks. Retrieved April 27, 2008. from World Wide Web: http://www.freedom.to-tinker.com/blog/wzeller-popular-website-vulnerable./cross.site.reals.