Social Media Use Pattern and the Image Implication among University Undergraduate Students in South East, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Social media use among university undergraduates has attracted many scholarly investigations. Although, many of these studies have probed the causal influence /role of the social media phenomenon on the increasing incidences of crime, immorality and anti-social activities among these students, little work or none seems to have been specifically done to ascertain if they are aware and also have the knowledge that some of their online social networking practices are capable of denting their online reputations, and also to determine if Nigerian universities, particularly, those in the South East zone are doing anything to promote responsible social media use among their students. The study which was anchored on the social responsibility theory adopted the mixed research methods of survey questionnaire and use of oral interview to generate data. Inferential statistics of t-test analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used in testing the hypotheses of the study. The findings among others are that: irresponsibility in social media use among the students is as a result of their unawareness that it is injurious to their online reputations, and that, the level of irresponsibility in social media use among the students is dependent on the lack of social media education in their respective universities. The major recommendations among others are that the National University Commission (NUC) should introduce social media education as a general study course in Nigerian university curriculum and that the undergraduate students should register with media contents and reputation security/check alert to enable them track unwanted postings and tagging by friends.

Key Words: Social Media, Knowledge, Use, Irresponsibility, online reputation, Implication, Social Media Education

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that the 21st Century has recorded unprecedented breakthrough in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Consequently, we are now in a brand new world which is characterized by a radical redefinition of the means and process by which people interact, share and exchange ideas, opinions, belief, messages, knowledge and experiences, through the use of text messages, pictures, videos, drawings, among others. This revolution has been facilitated by the advent of the internet-oriented social networking sites commonly referred to as social media.

The popularity of social media has been greatly enhanced by the fact that it offers one the opportunity to be both consumer and producer of wide range of communications at the same time. This is unlike the mainstream media that provide little, rigorous and delayed chances for feedback mechanism. Abott (2012)[1], refers to the 21ˢᵗ Century global communication industry as the "prosumer era". In a similar view, Nwabueze, Obasi and Obi, (2013)[2], posit that the social media ushered the world into the "attention age," an era which according to them, developed after the information age; and it is characterized by the ability of the individuals to create and consume information instantly and freely, and as well, share it on the internet via the social media. Ufuophu-Biri and Iwu (2014)[3], cite Akindehin and Aindehin (2011)[4], as describing the social media as the ninth wonder of the contemporary world. They note that these social networking sites are becoming much more connected, interactive, participatory, integrative, community-based, ubiquitous and digital.

In the words of Okoro, Nwafor and Chibuwe (2013)[5], "social media platforms are interactive, web-based media sites which belong to the new genre of media that focus on social networking allowing users to express themselves, interact with friends, share personal information, as well as, publish their own views on the internet". The implication of the advent of the social media is that it has brought back the era of libertarianism in the global information and communication industry. This means that social media users have almost absolute freedom on how to idiosyncratically use the social media to achieve the desired gratification(s).

Unfortunately, the freedom inherent in the use of the social media for communication and information sharing and exchange is now witnessing increasing abuses, reminiscing the event that led to the emergence of the social responsibility theory (Nwabueze, 2012)[6]. Commenting on the unfolding ugly side of the African social media industry, Okoro, Nwafor, and Chibuwe (2013, p. 48)[5], argue that "there is no doubt that the social media are unfettered, uncensored and unregulated in most African countries". In Nigeria for instance, researches have shown that majority of social media users are the young ones. And many of these young ones are still schooling. Several studies on social media use have established a causal link between it and the increasing cases of prostitution, crime, moral depravity and other anti- social behaviours among some undergraduate students in Nigeria. Besides, we have over the years observed that many of these students are increasingly getting involved in   posting of indecent pictures, videos, comments of themselves, that of their friends and perhaps, their perceived enemies on the pages of Facebook, YouTube, Instagram etc for public consumption. Unfortunately, these types of mindless postings are capable of damaging the reputations of such students forever online. Meanwhile, we were jolted when we learnt about the evolving trend in some developed countries like America, France and Britain whereby some employers, schools, scholarship administrators and sports coaches now investigate

and judge online/social media activities and reputations of candidates before final selections of beneficiaries.

Against the above backdrop, our worry becomes the fact that the world has really become a global village, such that, the above painted scenario may eventually become part of the system in many more countries of the world, including Nigeria. Moreover, graduates of Nigerian Universities as exemplified by those from South East zone seek job, postgraduate admissions and other favours across the countries of the world and will surely meet situation that involve probing their level of responsibility in social media use. Consequently, this research is geared towards answering two major questions: are the undergraduates in universities of South-East, Nigeria aware of the negative implications of irresponsible e social media use? What are universities in South- East, Nigeria doing to promote responsible /decent social media use among their undergraduate students?

THE PROBLEM

Today, social media use has become an integral part of the teaching and learning environment in institutions of higher learning across the world. Research findings on this new platform for social and public communications in Nigeria have largely shown that significant number of Nigerian undergraduates and universities, including those in South East of the country engage in online social networking practices.

However, the issue now is that though many of these students by now possess the technical know-how of social media use, they   may have remained ignorant of the fact that some of their online activities and postings via the various social media platforms may be injurious to their online reputations, and dented online reputation may pose a threat to their future endeavours and opportunities.

The study therefore, sought to determine the level of awareness and knowledge about the implications of irresponsibility in social media use among the undergraduates in universities of South East, Nigeria. In other words, the study sought to ascertain the students' level of awareness and knowledge that some of their online social networking activities are injurious to their online reputations. Besides, the study also determined if universities in South East, Nigeria have mechanism on ground for educating their students on responsible social media use.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The broad objective of the study was to determine the level of awareness and knowledge about implications of irresponsibility in social media use among undergraduates in universities of South- East, Nigeria. Specifically was meant to:

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1. Ascertain whether undergraduate students of universities of South -East, Nigeria are aware and knowledgeable that irresponsibility in social media use is injurious to their online reputations.

2. Find out what universities in South- East, Nigeria are doing to promote responsible social media use among their undergraduates.

3. Determine if there are significant differences in the use of Social media platforms to promote teaching and learning in federal, state and privately owned universities in South-East, Nigeria.

4. Find out if irresponsibility in social media use is related to the gender of the students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The followings are the research questions:

1. Are the students in universities of South -East, Nigeria aware and knowledgeable that irresponsible social media use is injurious to their online reputations?

2. Do universities in South- East, Nigeria provide social media education to guide against irresponsibility in social media use among their students?

3. Are there significant differences in the way social media platforms are used to promote teaching and learning among federal, state and privately owned universities in South- East, Nigeria?

4. Are the female undergraduates in universities of South -East, Nigeria more irresponsible in their social media use than their male counterparts?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses of the study are:

HYPOTHESIS ONE

Ho: The level of irresponsibility in social media use among undergraduate students in universities of South- East, Nigeria is independent of their level of awareness and knowledge that it is injurious to their online reputations.

HYPOTHESIS TWO

Ho: There is no significant relationship between the level of social media education in universities of South- East, Nigeria and the level of knowledge about irresponsibility in social media use among their undergraduate students.

HYPOTHESIS THREE

Ho: There are no significant differences in the level of social media use to promote teaching and learning in the federal, state and privately owned universities in South- East, Nigeria.

HYPOTHESIS FOUR

Ho: The extent of irresponsibility in social media use is independent of the gender of the undergraduate students of universities in South- East, Nigeria.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Though many researchers have been undertaken to investigate the pattern of social media use among the Nigerian Youths, particularly, among undergraduates of tertiary institutions of learning, the researcher at the point of this study was yet to find any work specifically tailored to probe the students' level of awareness and knowledge that some of their social media practices are injurious to their online reputations. This study is embarked upon to cover this lacuna.

Again, the study's novel idea of investigating if there is organized or structured mechanism put in place by universities in South East, Nigeria for educating their undergraduates on responsible social media use is another significant contribution to knowledge. Therefore, the study is of high significance to the undergraduates, their parents/guardians and universities of South East, Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Social media make a significant departure from the mainstream media because they are greatly characterized by the ability of the individuals to create and consume information instantly and freely, and as well, share it on the internet, (Nwabueze, Obasi and Obi, 2013)[2]. It is not only that there are so many social media platforms available to users, but each of these platforms, is constantly witnessing technical upgrading for the purpose of providing more efficient and effective services addressing some technical lacuna and introducing new services; all in a bid to increase and sustain their respective users. Such social media platforms among others are: Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, Myspace, whatsAPP, YouTube, 2go, Flicker, Wordpress, Linkedin, Wikipedia, wetpaint, wikidot, secondlife, Delicious, Digg, Reddit, Lulu, skype, Qzone, blog, Typepad and H15, etc.

CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN THE 21ST CENTURY FORMAL EDUCATION

Increasing number of researchers and educationists are emphasising the unfolding complementary relationship between social media use among students and teachers for formal education across the globe. For instance, tertiary education worldwide is structured in such a way that both the students and the teachers are constantly involved in research and collaborative efforts geared towards attaining educational excellence, fortunately, social media platforms now provide

greater and more enhanced opportunities for this much desired academic collaboration and researches. It also provides more flexible ways of teaching and learning. Today, the development and introduction of the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), which has in turn, ushered in the "technophoric" era of the social media, has indeed, given both the learner and the instructor the opportunity to search for more information, and as well , interact positively and progressively from different locations, (Sanusi, Adelabu and Okuunade, 2014)[7]. According to them, many students and educationists are using sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Myspace, Flicker, Netlog, slideshare, and tools such as skype, and Yahoo messenger to connect students to learning opportunities in new and exciting ways.

A columnist with the *USAToday*, Lori Grisham in an article published on Sept 23, 2014, entitled "Teachers, Students and Social Media: Where is the Line?" notes that "some instructors want to use Facebook and Twitter as teaching tools, yet, there is concern that appropriate boundaries are maintained." Grisham narrates the story of Carol Thebarge, a 79- year-old substitute teacher in Claremonth, USA, who was directed to unfriend the more than 200 students on her Facebook account by the authority of the school she was teaching, and she preferred resigning saying that she regarded her "Facebook as an extended classroom." Grisham concludes that teachers-students social networking is "a very slippery slope" because the teacher may have the best of all intention only to be misinterpreted by the students and parents. Consequently, some school officials are trying to find a middle ground. Grisham gives example of New York City Dept of Education Development Guidelines that provides that teachers can create professional social media sites such as Facebook pages created for class or project, but, should not communicate students through their personal pages and that Twitter is a good social media option because it is more public.

Ufuophu-Biri and Iwu (2014)[3], investigated the negative side of the social media and found that there was a significant relationship between the students' use of the social media and their involvement in prostitution. They also found that there was a significant relationship between the student's gender and their use of the social media for prostitution. As a result, they called on the authorities of the selected institutions of learning and other relevant governmental and non-governmental agencies to mount orientation programmes and formulate policies to discourage the students from using social media for negative purposes. Akindehin and Akindehin, (2011, p. 68)[4], after their own study draw their conclusion thus:

> To make classroom instructional events relevant to the real world of the students therefore, counselors need to establish helping relationship with students as online social network practices is appropriately utilised, to complement classroom learning activities.

Our study becomes much more imperative and significant if one considers the implication of the evolving trends in some developed countries like America, Britain and France some public and private organizations now investigate and judge online activities and reputations of candidates

before the final selection for employment, scholarship award, admission etc. Gail Hand in his "10 smart social media tips for students," published in the CollegeXpress , retrieved on January 24, 2015 says:

> I want all of you to avoid losing scholarship, being kicked off great sports team, or damaging your reputations forever online. You will save yourself a lot of headaches   if you do one small thing: think before you post ... Students ask me all the time, "how can employers judge me by my college events postings and who my friends are?" With a tough job market, employers do judge easily and readily. This also means that if you have your social media accounts so locked down that no one can see what you are doing, it can look a little suspicious when going in for an interview. They want to be able to google you and not just see you postings from last month-they want to see something positive about you, (CollegeXpress:com/article-and-advice/student-life/article/).

In their own argument, Sanusi, Adelabu and Okunnade, (2014, p. 24)[7], maintain that inspite the fact that "students and the instructors/teachers can abuse the use of social media for teaching and learning, it still suffices to accept that the sites offer tremendous education." Onwe and Ezekwe (2013), concour when they opine that the use of ICTs (e-learning) in tertiary institutions of learning, for teaching and community development is an on-going reality. However, they expressed worries that the inequalities that exist among tertiary students in terms of access, knowledge and use of ICTs is a significant challenge and threat to the success of e-learning in Nigeria. Moreover, many researches on the uses and gratifications of the social media among Nigerian Youths, particularly, students, reveal that those that have access, knowledge and the technical skill and experience of using social media platforms mostly, do so for other personal gains/gratifications rather than for academic performance or activities, (Onwe and Ezekwe, 2014)[8]. This observation ordinarily lends credence to the imperativeness of empirically studying   the students' awareness of the negative implications of irresponsible use of the social media. Asogwa and Ojih (2013)[9], conclude in line with their research finding that majority of the students do not consider contents of the social networking sites as being offensive or indecent. This obviously implies that the students are ignorant of what constitute offensive and morally decadent postings which are injurious their online reputation.

ONLINE REPUTATION DAMAGING PICTURES POSTED ON THE FACEBOOK NEWS FEED BY NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES
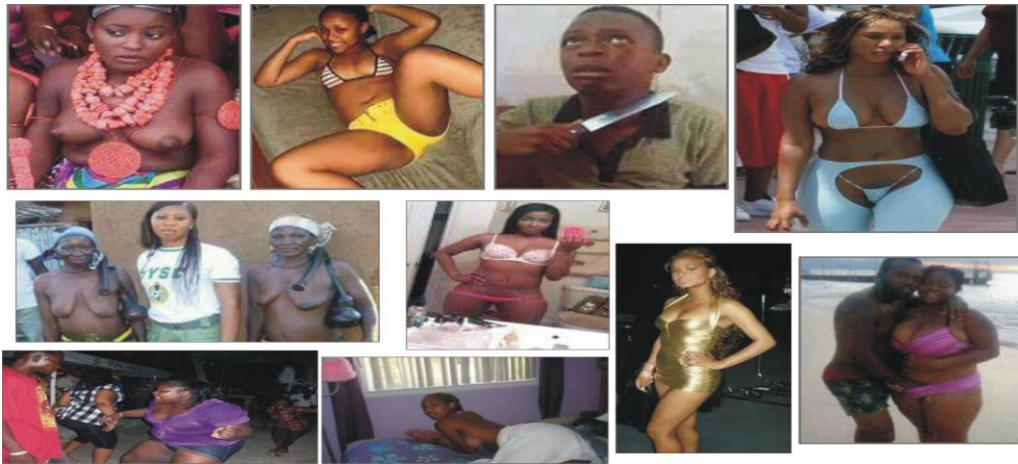
Source: Facebook News Feed

REVIEW OF RELATED EMPIRICAL WORKS

Enahoro (2009)[10], undertook a study entitled "the role of stakeholders in promoting safe internet environment among youths." It was anchored on the technological determinism theory and survey research method was adopted. As such, 200 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the purposively sampled respondents who were made up of different categories of people- Young people, parents, civil society organizations and ICTs professionals. It was carried out in Asaba, the capital of Delta State. The data generated were collated and analysed using simple percentage tables.

The findings of the study among others are as follows:

1. The dangers posed by online activities are pornography, internet fraud, online violence, hate speech, hate culture, impersonation, sexual solicitation etc
2. That stakeholders have critical role to play in ensuring that the use of internet for negative purposes are minimised.

Consequently, the study among other recommendations requests that:

1. Young people/children should adopt well established internet etiquette while working online, and that:
2. There should be sustained collaborative efforts among stakeholders towards promoting safe internet culture among young people.

The study reviewed above is interested in telling the young people what not to do in their social media use. But our own effort rather, is aimed at discovering why they do what is wrong in their social media use.

Similarly, Akindehin and Akindehin (2011)[4], carried out a study entitled, "online social networking practices of some Nigerian university undergraduates. Implications for counseling," published in *British Journal of Arts and Social Science* Vol3. No I (66-77). The objectives of the study among others included to find out: Ways in which online and offline experiences are deeply entwined and if the adoption of particular services correlates with the individual's gender, age or educational level.

The study which adopted the quantitative research approach used five hundred copies of what it calls "internet usage questionnaire (IUQ)" to obtain vital data from five hundred undergraduates who were randomly sampled from the University of Ibadan. These data were subjected to the discriminant analysis of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), using the stepwise option.

They found that social media use does not depend on age, but that years of usage and proficiency are of high significance. Again, they found that, there is a significant difference in the online social network practices between male and female undergraduates.

In consequence, they, among others, recommended that university counselors need to establish helping relationship with the students and guide them in social networking practices as complement of classroom learning activities.

As could be noted from the above findings, the study merely found that there is a significant difference between the female and male undergraduates' social networking practices. It is from this stand point that our study probed to determine the gender that is more irresponsible in social media use, and as well, establish if ignorance of the consequences of irresponsible uses is the underlying factor for the increasing problem of social media misconduct   among them.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is theoretically anchored on the social responsibility theory. Baran and Davis (2006)[11], posit that the social responsibility theory thrives largely on the earlier work of John Milton tagged the "self-righting principle." However, the Hutchins Commission's Report of 1947 in the USA later clarified, expanded and popularized the theory. It emphasises self control and correction instead of the use of external force to elicit responsible actions and control. According to Okunna (1999)[12], the underlying principle of the theory is that the press should be free to perform the function which the libertarian theory had granted it freedom to perform, but that this freedom should be exercised with responsibility. As such, the theory postulates that journalists, who cannot embrace self- control and make themselves responsible, should then be controlled externally by the government.

Bittner (1989), Wogu (2008), and Nwabueze (2012)[13][14],[6], all agreed that the social responsibility theory lies within the framework of open and free press criticism, codes of ethics or guidelines for responsible action by members of the press and government regulations.

Applied to this study, the social responsibility theory explains the way forward as universities and the society at large face the challenge of the increasing abuse of the social media by some users. By implication, it advocates that where ignorance is the underlying factor for irresponsible social media use among the people (undergraduates), there should be enlightenment and education to enable them adopt the self-righting principle. Where this strategy at last fails, external control should be used to control the system.

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative and qualitative research approaches were adopted for the study, using a triangulation of data collected with survey questionnaire and the responses generated during the oral interview sessions. A total of 18 universities exist in South- East, Nigeria catigorised into three groups as follows: (1) five federal government owned universities- University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), Nnamdi Azikiwe Universiy, Awka (UNIZIK), Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo (FUNAI), Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO) and Micheal Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, (2) five state government owned universities- Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki (EBSU), Abia State University, Uturu (ABSU), Anambra State University Igbariam and Imo State University, and (3) eight privately owned universities- Madonna, Caritas, Bishop Okoye, Gregory, Renaissance, Tansian and Paul universities. Three universities with a total population of 48,765 undergraduates as at 2014/2015 academic session, one each from the above three classifications, were selected for the study through simple probabilistic sampling of lucky deep. They are: UNN (29,003 undergraduates), EBSU (18,193 undergraduates) and Renaissance University (1,569 undergraduates).

The sample size of 397 undergraduates was determined through the use of Australian calculator. Proportional sampling approach was used in determining the number of respondents drawn from each of the above sampled universities. The principle of simple randomization was used to draw the faculties and departments whose students were sampled for the study. However, because not every undergraduate student is a social media user, purposive sampling technique was used in drawing those who were served with copies of the questionnaire. A structured 15-item questionnaire of the modified 5-point Linkert scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree was used to the generate responses. The instrument was face validated by three experts- a professor of Guidance and Counseling at Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria a professor of Mass Communication at University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria and a consultant statistician.

Ten copies of the questionnaire were used for the test-retest reliability study carried at EBSU which gave a co-efficient of 0.91. A total of 6 students, 2 each from the sampled 3 universities were also judgmentally drawn and used for the oral interview. The oral interview responses were used in interpreting and discussing the findings of the study.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The researcher distributed a total of 397 copies of the questionnaire, but succeeded in retrieving 392 copies. This amounted to 98.7% return. This means that only 1% of the copies of the questionnaire was lost, hence, it was concluded that the lost copies were too insignificant to affect the result of the study. Again, the computed data were packaged   in pie charts and bar charts as presented below:

FIGURE 1: GENDER OF RESPONDENTS
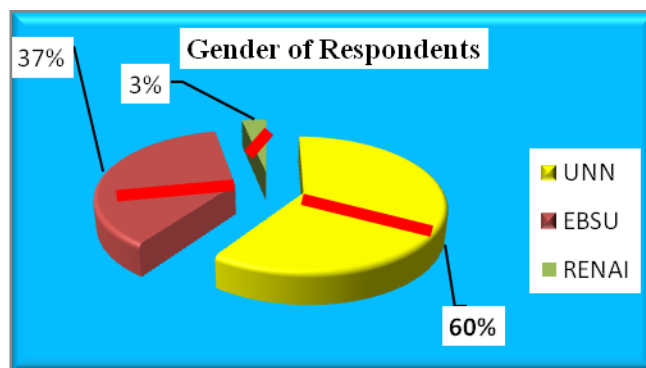
Source: Field work, 2015

For the purpose of generating data which would be used in testing the hypothesis on which gender is more irresponsible in social media use, the researcher had to purposively sample equal number of males and females for the study as reflected in figure 1 above.
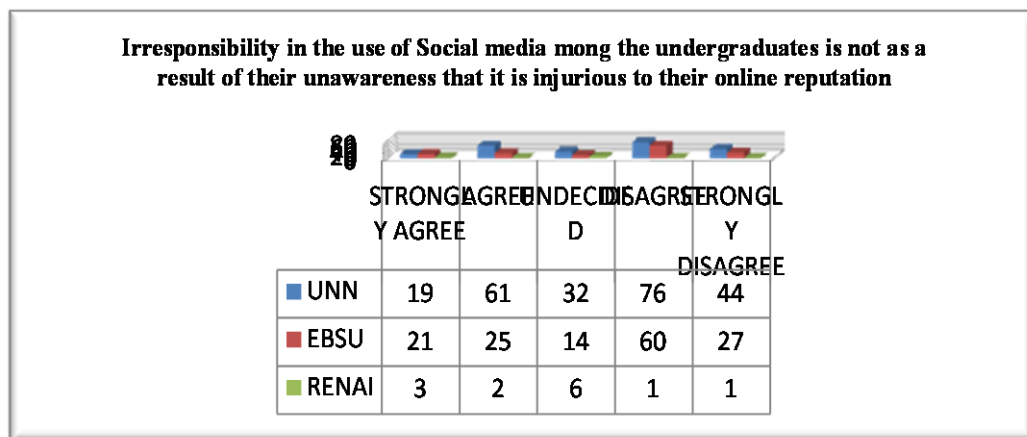
Figure 2: Respondents engagement in online Social networking practices
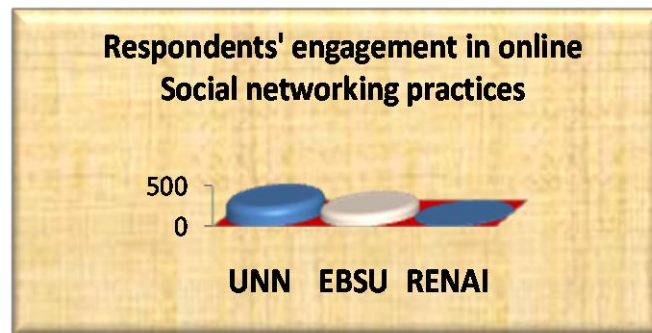
<div align="right">Source: Field work, 2015</div>

The figure 2 above shows that all the respondents in the 3 universities selected for the study admitted that they engage in online social networking practices

FIGURE 3: IRRESPONSIBILITY IN THE USE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG THE UNDERGRADUATES IS NOT AS A RESULT OF THEIR UNAWARENESS THAT IT IS INJURIOUS TO THEIR ONLINE REPUTATIONS.

Irresponsibility in the use of Social media mong the undergraduates is not as a result of their unawareness that it is injurious to their online reputation

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
UNN	19	61	32	76	44
EBSU	21	25	14	60	27
RENAI	3	2	6	1	1

Source: Field work, 2015

The figure 3 above shows that a total of 72 respondents out of 392, corresponding to 18.4% strongly disagreed with the statement and 137 which translates to 35% of the respondents disagreed. 13.3% (52 of them) were undecided. But, 22.4% (88 of them) agreed and 43 of them, that is 11% strongly agreed.

FIGURE 4 : FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES ARE MORE IRRESPONSIBLE IN THEIR USE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA THAN THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS.

female undergraduates are more irresponsible in their use of Social media than their male counterparts.

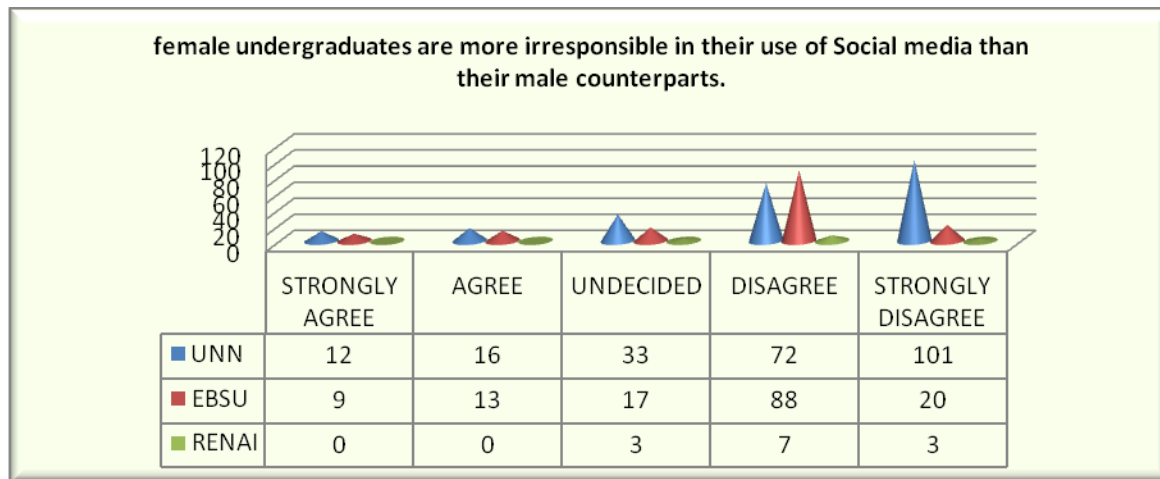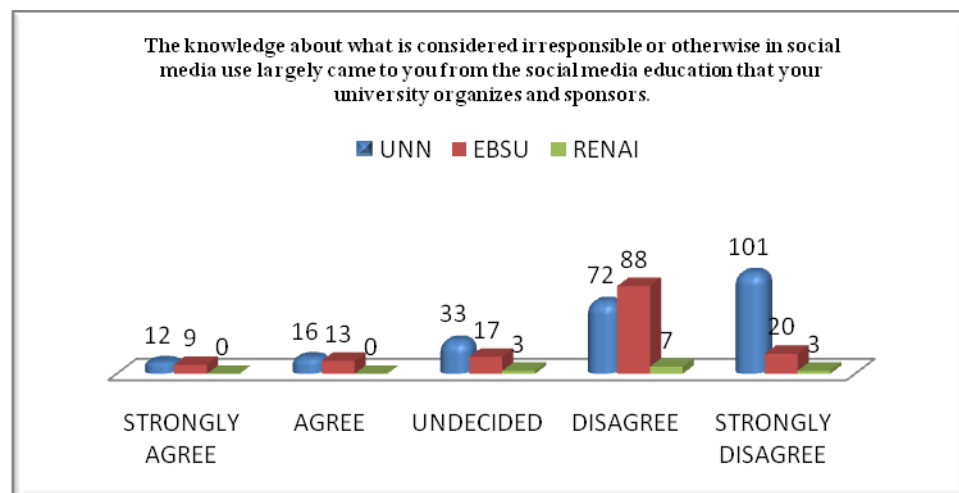|	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
UNN	12	16	33	72	101
EBSU	9	13	17	88	20
RENAI	0	0	3	7	3

Figure 4 shows that a total of 93 respondents out of 392 (23.7%) strongly disagreed with the statement, while 23.5%, that is 92 of them disagreed. 6.9% (27) of them were undecided. 93 respondents (23.7%) and 87 of them, translating to 22.2% agreed and strongly agreed respectively.

FIGURE 5: THE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHAT IS CONSIDERED IRRESPONSIBLE OR OTHERWISE IN SOCIAL MEDIA USE LARGELY CAME TO YOU FROM THE SOCIAL MEDIA EDUCATION THAT YOUR UNIVERSITY ORGANISES AND SPONSORS.

The knowledge about what is considered irresponsible or otherwise in social media use largely came to you from the social media education that your university organizes and sponsors.

Source: Field work, 2015

The figure 5 above shows that 31.6% which is 124 out of 392 respondents and 42.6% (167 of them) strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. 13.2% (53 of them) were undecided. But, 5.6% (22) and 5.4% (21 of them) agreed and strongly agreed respectively.

Testing of Hypotheses: Hypotheses number 1, 2 and 4 were tested with the t-test analysis, while hypothesis3 was tested using ANOVA.

Parameter	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Cut-off Value = 3.0		
				t	df	P-value
The level of irresponsibility in social media use among the undergraduates is dependent on their level of knowledge that it is injurious to their online reputations.	392	3.27	1.295	4.173	391	0.000

Since the mean score value of the students on the irresponsibility in the use of the social media among the undergraduates is as a result of their unawareness that it is injurious to their online reputations is greater than 3.0 which is the cut-off point, and the P<0.05, it is therefore stated that the hypothesis is rejected and concluded that the level of irresponsibility in social media use among the undergraduates is dependent on their level of knowledge that it is injurious to their online reputations.

Parameter	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Cut-off Value = 3.0		
				t	df	P-value
There is a significant relationship between the level of social media education in the universities of South-East, Nigeria, and the level of knowledge about irresponsibility in social media use among their undergraduates.	392	3.12	1.295	3.963	391	0.000

Since the mean score value of the students on the level of irresponsibility in social media use among the undergraduates is not dependent on the lack of social media education in their universities is greater than 3.0 which is the cut-off point, and the P<0.05, it is therefore stated that the hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is a significant relationship between the level of social media education in the universities of South- East, Nigeria, and the level of knowledge about irresponsibility in social media use among their undergraduates.

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TABLE 3: TEST OF HYPOTHESIS 3: ALSO USING THE DATA IN FIGURE 6. THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN THE WAY THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ARE USED TO PROMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING BY THE FEDERAL, STATE AND PRIVATELY OWNED UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA.

Universities	N	Mean	Standard deviation
UNN	234	2.00	1.146
EBSU	145	2.32	1.012
Renaissance	13	2.00	0.707

ANOVA TABLE

Source of Variations	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value
Between Groups	9.195	2	4.598	3.893	0.021
Within Groups	459.407	389	1.181		
Total	468.602	391			

The mean scores for students in UNN is 2.00±1.146, EBSU is 2.32±1.102 and Renaissance University is 2.00±0.707. Since the $P<0.05$, it is therefore stated that the hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is significant difference in the way the social media platforms are used to promote teaching and learning by the federal, state and privately owned universities in South -East ,Nigeria. This implies that the difference occurred in EBSU.

TABLE 4: TEST OF HYPOTHESIS 4 USING THE DATA IN FIGURE 5: THE DEGREE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA USE AMONG THE FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES IS NOT HIGHER THAN THAT OF THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS

Sex	N	Mean	Standard deviation	T	df	P-value
Male	196	2.98	1.522	0.099	390	0.921
Female	196	2.96	1.524			

The mean score for male students is 2.98±1.522, and that of the female counterparts is 2.96±1.524. Since the $P>0.05$, it is therefore stated that the hypothesis is accepted and concluded that the female undergraduates are not more irresponsible in their social media use than their male counterparts.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

It is interesting to note that the findings of the study are sequentially connected, thereby pointing to the existential reality of the problem that prompted the study. Finding number one establishes the fact that the students are irresponsible in their online social networking because of their ignorance that it is injurious to their online reputations. This finding is in agreement with the

earlier findings by Ajewole and Fasola (2012)[15], who had earlier found that the majority of the students do not consider contents of the social networking sites as being offensive. Again, Onasanya, Yahaya, Akingbemisilu and Ayelagba, (2013)[16], conclude that there is a significant relationship between students' ignorance of what constitutes irresponsible practices and their social media use on gender basis.

Similarly, the finding number two states that the level of irresponsibility in social media use among the undergraduates is dependent on the lack of social media education in their universities. This implies that the students' ignorance on responsible use of social media is further orchestrated by non organization of seminars, workshop, symposia, town hall meetings, etc by their universities for the purpose of educating and orientating them on responsible use of the social media. Several studies have harped on the increasing irresponsibility of the students in their online social networking practices. As mentioned before now, Asogwa and Ojih (2013)[9], and Onah and Nche (2014)[16], had also respectively concluded that the social media contribute to UNN students' increasing engagement in sexual perversion and given rise to moral issues especially among the youths. Consequently, Ajewole and Fasola (2012)[15], and Akubugwo and Burke (2013)[18], respectively advised that it is necessary that the university should strictly monitor how their students use the social media and that the youths should be wary of placing too much personal information online.

The third finding which accepts that the female undergraduates are not more irresponsible in their social media use than their male counterparts is also not surprising. Perhaps, the reason for this is not far from the fact that irresponsibility in social media use is divergent and multi-faceted. Though, the female gender may post more of indecent pictures and videos of theirs online, their male counterparts may be more involved in the cases of cyber bullying, sex solicitation and other online crimes and immoralities. For this reason, Enahoro (2009)[10] cites one Carstehson, Project Manager of Save the Children Fund as saying that "the fate of all children are at stake, and the best form of defence for them is to make them aware of what can happen online and provide options and solutions."

When the fourth hypothesis was tested through the use of ANOVA analysis, it shows the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis that there is significant difference in the way the social media is used by the federal, state and privately owned universities, South- East, Nigeria to promote teaching and learning. Interestingly, the difference occurred only in EBSU. Perhaps, the reason for the difference occurring on EBSU is because responses the students interviewed from the school reveals that the management of the school is seriously emphasising the use ICTs/ internet among their students. This should not in any way contradict the earlier acceptance of the alternate hypothesis two that the level of irresponsible use of the social media among the students is dependent on the lack of social media education in their universities.

In all, it is worthy to note that the findings deduced from the oral interview and the computations contained in tables which were not used for the test of the hypotheses equally lend credence to the above findings. For instance, when the respondents were asked if it is wise and safe

to fake one's identity in social media practices, 24.2% and 35.2% of the 392 respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively. When they were further asked if it is proper and safe to accept social media friendship invitation of an unknown person, 35% and 27% of 392 strongly agreed and agreed respectively. These responses re-echoed when they were asked if the social media provides protection to those who engage in hate speeches, cyberbullying, rumour mongering, posting of indecent pictures/ videos and sex solicitation, 26.3% and 32% of 392 strongly agreed and agreed respectively. Moreso, all the six   students orally interviewed admitted that they engage in social media practices for the fun of it; and that they do not consider the implications on their online reputations. As a result, they expressed their unwillingness to allow their parents or any other respected persons view their social media activity logs without prior notice. All these are testimonies to the fact the students are wallowing in ignorance in their social media use.

Our findings therefore, suggest that the online reputations of many social media users among the undergraduate students of universities in South-East, Nigeria may have been dented as a result of indecent/ irresponsibility in social media usage. Besides, universities in South-East, Nigeria may have not risen to the challenge of sensitizing and conscientizing their undergraduate students on the negative implications of indecency/irresponsibility in social media use. This trend if allowed to continue is capable of jeopardizing the chances of some these potential graduates in terms of being selected for international scholarship awards, oversea postgraduate admission, employment in international and even local organizations, etc as earlier highlighted.

CONCLUSION

Based on our findings, we are inclined to conclude that many social media users among the undergraduate students in universities of South-East, Nigeria lack the awareness and broad knowledge of the negative implications of their indecent/ irresponsible postings and activities in social media platforms. This our positions may apply to many other undergraduate students across Nigerian universities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Universities in South East, Nigeria and across the country should periodically organise seminars, workshops symposia, town hall meeting with the sole target of educating and orientating their students on responsible use of the social media. Besides, National Universities Commission (NUC) should address the problem holistically by introducing social media education as a general study course in Nigerian universities. Secondly, it is recommended that the students should master the private settings of their respective social media account, and privatize their account. And thirdly, Students should activate and register with media contents and reputation security/check alert to enable them track unwanted postings and tagging by friends

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