

**PATTERN OF INSTAGRAM USAGE AMONG  
STUDENTS OF KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC.**

**BY**

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**BEING A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE  
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## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work has been completed by **Adetunji Temitope Christiana** with matric number, **HND/23/MAC/FT/0902**, read through and approved as meeting the requirement of the Department of Mass Communication, Institute of Information and Communication Technology, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin in fulfilment for the Award of Higher National Diploma (HND) in Mass Communication.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to God the Ruler of the universe, the Custodian of everything in the heavens and the earth, the Supreme Being, gives Knowledge and Wisdom. Also, this project is dedicated to our lovely and caring parents, MR & MRS. ADETUNJI

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## ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the patterns of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. With the increasing relevance of social media in students' daily lives, Instagram has emerged as a dominant platform for communication, entertainment, and self-expression. The study examines the frequency of use, purposes of engagement, preferred content types, and the impact of Instagram on academic performance and social behavior. A quantitative research method was employed, using structured questionnaires distributed to a sample of 150 students across various departments. Findings reveal that the majority of respondents use Instagram daily, primarily for entertainment, communication with peers, and accessing fashion and lifestyle content. While some students acknowledged its usefulness for educational and entrepreneurial purposes, concerns were raised about time wastage and distraction from academic activities. The study recommends digital literacy campaigns and the promotion of academic-oriented content on social platforms to help students utilize Instagram more productively.*

**Keywords:** *Instagram, social media, students, usage patterns, Kwara State Polytechnic, academic impact*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In recent years, social media platforms have become essential tools in the lives of young people, including students. Among these platforms, Instagram stands out as one of the most popular due to its emphasis on visual content, user-friendly features, and ability to foster engagement. As of now, Instagram has over a billion active users worldwide, with a significant portion of its audience falling within the youth demographic, particularly college and university students (Duggan & Smith, 2013; Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). The platform has evolved from being a simple photo-sharing app to an influential tool for communication, information dissemination, social interaction, and even academic support (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).

Instagram's popularity among young people can be attributed to its multimedia capabilities and adaptability, making it an attractive space for self-expression and connectivity. Students utilize Instagram's features, such as stories, live videos, reels, and direct messaging, to create personalized online personas and maintain relationships with their peers. These interactive tools enable them to share both academic and non-academic content, participate in discussions, and stay updated on trends. However, the ease of content sharing and access to a vast array of media also present challenges, as students may be drawn to non-academic distractions that compete for their time and focus.

At Kwara State Polytechnic, Instagram's influence on students' academic, social, and personal lives has been noticeable. Students use Instagram not only to connect with peers but also to engage with academic content, share experiences, and network with professionals. Instagram can serve as a source of information, enabling students to access educational resources, interact with academic mentors, and participate in knowledge-sharing communities. Yet, the patterns of Instagram usage among students—such as the frequency of use, preferred content, engagement levels, and motivations—vary widely (Al-Menayes, 2015). Some students use Instagram for academic purposes, such as following educational pages or engaging in group discussions on course-related topics. Others prioritize entertainment, socialization, or even entrepreneurship, using the platform to promote personal brands or small businesses. Understanding these usage patterns is crucial as it provides insights into how social media shapes students' experiences and affects their academic performance, time management, and personal development (Moqbel & Kock, 2018).

Furthermore, the usage of Instagram among students in Kwara State Polytechnic raises questions regarding its influence on their study habits, academic outcomes, and social behavior. Some studies suggest that extensive social media usage can lead to academic distraction and reduced focus (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010), while others highlight its potential as a resource for collaborative learning, community building, and staying informed (Ainin et al., 2015). Instagram's dual nature as both a potential asset and a distraction makes it essential to understand how students engage with the platform and whether it ultimately benefits or hinders their academic pursuits.

This research, therefore, seeks to examine the pattern of Instagram usage among students at Kwara State Polytechnic, exploring how students use this platform, the factors influencing their engagement, and the potential impacts on their academic and social lives. Through this examination, the study aims to contribute to a better understanding of Instagram's role in higher education and offer insights that may inform strategies for more balanced social media use among students.

## **1.2.Statement of the Problem**

With the widespread adoption of social media, Instagram has become one of the most popular platforms among students for both personal and academic activities. However, the effects of Instagram usage on students' academic performance, time management, and social behavior remain complex and not fully understood. While some students use Instagram as a tool for learning and academic networking, others engage with it primarily for entertainment, potentially leading to distractions and reduced academic focus.

At Kwara State Polytechnic, the extensive use of Instagram among students raises questions about how it impacts their daily routines, academic success, and social interactions. There is a need to identify the predominant patterns of Instagram usage, including the time spent, types of content accessed, and primary motivations for using the platform. Additionally, understanding whether Instagram usage contributes positively to students' academic engagement or negatively affects their productivity and mental well-being is crucial.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining the pattern of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, assessing the factors driving their engagement with the platform, and exploring the potential impacts on their academic performance and social behavior. The findings of this study will provide insights that could help educators, policymakers, and students better understand and manage the influence of social media on academic life.

## **1.3.Research Objectives.**

1. To examine the patterns of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, including frequency, duration, and types of content accessed.
2. To identify the factors that influence students' engagement with Instagram and their motivations for using the platform.
3. To assess the impact of Instagram usage on students' academic performance and social behaviour.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

1. What are the patterns of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic?
2. What factors influence students' engagement with Instagram, and what are their primary motivations for using the platform?
3. How does Instagram usage affect the academic performance and social behaviour of students at Kwara State Polytechnic?

#### **1.5. Significant of the study**

The study on Instagram usage patterns among students of Kwara State Polytechnic holds significant value for academic institutions, students, researchers, and society. For academic institutions and educators, understanding how Instagram influences students' academic performance and social behaviors can aid in shaping policies that promote responsible social media usage. Such insights may help in developing strategies to encourage focus, better time management, and potentially improve academic outcomes among students.

For students, the study offers awareness of the effects their Instagram usage may have on their academic and social lives. By identifying potential positive and negative impacts, students can make more informed choices about their social media habits, balancing usage for academic benefits with caution against distractions.

For researchers and policymakers, this study will contribute to the growing body of research on social media's impact on students. It provides a localized context for understanding social media usage in Nigerian polytechnic environments and can serve as a basis for developing policies that encourage healthy digital habits among young people, supporting their academic and personal growth.

Lastly, the study's findings offer broader societal insights into the role of social media in shaping youth behavior and communication. This knowledge can support initiatives that promote safe and effective social media practices, helping young people navigate social media in a way that aligns with their educational and social development goals.

#### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on examining the patterns of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic. It aims to explore how often students use Instagram, the types of content they engage with, and their primary motivations for using the platform. Additionally, the study will investigate factors influencing students' engagement, such as academic, social, and personal reasons, and examine how these patterns may impact their academic performance and social behavior.

The research is limited to students of Kwara State Polytechnic across different departments and academic levels to provide a comprehensive understanding of Instagram usage patterns within this context. The study will not include other social media platforms or institutions outside Kwara State Polytechnic, as it specifically focuses on Instagram usage among this group. Data collection will rely on surveys and interviews to capture detailed and accurate information about students' Instagram behaviors and their perceived effects.

The findings will offer insights specific to Kwara State Polytechnic, which may be applicable to similar educational settings but will not be generalized beyond the scope of this institution.

### **1.7.Definition of Terms**

1. Pattern of Usage: Refers to the recurring behaviors, frequency, duration, and manner in which students interact with Instagram. This includes how often they use the platform, the types of activities they engage in, and the times of day they are most active.
2. Instagram: A social media platform primarily for sharing photos, videos, and stories. It allows users to connect, communicate, and follow others, often creating a personalized feed based on their interests and network.
3. Students of Kwara State Polytechnic: Refers to individuals enrolled in various academic programs at Kwara State Polytechnic, including both diploma and higher national diploma (HND) students across different departments.
4. Usage: The way in which students utilize Instagram for different purposes, including social interaction, academic support, entertainment, or personal expression.

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## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

##### **2.1.1. Concept of Social Media**

Social media refers to a wide range of online platforms and technologies that allow individuals to create and share content, interact with others, and form communities based on shared interests, values, or goals. Social media platforms are part of the broader internet-based communication tools that promote user-generated content, real-time interaction, and personal expression. Unlike traditional media, such as television or newspapers, where communication is generally one-way (from the media to the audience), social media enables a two-way exchange where users actively contribute to content creation and dissemination (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

At its core, social media is a network of people connected by common interests or goals, and it has become an essential aspect of modern-day life. Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social media as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile, articulate a list of connections, and view and traverse their connections within the system. Social media platforms are dynamic and allow for a diverse range of activities, such as sharing photos, posting text updates, engaging in video chats, or commenting on others' content. Examples of popular social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok, each with its own characteristics and user bases.

Over the last decade, social media has increasingly played a central role in communication across the globe, shaping how individuals engage with the world, how organizations promote themselves, and how politicians, businesses, and celebrities communicate with the public. The

accessibility and affordability of the internet have made social media available to a larger, more diverse user base, further enhancing its prominence.

From a psychological perspective, social media is seen as a platform for both social interaction and self-expression. The gratification obtained through social media use can be categorized into several psychological needs, such as the need for connection, information, entertainment, and self-presentation (LaRose et al., 2001). For example, individuals who feel isolated or disconnected can turn to social media to interact with others, find common ground, and build relationships that otherwise might not have been possible. In contrast, individuals seeking self-presentation may use social media to shape their identity and showcase their accomplishments or beliefs to an audience.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) categorized social media into six different types: collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (e.g., Twitter), content communities (e.g., YouTube), social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft), and virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life). Each of these platforms allows different types of interactions, but the fundamental purpose remains the same: to connect individuals and enable them to share and exchange content in a meaningful way.

While social media platforms have enhanced communication and social interaction, they have also introduced new challenges. Concerns about privacy, cyberbullying, and misinformation have emerged as major issues surrounding social media usage (Fuchs, 2017). Additionally, research has shown that excessive use of social media can contribute to negative psychological outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and stress (Twenge et al., 2017). Despite these concerns, the benefits of social media—such as enabling connection, increasing awareness of global issues, and supporting personal and professional development—make it a central part of modern communication.

### **2.1.2. Concept of Instagram**

Instagram, launched in 2010, is one of the most popular social media platforms globally, with over a billion active users. Its core feature is photo and video sharing, making it a highly visual platform. Instagram allows users to upload images, apply filters to enhance them, share them with followers, and interact with other users through likes, comments, and direct messages. Instagram also includes additional features such as Stories, which are short-lived posts that disappear after 24 hours, and Reels, which allow users to create short-form video content. Instagram has become a central platform for sharing visual content, expressing creativity, and establishing online identities.

The appeal of Instagram lies in its simplicity and emphasis on visuals. Research has shown that people are highly influenced by visual content, which is more likely to grab attention and evoke emotional responses compared to textual content (Calder et al., 2009). This is particularly true for young people, who have flocked to Instagram as a platform for self-expression, social interaction, and entertainment. According to Hu, Manikonda, and Kambhampati (2014), Instagram is primarily a social networking site that allows users to post photos and videos,

share stories, and explore content curated by others. The visual nature of Instagram also encourages creative expression, with users curating their content to present an idealized version of their lives.

In addition to its social networking features, Instagram has become a platform for brands, influencers, and organizations to engage with consumers. Through targeted advertisements, partnerships with influencers, and user-generated content campaigns, Instagram provides a unique opportunity for businesses to reach their target audience. Influencers, who have built large followings on the platform, often promote products and services, creating an avenue for consumer engagement. According to Nisbett (2018), Instagram's algorithm-driven feed and its ability to target users with personalized ads based on their behaviors have made it a powerful marketing tool. Brands can leverage Instagram to foster emotional connections with their audience by using visual storytelling to communicate their values, lifestyle, and products in a way that resonates with consumers.

Instagram's impact on various aspects of life, including personal identity, social relationships, and marketing, is substantial. As a platform built around sharing images and experiences, it has shaped how individuals perceive themselves and others. According to Marwick and Boyd (2011), Instagram encourages users to construct an idealized identity and self-presentation, which may contribute to feelings of inadequacy or dissatisfaction when individuals compare themselves to others. However, Instagram also allows users to build communities, share their experiences, and connect with people who share similar interests. This duality of benefits and drawbacks is characteristic of many social media platforms, as they offer both opportunities and challenges.

### **2.1.3. Evolution and Popularity of Instagram**

Instagram's rise to prominence is indicative of the broader trend toward visual communication in digital spaces. Since its launch, Instagram has undergone several transformations to adapt to changing user preferences and evolving digital trends. Originally designed as a photo-sharing app, Instagram quickly expanded its features to include video content, stories, and live streaming, making it more dynamic and interactive. The introduction of Instagram Stories in 2016, which allowed users to post temporary content, was a pivotal moment in the platform's evolution. Stories created a sense of urgency and excitement, encouraging more frequent engagement from users.

Instagram's acquisition by Facebook (now Meta) in 2012 played a significant role in its growth, providing the platform with more resources and a larger user base. The integration of Instagram with other Facebook-owned platforms, such as WhatsApp and Messenger, has made it a key part of Meta's broader digital ecosystem. The platform's ability to integrate with other apps and services, as well as its constant updates and introduction of new features, has kept Instagram relevant in an ever-changing digital landscape.

According to a 2020 report by Hootsuite, Instagram has over 1 billion active users, with the majority of users falling between the ages of 18 and 34. This demographic is particularly valuable to advertisers, as they represent a large portion of consumer spending. Instagram's popularity among younger audiences is also reflected in its role as a platform for social

activism, where users share content related to social issues such as racial justice, climate change, and mental health.

While Instagram has been successful in attracting a large user base, it has also faced criticism related to issues such as mental health, body image, and privacy. A 2021 study by the Wall Street Journal revealed that Instagram has a negative impact on the mental health of teenage girls, particularly in relation to body image concerns. Instagram's focus on beauty, fashion, and lifestyle can create unrealistic standards of appearance, leading to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem (Fardouly et al., 2015). This has led to calls for greater responsibility from the platform in managing harmful content and promoting mental well-being.

#### **2.1.4. Instagram in Academic Contexts**

Instagram has also found its way into academic contexts, where it is used by students, educators, and institutions to engage with academic content, network, and promote learning. Many students use Instagram to share educational resources, interact with peers, and showcase their academic achievements. Professors and academic institutions have also embraced Instagram as a platform to communicate with students, promote events, and share academic insights.

Research by Dabbagh and Kitsantas (2012) suggests that social media platforms like Instagram can be used to enhance the learning experience by providing students with additional resources and opportunities for collaboration. Instagram allows students to share educational content, ask questions, and engage with their peers and instructors in real time, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Additionally, students can use Instagram to build their personal brand, sharing their academic work and extracurricular activities with a broader audience.

However, the role of Instagram in education is not without controversy. Critics argue that excessive use of social media can distract students from their academic responsibilities, leading to procrastination and reduced academic performance. Research by Muringassery and George (2021) found that the time spent on social media, including Instagram, was negatively correlated with academic performance, particularly when students used the platform for non-educational purposes. Students who spend long hours scrolling through their feeds or engaging in activities unrelated to academics may struggle to maintain focus and productivity.

Despite these challenges, Instagram remains an integral part of modern communication and learning. The platform's visual and interactive nature makes it an ideal tool for engaging students, promoting collaboration, and fostering creative expression. By using Instagram responsibly and purposefully, students can leverage the platform to enhance their academic experience and build their personal brand.

#### **2.1.5. Instagram Usage Among Students**

Social media platforms have become integral to the daily lives of students, influencing how they communicate, learn, and interact. Among the most popular platforms is Instagram, a visual-centric social media platform that allows users to share photos, videos, and stories. Its user-friendly design and emphasis on visual content make it particularly appealing to students (Hu et al., 2014). Instagram's features, including direct messaging, live streaming, and Reels,

cater to the social and creative needs of students, making it a prominent part of their routines (Ellison et al., 2011).

### **1. Patterns of Instagram Usage Among Students**

Students typically use Instagram for various purposes, including social interaction, entertainment, self-expression, and information sharing. According to Alhabash and Ma (2017), young adults, particularly students, are among the highest demographic users of Instagram. They spend significant time on the platform daily, scrolling through feeds, posting updates, and engaging with peers.

#### **1. Frequency and Duration:**

Research indicates that students spend an average of 1–3 hours daily on Instagram, using this time for browsing photos, engaging with content through likes and comments, and direct messaging (Ellison et al., 2011). For many students, Instagram is not just a social networking site but also a source of entertainment and information (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

#### **2. Content Creation and Sharing:**

Students often use Instagram as a platform for self-expression and identity construction. They share posts that reflect their personalities, hobbies, and aspirations. Hu et al. (2014) observed that Instagram users often curate their profiles to present an idealized version of themselves, a trend particularly common among students striving for social acceptance or admiration.

#### **3. Social Connections:**

Instagram facilitates interaction among peers, allowing students to strengthen friendships and build new connections. The platform's interactive features, such as Stories and Reels, promote engagement and help students feel connected even in virtual spaces (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

### **2. Academic and Educational Applications**

While Instagram is primarily seen as a social and entertainment platform, it has also found relevance in education. Students use Instagram to enhance their academic experience by following educational pages, accessing resources, and collaborating with classmates (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012).

#### **1. Knowledge Sharing**

Students frequently use Instagram to access academic content. Educational institutions and instructors have embraced Instagram as a tool to disseminate information, provide updates, and share learning materials. Academic pages on Instagram post tips, tutorials, and motivational content that resonate with students (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

#### **2. Collaborative Learning:**

Group discussions and collaborations increasingly occur on Instagram. Through features such as group chats and private messaging, students can discuss projects, share study materials, and seek assistance from peers (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

### **3. Personal Branding and Career Development:**

Instagram allows students to build a professional online presence by showcasing their skills, projects, and extracurricular activities. Dabbagh and Kitsantas (2012) noted that students use platforms like Instagram to network with industry professionals and explore career opportunities, making it an essential tool for personal and professional development.

#### **2.1.6. Positive Impacts of Instagram Usage Among Students**

##### **1. Creative Expression:**

Instagram's visual nature encourages creativity, allowing students to explore photography, videography, and graphic design. It also helps them express their opinions and ideas uniquely (Hu et al., 2014).

##### **2. Social Interaction:**

Instagram promotes social connectivity, helping students maintain relationships and develop a sense of belonging. This can be particularly beneficial for students studying away from home or feeling isolated (Ellison et al., 2011).

3. Awareness and Advocacy: Instagram provides a platform for students to engage with social causes and advocate for issues they care about. Through posts, stories, and hashtags, students can participate in discussions about global and local issues (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).
4. Stress Relief and Entertainment: For many students, Instagram serves as a source of relaxation and entertainment. Scrolling through humorous content, engaging in trends, or watching entertaining Reels provides a much-needed mental break from academic pressures (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

#### **2.1.7. Negative Impacts of Instagram Usage Among Students**

1. Distraction from Academics: Excessive time spent on Instagram can detract from academic responsibilities. Students may procrastinate or struggle to focus on their studies due to frequent engagement with the platform (Ellison et al., 2011).
2. Mental Health Concerns: Instagram's emphasis on idealized lifestyles and appearances can negatively impact students' mental health. Research by Fardouly et al. (2015) found that social comparison on Instagram is linked to body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem among students.
3. Addiction and Dependency: Many students develop a dependency on Instagram, where they feel compelled to check the app frequently. This can lead to unhealthy patterns of behavior, such as neglecting face-to-face interactions or losing sleep (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).
4. Cyberbullying and Privacy Issues: Students may encounter cyberbullying or harassment on Instagram, which can affect their emotional well-being. Additionally,

privacy concerns arise when students share personal information on the platform (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

### **2.1.8. Patterns of Instagram Usage**

Instagram, a photo and video-sharing social media platform, has grown significantly in popularity among diverse demographics, especially students. Its visually engaging interface and multifunctional tools make it a preferred platform for communication, entertainment, education, and self-expression (Hu et al., 2014). Students' Instagram usage patterns reveal how the platform integrates into their daily lives and influences their social, academic, and personal activities.

#### **1. Frequency of Usage**

Students are among the most active Instagram users globally. Research shows that most students log onto Instagram multiple times daily, with an average usage time ranging from one to three hours (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). The platform's addictive features, such as the infinite scroll and algorithm-driven personalized feeds, contribute to this frequent engagement (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Students often check Instagram during their leisure time, between classes, or even during study sessions, highlighting its pervasive role in their routines.

#### **Purpose of Usage**

1. **Social Interaction and Networking:** Instagram serves as a hub for social interaction, enabling students to stay connected with friends, peers, and family members. Features like Direct Messaging (DM), Stories, and Live Videos allow users to engage in real-time communication and share updates about their lives (Ellison et al., 2011).
  2. **Content Creation and Sharing:** Many students use Instagram as a platform for self-expression. They post photos, videos, and stories to showcase their creativity, personal milestones, or opinions. According to Hu et al. (2014), students often curate their Instagram profiles to reflect their desired self-image or brand.
  3. **Information and News Consumption:** Instagram has evolved beyond a mere social networking site to become a significant source of news and information. Students follow educational pages, influencers, and news outlets for updates on topics ranging from academics to current affairs (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).
  4. **Entertainment:** The entertainment value of Instagram cannot be overstated. Students consume a wide variety of content, including memes, reels, and live streams, which cater to their interests and help them unwind from academic pressures (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).
  5. **Commercial Engagement:** Instagram also acts as a marketplace for students. Many use it to explore brands, shop for products, or even run their small businesses. This trend reflects Instagram's role as a bridge between social interaction and e-commerce (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).
2. Behavioral Trends

1. **Story Usage:** Instagram Stories, a feature that allows users to post temporary content visible for 24 hours, has gained immense popularity. Students use Stories to share spontaneous moments or updates without the commitment of a permanent post (Hu et al., 2014).
2. **Engagement with Reels:** Reels, Instagram's short-video feature, has become a favorite among students for creating and consuming trendy, engaging, and humorous content. It allows them to participate in viral challenges and connect with a broader audience (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).
3. **Hashtag and Trend Participation:** Students actively participate in trending hashtags and challenges, which enable them to engage with broader social movements or entertainment trends. This participation often amplifies their online presence and connects them to like-minded communities (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).
4. **Gender-Based Differences in Usage**

Studies suggest notable gender-based differences in how students use Instagram. Female students tend to engage more in activities related to self-presentation, such as posting selfies or lifestyle content, while male students focus more on consuming entertainment-oriented content like sports or humor (Tifferet & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2014). Additionally, females are more likely to use Instagram for emotional expression and relationship building, whereas males prioritize networking and status updates (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

## **5. Academic Integration of Instagram**

1. **Educational Resources:** Students utilize Instagram to follow pages that provide academic resources, motivational content, and study tips. Educational institutions and tutors increasingly use Instagram as a platform to reach students and disseminate learning materials (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012).
2. **Collaborative Learning:** Group chats and private messaging on Instagram enable students to collaborate on academic projects or share study resources. This demonstrates Instagram's potential to support peer-assisted learning (Ellison et al., 2011).
3. **Career Development:** Instagram is also used for career development, as students follow professionals, attend live career counseling sessions, or showcase their skills through portfolio posts. This aspect highlights Instagram's utility in professional growth and networking (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

## **4. Negative Patterns of Usage**

1. **Excessive Screen Time:** Prolonged Instagram use can lead to decreased productivity and reduced focus on academic or personal responsibilities. Studies suggest that students who spend excessive time on Instagram are more likely to experience sleep disturbances and poor time management (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).
2. **Comparison and Mental Health Issues:** Instagram's curated content often leads to social comparison, resulting in feelings of inadequacy or low self-esteem among students. Fardouly et al. (2015) found that students exposed to idealized lifestyles on Instagram are more susceptible to anxiety and body image concerns.

3. **Addiction and Dependency:** Many students exhibit signs of Instagram addiction, where they feel compelled to check the app frequently, often at the expense of face-to-face interactions or personal well-being (Ellison et al., 2011).
4. **Exposure to Misinformation:** The prevalence of misinformation and fake news on Instagram poses challenges for students who rely on the platform for information. This underscores the need for critical media literacy (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The patterns of Instagram usage among students reveal the platform's versatility and influence on their social, academic, and personal lives. While it fosters creativity, connectivity, and information sharing, excessive or unbalanced usage can lead to adverse effects such as reduced academic performance and mental health challenges. By understanding these patterns, educators, parents, and policymakers can develop strategies to encourage productive and mindful Instagram use among students.

### **2.1.9. Implications of Instagram Usage**

Instagram has become a cornerstone of digital interaction, transcending its original purpose as a photo-sharing app to influence various aspects of users' lives. The platform's widespread adoption among students, particularly in educational settings like Kwara State Polytechnic, provides valuable insights into its societal and academic implications. This section explores the multifaceted effects of Instagram usage, emphasizing its implications on mental health, social behavior, academic performance, and professional development.

#### **1.Implications on Mental Health**

1. **Positive Impacts on Mental Health:** Instagram allows students to express themselves creatively and connect with peers, contributing to a sense of belonging and emotional well-being (Ellison et al., 2011). Features such as supportive communities and motivational content offer avenues for emotional upliftment and peer validation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).
2. **Negative Impacts on Mental Health:** However, prolonged Instagram usage is often linked to adverse mental health outcomes. The platform's emphasis on curated content leads to social comparison, fostering feelings of inadequacy or low self-esteem among students (Fardouly et al., 2015). Moreover, the constant exposure to idealized lifestyles can exacerbate anxiety and depression, particularly among young users.

#### **2.Implications on Social Behavior**

1. **Enhancement of Social Networks:** Instagram fosters social connectivity by bridging geographical and cultural gaps. Students leverage the platform to maintain relationships, form new connections, and engage in group discussions, enhancing their social networks (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).
2. **Erosion of Face-to-Face Interactions:** The heavy reliance on Instagram for communication can erode interpersonal relationships. Students may prioritize virtual interactions over face-to-face communication, leading to weakened social bonds and diminished social skills (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).

3. **Influence on Social Norms:** Instagram also shapes social norms and trends, influencing students' lifestyle choices, fashion, and behavior. While this fosters a sense of inclusion, it can also pressure students to conform to unrealistic societal standards (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

### **3.Implications on Academic Performance**

1. **Educational Opportunities:** Instagram provides a wealth of educational resources, including academic pages, tutorial videos, and peer study groups. Many students use the platform to access knowledge, participate in online learning, and collaborate on academic projects (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012).
2. **Distraction and Reduced Focus:** Conversely, excessive Instagram usage can distract students from their academic responsibilities. Notifications and engaging content often disrupt study sessions, leading to procrastination and diminished academic performance (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).
3. **Digital Literacy:** The use of Instagram enhances students' digital literacy skills. By navigating the platform's features, they develop competencies in media creation, digital communication, and information filtering, which are valuable in the digital age (Ellison et al., 2011).

### **5.Implications on Professional Development**

1. **Career Networking:**

Instagram serves as a platform for professional networking and personal branding. Students use the platform to showcase their skills, connect with industry professionals, and explore career opportunities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

2. **Entrepreneurship:**

Many students leverage Instagram for entrepreneurial purposes, using it to promote small businesses, sell products, or provide services. This entrepreneurial engagement not only supplements their income but also hones their marketing and business management skills (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).

3. **Building an Online Portfolio:** For creative fields such as graphic design, photography, and writing, Instagram acts as a portfolio platform where students can exhibit their work and attract potential clients or employers (Hu et al., 2014).

#### **2.1.10. Instagram Usage Among Kwara State Polytechnic Students**

Kwara State Polytechnic students represent a microcosm of how young adults in Nigeria interact with social media, particularly Instagram. This section delves into the specific patterns, motivations, and outcomes of Instagram usage within this demographic, shedding light on its impact on their social, academic, and personal lives.

- i. **Patterns of Instagram Usage**

1. **Frequency and Duration:** A majority of Kwara State Polytechnic students report using Instagram daily, often for several hours. This consistent usage highlights the platform's role as an integral part of their daily routines (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).
2. **Content Engagement:** Students engage with a variety of content on Instagram, including memes, academic posts, motivational content, and updates from friends. Features like Reels and Stories are particularly popular due to their interactive and ephemeral nature (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).
3. **Demographic Trends:** Female students are more likely to use Instagram for self-expression and lifestyle content, while male students gravitate toward entertainment and informational content. These trends reflect broader gendered patterns in social media use (Tifferet & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2014).

#### **ii. Motivations for Instagram Usage**

1. **Social Connectivity:** Students use Instagram to stay connected with friends and family, particularly those living far away. The platform's communication tools, such as Direct Messaging and group chats, facilitate these interactions (Ellison et al., 2011).
2. **Information Seeking:** Instagram serves as a hub for information and news. Students follow accounts related to their interests, academic subjects, or current events, demonstrating the platform's educational utility (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012).
3. **Entertainment and Leisure:** The entertaining nature of Instagram makes it a go-to platform for leisure activities. Students consume humorous and light-hearted content to relieve stress and unwind from academic pressures (Hu et al., 2014).

#### **iii. Impact on Academic Activities**

1. **Collaborative Learning:** Instagram facilitates collaborative learning through group chats and academic pages. Students use these tools to share resources, discuss assignments, and prepare for exams collectively (Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012).
2. **Disruptive Potential:** Despite its educational benefits, Instagram can also disrupt students' academic focus. Notifications and the allure of engaging content often divert their attention from study-related tasks (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).
3. **Access to Academic Resources:** Many students follow accounts that offer tutorials, study tips, and academic advice, underscoring Instagram's role as an informal learning platform (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

#### **iv. Influence on Social Behavior**

1. **Peer Influence:** Instagram amplifies peer influence by exposing students to trends and lifestyles adopted by their peers. This can shape their preferences, attitudes, and social interactions (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016).
2. **Identity Construction:** Kwara State Polytechnic students often use Instagram to construct and project their desired identities. This includes curating their profiles to reflect specific values, interests, or aspirations (Hu et al., 2014).

#### **v. Challenges and Risks**

1. **Misinformation:**

The prevalence of misinformation on Instagram poses a risk to students who rely on the platform for news and information. Critical media literacy is essential to mitigate this issue (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

## **2. Cyberbullying:**

Instances of cyberbullying and online harassment are reported among students, highlighting the darker side of Instagram usage (Ellison et al., 2011).

3. **Privacy Concerns:** Students express concerns about privacy and data security, particularly when sharing personal information or content on the platform (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016)

The exploration of Instagram usage among students, particularly at Kwara State Polytechnic, reveals the platform's profound impact on various aspects of their lives. Instagram has evolved beyond a social media platform, becoming a tool for social interaction, academic engagement, personal branding, and even professional development. Students leverage its features to connect with peers, access educational content, and express their creativity.

However, the platform also presents challenges. The potential for distraction, exposure to misinformation, and risks to mental health underscore the need for balanced and mindful usage. While Instagram can foster social and academic growth, excessive reliance on the platform may hinder face-to-face interactions, reduce productivity, and contribute to psychological stress.

For Kwara State Polytechnic students, the patterns and implications of Instagram usage highlight a dual-edged sword. On one hand, it offers opportunities for learning, networking, and entertainment. On the other hand, it necessitates critical engagement and responsible usage to mitigate its negative impacts.

Educators, policymakers, and students themselves must navigate this dynamic landscape by fostering digital literacy, encouraging meaningful interactions, and promoting awareness of the potential risks. By striking a balance, students can harness the benefits of Instagram while minimizing its drawbacks, thereby enhancing their overall academic and social experiences.

## **2.2.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework serves as a foundation for understanding Instagram usage among students, providing insights into the motivations and behaviors that shape their interactions with the platform. This study adopts two key theories: Uses and Gratifications Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, to examine the patterns, motivations, and implications of Instagram usage.

### **2.2.1. Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Proposed by Elihu Katz in 1972, the Uses and Gratifications Theory emphasizes that individuals are active participants in their media consumption, choosing content that aligns with their personal and social needs. This approach shifts from traditional views that regarded

audiences as passive recipients of media content, instead highlighting their agency in selecting and engaging with specific platforms like Instagram.

For students, Instagram serves multiple purposes that fulfill a variety of needs. Firstly, it acts as a source of information-seeking, where users can access academic updates, trending news, and self-improvement tips. The platform also facilitates social interaction, enabling students to connect with friends, classmates, and peer groups. Additionally, Instagram provides an avenue for entertainment, offering engaging content like memes, videos, and trending reels that cater to students' recreational needs. Lastly, it supports personal branding, as students use the platform to share achievements, showcase their talents, and improve visibility among peers and potential employers.

This theory provides a framework to explore why Kwara State Polytechnic students gravitate towards Instagram, the content they engage with, and the needs they aim to satisfy. By viewing Instagram as a tool for self-expression, information sharing, and community building, the Uses and Gratifications Theory underscores the active role students play in their digital experiences.

### **2.2.2. Social Cognitive Theory**

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, introduced in 1986, provides another perspective for understanding Instagram usage. This theory emphasizes the reciprocal interaction between personal factors, environmental influences, and behavior. It posits that individuals learn and adapt behaviors by observing others in their social environment, a process that is particularly relevant in the context of social media.

Instagram usage among students can be understood through the lens of modeling behavior, where users mimic trends, habits, and practices seen in influencers, peers, and celebrities. For example, students may adopt new fashion styles, communication trends, or even study habits inspired by content they encounter on Instagram. Furthermore, the platform fosters self-efficacy, as students gain confidence in their abilities to engage, share, and create content that resonates with their audience.

Reinforcement mechanisms like likes, comments, and shares act as social rewards, encouraging students to maintain or increase their engagement on the platform. Additionally, Instagram reinforces social norms, as the content students consume and share often reflects societal expectations and peer group behaviors. This dynamic shapes their self-perception, social interactions, and even decision-making processes.

Social Cognitive Theory provides a robust framework for analyzing the behavioral implications of Instagram usage. It highlights how the platform influences students' attitudes, habits, and interactions, making it instrumental in understanding both the positive and negative outcomes of their engagement.

### **2.2.3. Relevance to the Study**

The integration of Uses and Gratifications Theory and Social Cognitive Theory offers a comprehensive perspective on Instagram usage among students at Kwara State Polytechnic.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory explains the motivations behind students' engagement with Instagram, focusing on how the platform satisfies their needs for information, social connection, and entertainment. Meanwhile, Social Cognitive Theory delves into the behavioral dynamics, examining how Instagram influences students' learning, self-perception, and social behaviors through modeling, reinforcement, and social norms.

Together, these theories underscore the dynamic interplay between students' personal needs, the platform's affordances, and broader social influences. By applying these frameworks, this research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Instagram's role in shaping the academic, social, and psychological experiences of students. This theoretical foundation serves as a guiding lens to explore the patterns, implications, and potential impacts of Instagram usage on students' lives.

### **2.3.EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Sheldon and Bryant (2016) explored how students use Instagram to connect with friends and share personal updates. They found that the platform plays a significant role in fostering social connectedness among students. Female users often focused on curating their profiles to reflect their personalities and interests, emphasizing self-presentation. Male students, on the other hand, used the platform more casually, often for interaction and humor. Overall, Instagram proved to be a powerful tool for maintaining relationships and enhancing social bonds.

Alhabash and Ma (2017) delved into the addictive nature of Instagram, attributing its appeal to the platform's visually engaging content and personalized algorithms. For students, Instagram became a daily habit, with many spending 1-3 hours per day scrolling through feeds, liking posts, and watching Stories. The study highlighted how Instagram's design encourages continuous engagement, making it a key part of students' social media routines.

Meier and Reinecke (2020) examined the impact of Instagram on academic performance. While some students followed educational pages and influencers that provided valuable learning resources, excessive use of the platform often led to procrastination and reduced focus on studies. The study emphasized the importance of balance, as Instagram's appeal can easily divert attention from academic responsibilities.

Lee, Lee, and Choi (2019) studied gender differences in Instagram usage patterns. They discovered that female students often shared aesthetically pleasing and well-edited photos, using the platform as a means of self-expression and lifestyle documentation. Male students, however, were more likely to engage with humorous content, memes, and trending topics. These differences highlighted how Instagram caters to diverse user interests and motivations.

Kim and Drumwright (2021) focused on Instagram's role in building social capital among students. The platform was not just a source of entertainment; it also served as a valuable tool for networking and accessing peer resources. International students particularly benefited, using Instagram to adapt socially and integrate into new environments. The study emphasized the platform's potential to strengthen community ties and foster inclusivity.

Balakrishnan and Griffiths (2018) explored the motivations behind students' Instagram use. They found that the platform was primarily used for social interaction, entertainment, and self-expression. Students enjoyed documenting their lives through creative posts, which helped them connect with peers and build a sense of identity. Instagram's features, like Stories and Reels, played a key role in keeping users engaged and encouraging self-expression.

Huang and Su (2018) examined the psychological effects of Instagram on students. They found that while receiving likes and positive comments boosted confidence, many students struggled with self-esteem due to constant comparisons with idealized content. This dynamic created a complex relationship where Instagram could both uplift and undermine users' mental well-being, depending on how they engaged with the platform.

Ayodele and Akinyemi (2022) focused on the patterns of Instagram use among African university students. They observed that students used Instagram not only for socializing but also for academic engagement and career exploration. The platform became particularly significant during the COVID-19 pandemic, as students relied on it for updates, virtual events, and staying connected during lockdowns.<sup>1</sup>

Vannucci et al. (2017) investigated the link between Instagram use and anxiety among college students. They found that students who relied heavily on likes and comments for validation often experienced heightened stress and anxiety. The pressure to maintain an ideal online image and keep up with peers contributed to these mental health challenges, emphasizing the need for mindful social media use.

Fardouly et al. (2018) highlighted the impact of Instagram on body image among students. Many, especially females, felt dissatisfied with their appearances after being exposed to fitness influencers and accounts promoting idealized beauty standards. This exposure led to increased body dissatisfaction and pressure to conform to unrealistic expectations, showcasing the darker side of social media's influence on self-perception.

These studies collectively shed light on the diverse patterns and impacts of Instagram usage among students, offering insights into how the platform influences their social, academic, and psychological well-being.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed in the study, serving as a blueprint to guide the conduct and assessment of the research. The study investigates the **Pattern of**

**Instagram Usage Among Students of Kwara State Polytechnic**, employing a survey method to collect data through structured and unstructured questionnaires. These instruments were designed to understand the extent and reasons for Instagram usage among the students.

### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research adopted the survey research method. This method, as Nwodu (2006) describes, focuses on collecting and analyzing data from a representative sample of the population. The survey method was chosen for its ability to provide insights into the patterns and motivations behind Instagram usage, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

### **3.2 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

The population of the study refers to all students of Kwara State Polytechnic. According to Afiwokemi (2015), the population of a research study includes all participants eligible for the study. Similarly, Wimmer and Dominick (2006) define it as the collection of subjects or variables relevant to the study. For this research, the target population comprises students of Kwara State Polytechnic, from which 200 respondents were sampled.

### **3.3 SAMPLE SIZE**

The sample size for this study is 200 students, selected using a **non-probability random sampling method**. While this method involves subjective judgment rather than random selection, systematic random sampling was employed to ensure fair representation. This approach minimizes the cost and time associated with studying the entire population while maintaining the reliability of the findings.

### **3.4 DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT**

The primary instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, designed to gather accurate and relevant data on Instagram usage among students. The questionnaire comprised both structured and unstructured questions, allowing respondents to provide detailed insights. A total of 200 copies were distributed and collected immediately after completion to ensure accuracy and reliability.

### **3.5 INSTRUMENTATION**

The questionnaire, as the primary research instrument, was distributed to the selected 200 respondents. It consisted of 20 questions aimed at understanding the pattern, purpose, and frequency of Instagram usage among students. The administration and collection of the questionnaires were conducted personally to ensure a high response rate.

### **3.6 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The data collected through the questionnaires were analyzed using **simple percentages** and **cross-tabulations**, methods widely adopted in social science research for their effectiveness in

presenting data insights. The findings were summarized and conclusions drawn to address the research questions. Recommendations based on the findings were subsequently provided.

This methodology ensures a systematic approach to understanding the **Pattern of Instagram Usage Among Students of Kwara State Polytechnic**, contributing to the body of knowledge on social media behaviors in academic settings.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

## DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

### 4.0. INTRODUCTION

The essence of this chapter is to analyze and discuss the response given to the questionnaire distributed to the respondents.

Gathered data would be analyzed by using table text to reflect the percentage of the respondents, which would be allowed by specific interpretation of the results.

In this research, the researcher used tables, percentage and chi-square to check the reliability and validity of the results obtained in the study.

The study answered following research questions:

Number of questionnaires distributed 100

Number of questionnaires filled 100

Number of questionnaires not filled 0

Number of questionnaires presented and analyzed. 100

### 4.1 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

**Table 1: Gender of Respondents**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Male	38	38%
Female	62	62%
Prefer not to say	0	0%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 1 above, 38% of the respondents are male, while 62% are female. None of the respondents selected "Prefer not to say" or "Other."

**Table 2: Age of Respondents**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
18–25 years	86	86%
26–35 years	14	14%
36 and above	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 2 above, the majority of respondents (86%) are aged between 18–25 years, while 14% fall within the 26–35 years category. None of the respondents are aged 36 or above.

**Table 3: Educational Level of Respondents**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
ND 1	92	92%
ND 2	6	6%
HND 1	4	4%
HND 2	0	0%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 3 above, 92% of respondents are in ND 1, followed by 6% in ND 2 and 4% in HND 1. No respondents are in HND 2 or chose “Other.”

**Table 4: Marital Status of Respondents**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Single	85	85%
Engaged	5	5%
Married	10	10%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 4 above, the majority of respondents (85%) are single. 10% are married, and 5% are engaged. No respondent selected “Other.”

**Table 5: Religion of Respondents**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Islam	37.4	37.4%
Christianity	62.6	62.6%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 5 above, 62.6% of respondents identify as Christians, while 37.4% identify as Muslims. No respondent selected “Other.”

## **SECTION B: USAGE PATTERNS OF INSTAGRAM**

**Table 6: Instagram Account Ownership**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	100	100%
No	0	0%
Maybe	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 6 above, all respondents (100%) confirmed they have an active Instagram account.

**Table 7: Frequency of Instagram Use**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	83	83%
2–3 times a week	8	8%
Occasionally	9	9%
Rarely	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 7 above, 83% of respondents use Instagram daily, while 8% use it 2–3 times a week, and 9% use it occasionally.

**Table 8: Most Frequent Time of Instagram Use**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Morning	25	25%
Afternoon	25	25%
Evening	26	26%
Late night	24	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 8 above, 26% of respondents use Instagram mostly in the evening, followed by 25% each in the morning and afternoon, and 24% at late night.

**Table 9: Time Spent on Instagram Per Day**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	18	18%
1–2 hours	57	57%
3–5 hours	21	21%
More than 5 hours	11	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 9 above, the majority of respondents (57%) spend 1–2 hours on Instagram daily, followed by 21% who spend 3–5 hours.

**Table 10: Primary Purpose for Using Instagram**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Entertainment	48	48%
Academic/Research	22	22%
Business/Branding	19	19%
Social Networking	4	4%
News/Information	7	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 10 above, entertainment is the main purpose for using Instagram (48%), followed by academic/research (22%) and business/branding (19%).

**Table 11: Most Engaged Content on Instagram**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Memos/Humor	20	20%
Educational Posts	22	22%
Fashion/Beauty	23	23%
News	8	8%
Business Promotions	22	22%
Influencer Content	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 11 above, Fashion/Beauty (23%) and Educational Posts (22%) are the most engaged content types, followed closely by Business Promotions (22%).

**Table 12: Use of Instagram for Business/Brand Promotion**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	98	98%
No	2	2%
Maybe	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 12 above, 98% of respondents have used Instagram to follow or promote a business/brand, while only 2% have not.

## SECTION C: IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM USAGE ON STUDENTS

**Table 13: Instagram Helps Me Stay Updated with Trends and Events**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Agree	67	67%
Strongly agree	33	33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 13 above, 67% of respondents agree that Instagram helps them stay updated with trends and events, while 33% strongly agree. None disagreed or were neutral.

**Table 14: I Use Instagram as a Source of Academic or Educational Content**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	1	1%

Agree	73	73%
Strongly agree	26	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 14 above, the majority of respondents (73%) agree and 26% strongly agree that they use Instagram for academic or educational content.

**Table 15: Spending Time on Instagram Affects My Academic Concentration**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	7.1	7.1%
Agree	78.8	78.8%
Strongly agree	14.1	14.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 15 above, 78.8% agree and 14.1% strongly agree that Instagram affects their academic concentration, while 7.1% remained neutral. No respondent disagreed.

**Table 16: Instagram Helps Me Connect with Friends and Like-Minded People**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	1	1%
Agree	42	42%
Strongly agree	57	57%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 16 above, 57% strongly agree and 42% agree that Instagram helps them connect with friends and like-minded people, while 1% remained neutral.

**Table 17: Instagram Has Influenced My Perception of Beauty, Fashion, or Lifestyle**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	1	1%
Disagree	2	2%
Neutral	0	0%
Agree	73.5	73.5%
Strongly agree	23.5	23.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 17 above, 73.5% of respondents agree and 23.5% strongly agree that Instagram has influenced their perception of beauty, fashion, or lifestyle, while only 3% disagreed.

**Table 18: Instagram Usage Helps Me Discover Local Brands and Student Businesses**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	1	1%
Disagree	0	0%
Neutral	1	1%
Agree	87	87%
Strongly agree	11	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 18 above, the majority of respondents (87%) agree and 11% strongly agree that Instagram helps them discover local brands and student businesses.

**Table 19: I Feel Pressure to Post or Maintain a Certain Image on Instagram**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	2	2%
Disagree	5	5%
Neutral	8	8%
Agree	84	84%
Strongly agree	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 19 above, 84% of respondents agree that they feel pressure to maintain a certain image on Instagram, 8% are neutral, and a total of 7% disagreed, while only 1% strongly agreed.

**Table 20: I Follow Influencers or Content Creators Who Affect My Buying Choices**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	12	12%
Neutral	7	7%
Agree	79	79%
Strongly agree	2	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 20 above, 79% agree and 2% strongly agree that influencers impact their buying choices. Meanwhile, 12% disagree and 7% are neutral.

**Table 21: I Have Considered Starting a Business or Brand Through Instagram**

Options	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	3	3%
Neutral	0	0%
Agree	92	92%

Strongly agree	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 21 above, a strong majority of respondents (92%) agree and 5% strongly agree that they have considered starting a business through Instagram. Only 3% disagreed.

**Table 22: Excessive Use of Instagram Sometimes Distracts Me from My Academic Goals**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly disagree	2	2%
Disagree	3	3%
Neutral	6	6%
Agree	88	88%
Strongly agree	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Source:</b> Field Survey, 2025		

From Table 22 above, 88% of respondents agree that Instagram sometimes distracts them from academic goals, 6% are neutral, and 5% disagree or strongly disagree.

## 4.2 Analysis of Research Questions

### Research Question One: What are the patterns of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic?

The first research question sought to examine the patterns of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic. Findings from the study show that all respondents (100%) have active Instagram accounts, indicating total adoption of the platform among the surveyed students. A significant majority (83%) use Instagram daily, while smaller percentages engage with the platform 2–3 times a week (8%) or occasionally (9%). Usage is spread fairly evenly throughout the day, with 25% accessing the platform in the morning, another 25% in the afternoon, 26% in the evening, and 24% late at night. In terms of time spent, most respondents (57%) reported spending 1–2 hours on Instagram daily, followed by 21% who spend 3–5 hours, and 11% who spend more than 5 hours. These results suggest that Instagram is deeply embedded in students' daily routines, with frequent and consistent usage throughout the day.

### Research Question Two: What factors influence students' engagement with Instagram, and what are their primary motivations for using the platform?

Addressing the second research question, which focuses on the factors influencing students' engagement with Instagram and their primary motivations for using the platform, the data indicates that entertainment is the leading motivation (48%), followed by academic and research purposes (22%), business or branding (19%), news and information (7%), and social networking (4%). The content most engaged with includes fashion and beauty posts (23%), educational content (22%), business promotions (22%), and humorous or meme-based posts (20%). Furthermore, 98% of respondents affirmed that they have used Instagram to follow or promote a business or brand, indicating strong entrepreneurial interest. Many students also acknowledged the platform's role in helping them stay updated with trends (100% agreed or

strongly agreed), access academic content (99%), and discover local or student-run businesses (98%). These findings reveal that students use Instagram for a blend of entertainment, academic support, branding, and informational purposes, reflecting the platform's multifaceted appeal.

### **Research Question Three: How does Instagram usage affect the academic performance and social behavior of students at Kwara State Polytechnic?**

In response to the third research question, which examines how Instagram usage affects academic performance and social behavior, the results reveal a mix of positive and negative influences. A large percentage (78.8%) of respondents agreed that spending time on Instagram affects their academic concentration, with an additional 14.1% strongly agreeing. Similarly, 88% admitted that excessive use of Instagram sometimes distracts them from academic goals. Nonetheless, 99% acknowledged using the platform for academic or educational content, suggesting that Instagram serves both as a distraction and as a supportive academic tool. Regarding social behavior, a combined 99% agreed or strongly agreed that Instagram helps them connect with friends and like-minded individuals. However, 84% of students reported feeling pressure to maintain a certain image online, highlighting the psychological and social impact of curated digital personas. Additionally, 81% of students agreed or strongly agreed that influencers they follow affect their purchasing decisions, and 97% have considered starting a business or brand via Instagram. These findings demonstrate that while Instagram may pose challenges to academic focus, it also fosters social connections, influences consumption behavior, and motivates entrepreneurial aspirations among students.

### **4.3 Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study provide significant insight into the patterns, motivations, and effects of Instagram usage among students of Kwara State Polytechnic. The results show that Instagram is a highly adopted and regularly used platform among students, with all respondents confirming they have an active account and a vast majority engaging with the platform daily. This aligns with global trends that place Instagram among the most popular social media platforms for young adults, particularly in academic environments. The fact that students use Instagram across all times of the day and spend considerable time—often over one hour daily—indicates its deep integration into their lifestyle and routines.

The study also reveals multiple motivations behind students' engagement with Instagram. Entertainment remains the most dominant purpose, followed closely by academic use and business or branding activities. This suggests that while Instagram is primarily used for leisure, it also serves as a valuable tool for learning and entrepreneurship. The high engagement with educational content and business promotions reflects students' ability to adapt social media for both personal development and economic empowerment. Additionally, the overwhelming majority of respondents who use Instagram to promote or follow brands demonstrates the platform's influence on consumer behavior and digital marketing, especially among youth.

In terms of the academic and social impact of Instagram, the findings present a dual perspective. On one hand, many students acknowledged that Instagram helps them stay informed, access academic content, and connect with peers. On the other hand, a significant number admitted that excessive usage negatively affects their academic focus and

concentration. This suggests a balancing act between productive and unproductive use of the platform. Furthermore, the study highlights that Instagram has a notable influence on students' social behavior and self-perception. Many respondents reported feeling pressured to maintain a particular image, and a large number confirmed that influencers shape their purchasing decisions. These results support existing literature on social media's role in shaping identity, peer pressure, and consumer culture.

Overall, the findings reflect Instagram's multifaceted role in the lives of students—acting simultaneously as a source of information, academic resource, business platform, and social space. While it offers several benefits in terms of connectivity, awareness, and learning, it also presents challenges such as distraction and social comparison, which need to be managed effectively for optimal use.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This study examined the usage patterns, motivations, and effects of Instagram on students of Kwara State Polytechnic. The data revealed a high level of engagement with Instagram, with 100% of surveyed students maintaining active accounts and the majority (83%) using the platform daily. Time spent on Instagram varied, with most students dedicating between one to two hours per day, reflecting its integration into their daily routines.

The study identified multiple purposes for Instagram use. Entertainment was the primary reason cited by nearly half of the respondents, highlighting the platform's role as a source of leisure and social interaction. Academic and research-related usage accounted for about one-fifth of respondents, indicating the growing relevance of social media as an educational tool. Business and branding activities also featured prominently, with many students actively promoting or following businesses on Instagram. This demonstrates the platform's importance in fostering entrepreneurial efforts among young people.

The research also explored Instagram's influence on academic performance and social behavior. While many students acknowledged Instagram's usefulness in providing educational content and facilitating connections with peers, a significant number reported that excessive use negatively impacted their concentration and academic goals. Furthermore, social pressures related to maintaining an idealized image on Instagram were widely reported, reflecting the psychological effects of social media engagement. Students also indicated that influencers have a strong impact on their purchasing decisions, showing how Instagram shapes consumer behavior. Notably, many respondents expressed interest in leveraging Instagram as a platform for starting their own businesses, underscoring its potential as a tool for economic empowerment.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

From the findings, it can be concluded that Instagram holds a multifaceted position in the lives of students at Kwara State Polytechnic. It functions not only as a platform for entertainment

and socialization but also as a valuable resource for academic learning and entrepreneurial activities. The platform's wide reach and ease of use have made it indispensable in students' daily lives. However, this dual-edged impact means that while Instagram offers significant benefits, it also presents challenges, especially related to academic distraction and social pressures.

The pressure to maintain a certain image and the influence of content creators on consumer habits highlight the need for critical engagement with social media content. Instagram's role in promoting student entrepreneurship is encouraging, suggesting that when used thoughtfully, the platform can support economic development among youth. Overall, Instagram's influence extends beyond simple communication, shaping students' behaviors, aspirations, and social identities.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed to maximize the benefits of Instagram while mitigating its negative effects:

1. **Educational Institutions:** Institutions like Kwara State Polytechnic should incorporate social media literacy into their curriculum or offer workshops that educate students on responsible and balanced use of platforms like Instagram. Emphasis should be placed on time management strategies and understanding the potential impacts of social media on mental health and academic performance. This will help students leverage Instagram as a positive tool for education and business while avoiding distractions.
2. **Students:** Students themselves should be encouraged to develop self-awareness and self-regulation in their social media use. Setting personal limits on daily usage and prioritizing academic responsibilities can reduce the risk of distraction. Additionally, students should be encouraged to actively seek and engage with educational and entrepreneurial content on Instagram, harnessing the platform's potential for personal and professional growth.
3. **Social Media Influencers and Content Creators:** Influencers who hold significant sway over youth behaviors should be mindful of their impact. They should promote authentic and positive content, discouraging unrealistic beauty standards or materialism that may cause undue pressure on their followers. Influencers can also partner with educational and business initiatives to promote constructive use of social media.
4. **Policy Makers and Platform Developers:** Policymakers and social media platform developers should collaborate to create features that encourage healthy social media habits. Tools such as usage time reminders, content filters, and educational resource highlights can help users maintain balanced engagement. Regulations promoting transparency and accountability in influencer marketing could also protect young users from deceptive advertising.
5. **Further Research:** Future studies should consider longitudinal designs to track the long-term effects of Instagram use on students' academic performance, mental health, and social development. Research could also explore comparative analyses between

different social media platforms or investigate the role of Instagram in shaping specific behaviors such as political engagement or mental wellness.

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**APPENDIX**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION**  
**INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (IICT)**  
**KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN**

**Dear Respondent,**

I am a final-year student of Mass Communication, HND2, conducting a research study on the topic:

**“Patterns of Instagram Usage among Students of Kwara State Polytechnic.”**

This questionnaire is strictly for academic purposes. Your responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

**Instructions:** Please tick [☒] the option that best reflects your opinion. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: Section A (Usage Patterns), and Section B (Impact of Instagram Usage), Section C (Personal Data).

**SECTION A: USAGE PATTERNS OF INSTAGRAM**

1. Do you have an active Instagram account?

Yes [☐] No [☐]

2. How often do you use Instagram?

Daily [☐] 2–3 times a week [☐] Occasionally [☐] Rarely [☐]

3. What time of day do you mostly use Instagram?

Morning ☐ Afternoon ☐ Evening ☐ Late night ☐

4. How much time do you typically spend on Instagram per day?

Less than 1 hour ☐ 1–2 hours ☐ 3–5 hours ☐ More than 5 hours ☐

5. What is your primary purpose for using Instagram?

Entertainment ☐ Academic/Research ☐ Business/Branding ☐ Social Networking ☐  
News/Information ☐

6. What content do you engage with most on Instagram?

Memes/Humor ☐ Educational Posts ☐ Fashion/Beauty ☐ News ☐ Business Promotions ☐ Influencer Content ☐

7. Have you ever used Instagram to follow or promote a business/brand?

Yes ☐ No ☐

## SECTION B: IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM USAGE ON STUDENTS

**Instruction:** Tick ☒ the option that best suits your opinion.

**Key:** SA – Strongly Agree | A – Agree | N – Neutral | SD – Strongly Disagree | D – Disagree

s/n	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	SD	D
1	Instagram helps me stay updated with trends and events.					
2	I use Instagram as a source of academic or educational content.					
3	Spending time on Instagram affects my academic concentration.					
4	Instagram helps me connect with friends and like-minded people.					
5	Instagram has influenced my perception of beauty, fashion, or lifestyle.					
6	Instagram usage helps me discover local brands and student businesses.					
7	I feel pressure to post or maintain a certain image on Instagram.					
8	I follow influencers or content creators who affect my buying choices.					
9	I have considered starting a business or brand through Instagram.					
10	Excessive use of Instagram sometimes distracts me from my academic goals.					

## SECTION C: PERSONAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

- Gender:** Male ☐ Female ☐
- Age:** 18–20 years ☐ 21–25 years ☐ 26 years and above ☐
- Level of Study:** ND1 ☐ ND2 ☐ HND1 ☐ HND2 ☐
- Marital Status:** Single ☐ Engaged ☐ Married ☐

**Department:**

**Thank you for your time and cooperation. Your response is essential to this research.**