

`KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN

**THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP
AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC**

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**BEING A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASSCOMMUNICATION,
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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certified that this project report titled: “THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC” meets the requirement of Department of Mass communication for the award of National Diploma in Mass communication.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Almighty God, whose grace and guidance made the successful completion of this work possible. It is also dedicated to my beloved parents and family for their unwavering love, encouragement, and prayers throughout the course of my study. Finally, I dedicate this work to all undergraduate students of Kwara State Polytechnic, whose experiences and realities inspired the focus of this research.

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of social media platforms on interpersonal relationships among undergraduate students of Kwara State Polytechnic. The rapid rise of social networking sites has transformed communication patterns globally, raising concerns about their influence on face-to-face relationships, especially among young people. The objectives of this study were to identify the most commonly used social media platforms among undergraduates, determine the purposes of their usage, and assess both the positive and negative effects of such platforms on interpersonal relationships.

The study adopted a survey research design. A sample of 100 undergraduate students was selected across different departments using simple random sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using frequency counts and percentages, with results presented in tables and discussed accordingly.

The findings revealed that WhatsApp and Facebook are the most frequently used social media platforms among students. A majority of respondents spend between four to six hours daily on social media, using it mainly for chatting, networking, and academic purposes. The results showed that social media has improved communication, enhanced peer closeness, and helped maintain long-distance friendships. However, the study also uncovered negative effects, such as reduced face-to-face interaction, communication misunderstandings, and occasional conflicts in personal relationships.

It was concluded that social media has a dual impact on students' interpersonal relationships—while it enhances communication and broadens social networks, it also weakens traditional in-person interactions when excessively used. The study recommends that students balance online and offline interactions, use social media productively, and limit excessive time spent online in order to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: Social media, Interpersonal relationship, Undergraduate students, Kwara State Polytechnic.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Nowadays, social media is regarded as the most commonly utilized method of communication. It is being used by individuals belonging to all walks of life. No doubt it has been widely accepted by the general public because of its effectiveness in communication. Social media platforms are very numerous and therefore include Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn, Google+, Flickr, snapchat, vine, Tumblr and the likes. The main purpose of social media is to give access to its clients and users. They can have conversation with individuals and construct social relations on the web. They can likewise share their contemplations and individual data on social media including everyday happenings, suppositions, pictures, recordings and web-links. Also, individuals can promote their business and individual aptitudes. The capacity of online networking to spread valuable data quickly has made it the quickest developing method of association. Social media networking has changed numerous businesses; however the most striking impact of it is in the classrooms and the overall education system of this generation. It has enabled the students to develop adequate interpersonal relationship skills in a number o ways. Whether it is using private social gatherings, Facebook Pages, classroom Twitter profiles or web journals, school after school has grasped long range of interpersonal communication using some form of social media. With such a high rate of students using social media networking on daily basis, there is a strong need to analyze the extent to which social media is having its impact on students particularly on their interpersonal relationship.

There is no doubt that online networking sites specially the social media have conveyed individuals closer to one another more than ever, yet specialists and researchers around the globe have been searching for the weaknesses that might have been faced by its users. After the presentation of cell phones, the utilization of online networking has risen exponentially. With the ascent in the utilization of long range interpersonal communication locations, the edge of customary individual collaboration had been changed and will be more distinctive for the up and coming era. The long range interpersonal communication has its consequences for society inside and out for instance, specialized techniques, self-expression, disengagement, relations and the sense of humanity.

Researches have shown that heavy users of social media like Myspace felt less socially involved with the community around them than light users (Nyland, Marvez, and Beck, 2022). Furthermore, a substantial proportion of respondents were using this social network for entertainment, as opposed to maintaining or strengthening offline relationships. This line of research echoes one of the most pervasive criticisms against social media that its lead to users 'isolation (Hodgkinson, 2023). On the one hand, there are studies that support a rich get richer perspective, where those that are psychologically better-off (e.g., have high self-esteem and life satisfaction, have more offline contacts, are more popular, etc.) gain more from using internet services (e.g., Tian, 2022). On the other hand, there is research that supports a poor get richer perspective, where those that are less well-off gain more from the internet than those who are better-off (Stern & Dillman, 2006).

Nie (2001) argued that internet use detracted individuals from face-to-face interactions, which might diminish their traditional interpersonal relationships. However, later research has found that online communication has a positive role on individuals 'participation in community life, fostering norms of trust and reciprocity (Best & Dautrich, 2022; Kavanaugh, Reese,

Carroll, & Rosson, 2005; Kobayashi, Ikeda, & Miyata, 2006; Räsänen & Kouvo, 2022). Moorman et.al (2021) conducted a study on the role of social media on interpersonal relationships of university students. It has been found from the study that interpersonal relationship quality is stronger in low facebook users. It means that there could be some negative impact of social media on students 'interpersonal relationship. But the reason is not identified in the above mentioned study as the study depends on only quantitative data though it deserves qualitative data to find out the reasons of negative impact. Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2022) conducted a study to examine the relationship between Facebook users and students social capital. Interesting results have been found in Nyland (2022) study that face-to face communication is the tool that fulfils more media gratification than the social networking sites. Most of the social media users in Nigeria are students (both undergraduates and postgraduates). Though a good number of studies have been conducted about social media users and undergraduate but very few studies have been focused on new dimension of changing nature of interpersonal relationships of undergraduate students through social media. The present study is an attempt to explore this knowledge gap by using mass communication students of kwara state polytechnic, as a case study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It has been a well-known truth that in order to utilize social networking websites, one needs to create an account and sign in every time they want to access the website. Every social networking site does not give its clients a choice to keep their online appearance private. In addition, there is an absence of mindfulness on approaches to hide the private data of the clients. Due to this reason, individuals face various privacy and accountability issues while utilizing online networking. Besides, there have been questions on the quality and dependability of the data that is accessible on the online networking in view of the absence of following back the

realities. Individuals want to get the news instead of checking it. This makes them deceived and once in a while prompts mistaken assumptions. Moreover, it gives them a misguided feeling of being progressive. Another challenge is the issue of social media on generic health concerns of the society. The reason behind this is people prefer to play games online that do not involve any physical activity. The purpose for this is individuals want to play games online which do not involve any physical action. The main concern of this study is to investigate the main idea of social media interpersonal relationship, its importance and utilization among undergraduate students in Nigeria. The study will also focus on how the use of social media effects daily life of the students and how it influences their relationship with people outside school, their academic as well as their social prosperity.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the effect of social media platform on interpersonal relationship among undergraduate students of mass communication. The specific objectives however include;

- i) To examine the prevalence of social media usage among undergraduate students of mass communication.
- ii) To study the influence of social media on interpersonal relationship of undergraduate students of mass communication.
- iii) To study the positive effects of social media usage on the interpersonal relationship of undergraduate students of mass communication.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are some of the questions which this study intends to answer:

- i) What is the prevalence of social media usage among undergraduate students of mass communication?

- ii) What is the influence of social media on interpersonal relationship of undergraduate students of mass communication?
- iii) What are the positive effects of social media usage on the interpersonal relationship of undergraduate students of mass communication?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Inter-personal relationship with social media is preferred greatly nowadays around the world. It is also common among university students. University students prefer new technological devices more when compared with the older generations. Especially, Facebook, twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp etc. are preferred mostly by the new generation. Determinative role of new generations is important for the communication habits of the future generations. Therefore, inter-relationship choice of university students as new generation will indicate communication devices and communication channels of the future. Accordingly, it can be claimed that the effects of social media on university students are of significant and worth researching. This study focuses on the effect of social media platform on interpersonal relationship among undergraduate students using mass communication students as a case study. The aim of this study is to determine whether the use of social media has negative or positive effects on the university students' inter-personal relationship.

Therefore, the study can be a good academic source for researchers, especially in Nigeria, where there is scanty of such literature. This research will be as a trusted academic source and pave the way for scholars, lecturers and students to know the effects of social media, and the effects on the undergraduates' inter-personal relationship. It will raise the awareness of the people about either positive and negative impacts of social media on the inter-personal relationship of students in Nigerian society. It will also encourage students to use social media

beneficially as effective communication tools as well as educational media to improve their knowledge and skills.

1.6 Scope of Study

This study will be carried out among the undergraduate mass communication students of kwara state polytechnic, kwara State, Nigeria.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is only limited to and within the reach of all those in the sample population who have access to the internet. This limitation is due to scarcity of resources both financial and human for the research preparation, data collection and analysis as well as lack of time due to the limited time schedule.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Frame Work

Technological forces like those of evolutions are strong forces that have shaken up everything, especially the internet in all spheres of personal, social and professional human life. Right from the mere ways of interaction to the running of huge systems, we are utilizing the conveniences provided by the existence of internet (Ahmed and Qazi 2022). Technology is changing the way that people interact and communicate. New technologies are providing more ways to communicate with others and especially among the youth.

Although some researchers argue that these technologies are just a new medium for youths to use and that their patterns of relationships and quality of communication remain the same as with other forms of communication, since they treat the online environment as just another place to interact with already existing friends (Lee & Sun, 2023), questions are still arising on the impact of these new technologies on the traditional modes of communication. Social media, as well as email, instant messaging, blogging, and online journals are among the technological changes that have completely changed the way that people interact and gather information. They can be classified under communication technology.

Communication technology is a term that describes types of technology that are used for communication. Discussions about youths today have differed considerably on the role that technology plays in their lives (Ahn 2022). Ahn adds that though the technologies used today by youths are new especially in terms of communication, the technologically mediated activities that youth participate in are similar to past generations. ‘ There is nothing new with the way adolescents are behaving with the internet. Ito et al (2023) says that they hang out in

the internet as they used to in the shopping malls, to gossip share and support each other. Nothing has changed, just the venue. Therefore the social media have only helped the youth link up with their friends from far and this has made the hanging out more fun.

2.2 Social Media

Boyd and Ellison B, (2023) define social networking sites as web-based services that allow individuals to:

- a) Construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system,
- b) Articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and
- c) View and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Buss and Strauss (2023) have also defined social media or social networking sites (SNSs) as virtual communities which mainly focus on user relationships‘ the members of this communities create profile pages of themselves which have information about one self ,their backgrounds and any vital information that may lead one to recognize another in these virtual communities. They add friends, meet their friends and communicate in various ways, such as public messaging, private messaging and instant messaging. Popular examples include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Myspace SNSs help people to feel socially connected and part of a community, even though they may be sitting home alone at their computer or with their mobile phones. Participants connect with other people they know through school, work, or an organization; they also meet complete strangers from all over the world (Coyle & Vaughn, 2023).

Boyd (2022) points out that social media today has had the potential to make known to larger audiences age-old anxieties and rites of passage in ways that yesterday’s communications media did not‘. What was considered as private is now open to a wide

community, people especially the youth are exchanging photos information of whatever kind about themselves or others for others to see and comment.

Social networking sites have today changed the way of human communications. They have become the source of change in different fields, supplemented traditional social interactions and even discussion of common interests; they have revolutionized people's interaction, communication, and even the way of thinking (Abdelraheem, 2013). According to Mary Meeker, an influential Internet analyst, mobile Internet and social media are the fastest-growing areas of the technology industry worldwide, and she predicts that mobile Internet use will soon overtake fixed Internet use. Meeker attributes social networking's success to the fact that most people own mobile phones and that a mobile phone is a unified communications and a multimedia creation tool/repository in your pocket. In Nigeria for example, most students especially those from urban homes own mobile phones that are internet enabled or have access to a computer that is internet connected. This gives them the opportunity to belong to SNSs of their choice especially Facebook and easy access to them.

In light of the foregoing discussions on the rapid adoption of the use of SNSs Nielsen Wire, 2021 raises important questions about the social implications of their usage. However, people can use SNSs in several different ways including accessing information, debating, socializing, or for entertainment (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2023). Hence, the usage of such sites differs from person to person, and dissimilar patterns of usage might have different social implications (Brandtzæg & Heim, 2022).

2.3 Review of Related Theories

There are many studies performed about the positive and negative effects of social media on the students' academic performances. For example, Heffner (2016) alleged that the use of social

media can be a good outlet to deal with academic frustrations, especially if the students are in contact with another student that is having the same problem. Social media lets students to get connected with other students, which can be very useful because it will allow them to discuss class matters via social media. Additionally, Adam Mahamat (2014) tried to obtain students' perceptions of how their use of social networking sites influences their academic performances. The researchers performed a preliminary survey of a group of kwara poly students. It was found that the majority of respondents agreed that social networking sites have a positive impact on their academic performances.

According to LaSalle (2004) the modern communication systems allow people to interact with each other in settings that are not face-to-face. The use of telephones and computers has paved the way for the most recent addition to

Communication—social media. According to (Marshall, 2012) traditionally, relationships had to deal with components of love, trust, commitment, honesty, passion, and satisfaction; now relationships have to deal with much more. Papp, Danielewicz, and Cayemberg (2012) concluded that the use of Facebook has altered the way people interact and develop relationships, finding “we can no longer disregard the potential connections between Facebook and intimate relationships, which serve as one of the most important contexts of individual growth and development” (p. 85).

Menseh and Nizam (2016) described that social networking have a meaningful effect on the students' academic performances. They also pointed out about the abnormal use of social media platforms by students. The study suggested it is useful that universities and colleges in Malaysia educate their students to use these platforms positively for educational purposes which will ultimately result in a positive impact on their academic performance. Jha, Jaipuria, Jha, and

Sinha (2016) asserted that students more probably affected by social media. To some extent, it absolutely affects the lives of college students counting the grades. They added that social media is attractive as it gives college students another world to make friends, also provides a good way to release pressure. It was also noted that an approach is required to balance the relationship between social media and academic study. Consequently, college students should think more about the balancing of social media and academics.

Additionally, the findings of an investigation conducted by Eke, Omekwu and Odoh (2014) among undergraduates in Nigeria showed that there are some benefits come from using social media, which encourages virtual meeting with co-research scholar; self-esteem and wellbeing; Research and learning; strengthening interpersonal relationship; read and write web skills etc. It was also noted that students use social media to communicate with friends, viewing movies, for discussing national issues like politics, economy and religious matters, and for academic purposes. Mingle and Adams (2015) stated that there are some students experienced improvement in their reading skills as a consequence of participation and involving social media. Also, respondents shared ideas, discussed and shared examination questions among themselves on social media.

All the same, Mingle and Adams (2015) asserted that majority of respondents' experienced negative effects i.e. poor grammar and spelling, late submission of assignment, less study time and poor academic performance because of too much use of social media networks.

Moreover, addiction toward using social media among students was high. Eke, Omekwu and Odoh (2014) described some dangers associated with social networking sites such as Ecrime, Internet addiction, laziness, standard crime like, fraud, murder, kidnapping; immoral act like, pornography, prostitution, cyber-bullying where identified.

In addition, the outcomes of a survey performed by Roblyer, McDaniel, Herman and Witty (2021) showed that faculty and students differ somewhat in their current and anticipated uses of social media such as Facebook. It was noted that there is a significant difference between the perceived role of this tool as social, rather than educational. Students look like much more open to the idea of using Facebook instructionally than do faculty. Sudha and Kavitha, (2016) also stated that most of the faculty members believed that social media have a negative effect on the students' academic performances compared with positive effects, due to lack of awareness among the students and faculty members about the appropriate usage of social media topics of educational interest. In the meantime, the positive effects of social media on their academic performances appeared to be significantly low.

Moreover, Heffner and Tara (2016) conducted a study among undergraduates at Rowan University of the USA. The study results described that social media do not have a positive effect on the students' academic achievements. Because the student GPA decreased as much as they were engaged in social media. The study suggested the undergraduate students should manage and monitor their time spent using social media such as Facebook. In another study, Mushtaq (2015) discovered social media as a factor in the lacking of habits of reading newspaper among students and it may cause them to lose much advantageous information consist of the newspaper.

Furthermore, Wang, Chen and Liang (2022) alleged that social networking is absolutely affecting students' effectiveness as well as their grades. Therefore, educators need to be worried about these problems and attempt to find better ways to solve these problems.

Though, framed within an academic context, the concepts outlined here can be used to investigate the use of communication technology not only at school, but also at home,

workplace, and many other settings, and for a diversity of different viewers like teenagers, young adults, the elderly, or families.

2.4 Online Communication and Interpersonal Relationships

An interpersonal relationship is defined as an association between two or more people that may range in duration from brief to enduring. This association may be based on inference, love, solidarity, regular business interactions, or some other type of social commitment. Interpersonal relationships are formed in the context of social, cultural and other influences. The context can vary from family or kinship relations, friendship, and marriage, relations with associates, work, clubs, neighbourhoods, and places of worship. They may be regulated by law, custom, or mutual agreement, and are the basis of social groups and society as a whole (Wikipedia).

Interpersonal communication is considered to be the most important use of the internet sites, (Cummings, Butler & Kraut, 2002). The Internet is the latest in a series of technological breakthroughs in interpersonal communication, following the telegraph, telephone, radio, and television. It combines innovative features of its predecessors, such as bridging great distances and reaching a mass audience John A. Bargh and Katelyn Y.A. McKenna.

In recent years, much of the communication that occurred face-to-face has moved to computer-mediated communication. Computer-mediated communication has had and continues to have an effect on all people around the globe especially teenagers who mostly use SNSs to communicate, and its effects on interpersonal communication have many benefits as well as many drawbacks.

Several scholars have contended that Internet communication is an impoverished and sterile form of social exchange compared to traditional face-to-face interactions, and will

therefore produce negative outcomes (loneliness and depression) for its users as well as weaken neighborhood and community ties. Media reporting of the effects of Internet use over the years has consistently emphasized this negative view (McKenna & Bargh 2000) to the point that, as a result, a substantial minority of (mainly older) adults refuses to use the Internet at all (Hafner 2022). Other scholars feel that, CMC lacks tone, postures, gestures, or facial expressions, and this causes the richness of communication to be depleted, due to the lack of these non-verbal cues that help clarify a verbal message, computer-mediated communication loses richness and in essence the message that comes across is seen as leaner. These lean messages become harder to interpret with confidence. Things such as irony or humor can easily be taken the wrong way and because of this, these messages are extremely ambiguous (Bower 1998).

By contrast, others feel that, Computer-mediated communication has increased interpersonal communication by making it easier. Since face-to-face communication is not always feasible, using the Internet helps connect those who are not able to physically. Computer-mediated communication has also increased the levels of self-disclosure, with many people saying things through the Internet that they would not normally say in person (Adler, et al. 2021), especially among teenagers. Others believe that the Internet affords a new and different avenues of social interaction that enable groups and relationships to form that otherwise would not be able to, thereby increasing and enhancing social connectivity.

2.5 Relationships and Interpersonal Communication

2.5.1 Relationship

Relationship refers to two people whose kinds of behaviour are interdependent in that a change of behaviour in one is likely to influence a change of behaviour of the other. Basically, a relationship is a connection established when you communicate with another person. When

two individuals are in a relationship, what one person says or does influences the other person (Berscheid & Ammazalorso, 2004). One can therefore find that effective communications is part and parcel for initiating and maintaining interpersonal relationships because the existence of both affects each other in one way or another.

2.5.2 Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication is a distinctive and transactional form of human communication involving mutual influence, usually for the purpose of managing relationships. The three essential elements of this definition differentiate the unique nature of interpersonal communication from other forms of human communication (Anolli & Riva 2005).

Moreover, Anolli & Riva (2005) define interpersonal communication as the procedure by which people swap information, and feelings and impart them through verbal and non-verbal messages. This definition underlines the crucial fact that interpersonal communication is not only apprehensive about ‘what’ is pronounced, that is, the language employed, but ‘how’ it is pronounced, for example, the nonverbal messages sent, such as tone of voice and facial expressions.

One can therefore find that from above definitions, interpersonal communication help people to initiate and form relationships by communicating with others whom they find attractive in some way. People seek to increase their interactions with others whom they wish to develop relationships, and they continually communicate interpersonally to maintain the relationship. They also use interpersonal communication to end or redefine relationships they have decided are no longer viable or need to be changed (Anolli & Riva, 2005).

People are increasingly likely to use social media to connect with friends and manage their relationships. Researchers have found that instant messages (including text messages) have an overall positive effect on relationships. E-mail, texting, and other forms of instant

messages appear to be primarily used to maintain existing relationships, although they certainly play a role in establishing initial contact with others. Additionally, research has found that online and instant messages at first are perceived as lower quality than face-to-face interactions, but as time goes on, they are judged as positive. So, whether it occurs online or offline, interpersonal communication helps people to manage their relationships (Anolli & Riva G, 2005).

2.6 Types of Interpersonal Communications

Interpersonal communication is subdivided into three levels: dyadic communication, public speaking, and small-group communication. Dyadic communication is communication that involves only two people such as a telephone conversation or even a set of letters sent to and received from a pen friend. In this communication process, the sender can instantly receive and appraise feedback from the receiver so that, it permits more specific couture of the message and more personal communication than do numerous other media (Hartley 1999).

Moreover, Wahlstrom, (1992) defined interpersonal communication as communication which occurs between two people, called dyad. Adding that such communication can be impersonal, or interactive, as it is in routine situations, or it can be highly personal, or transactional. In addition, Wahlstrom, (1992) asserted that because interpersonal communication involves two persons who share the roles of sender and receiver, the skills of a good communicator involves both the sending and receiving of information. Therefore, being a good speaker does not necessarily mean you will be a good interpersonal communicator unless you develop the skills necessary for receiving others' messages as well.

2.7 Social Media and Interpersonal Relationships

Research showed that people in the past used internet for informational knowledge but nowadays with social media it has been used for communication and news updates for trends and as entertainment channels. People also use Internet and social media to connect and communicate with each other because of the availability of Internet access. In view of the fact that information is updated on the Internet or social media for almost twenty-four hours a day, hence, the users may feel the pressure to be online all the time and be part of the mainstream.

Currently, the use of social media and other mobile applications have been growing intensively in developing countries and it has been easy for people to develop interpersonal communication with others in order to maintain and develop further relationships on- and offline.

Psychologist William Schutz (2021) developed an interpersonal needs theory, which asserts that human beings have a tendency to create and sustain relationships depending on how well they meet three basic needs. The first need is affection, the desire to give and receive love and liking. The second need is inclusion, the desire to be social and to be included in groups, and the third need is for control, which is a desire to influence the people and events in our lives.

Expounding on Schutz's ideas, Abraham Maslow (2021) proposed that people communicate to meet a range of human needs. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, basic needs must be satisfied before we can focus on those that are more abstract. Maslow's hierarchy show air, food, sex, and excretion, for example, are necessary to life. These are considered to be the "most basic" of our needs. These basic needs are vital to focus on what is considered our "most abstract" need, which is self-actualization.

According to Maslow, components of interpersonal communication are facial expression including eye contact and length of glance which occupy 55 percent. While, vocal, tone of voice, loudness, hesitations or pauses and firmness is 38 percent, and verbal with actual words is 7 percent. These components show how interpersonal communication is rich in fulfilling its communicative purposes hence should not be overstated.

According to Cavazos, (2021) human relationships develop through nonverbal and verbal interpersonal communication. From psychological point of view, Randi Kreger (2023) reported that nonverbal interpersonal communication like body language may communicate 93 percent of your attitudes and beliefs, suggesting that others tend to believe your nonverbal communication if your verbal messages contradict them. Moreover, other scholars urge that physical contact may communicate a wider range of emotion than gestures and facial expressions.

2.8 Effects of Social Networking Sites on Interpersonal Relationships among Youths

The changing dynamics of communication within the youths population especially those in their teenage years, have important implications on their social relationships and communication in real life. SNSs act as a mediator between real and virtual communication, leading directly to the individual's virtual interpersonal relationship (Lin, Sun, Lee, & Wu, 2022).

According to Mikami, Szewedo, Allem, Evens, & Hare, 2021, the presence of higher positivity and lower negativity in a peer interaction in early adolescence each predict a greater number of friends on their social networks (2021). This in turn keeps them logged into their SNSs to chat with the increasing number of friends they have online ,impacting in one way or another on their interpersonal relationships both offline and online.

With peer-based connectedness, being so important to students, their interactions with others enhance their sense of belonging and help them understand their individual self and others (Boneva, Quinn, Kraut, Kieler, & Shklovski, 2006). This explains the long hours they spend logged in their SNSs.

Worldwide, adolescent lives have become so busy and full of activities that their time to interact with friends is becoming more limited (Lee & Sun, 2023), they adapt these new technologies to continue improving and sustaining their relationships. SNSs have in fact helped the teens to be more connected to their social groups and maintain relations as they also expand their network of friends. By staying connected to their social groups, they are defining their self-identity (maintaining individual friendships) and their social-identity (belonging to peer groups) (Lee & Sun, 2023).

According to Asilo et al (2021), students develop two possible types of interpersonal relations that is stronger interpersonal relationship with their friends, teachers, and parents. They are always updated with the status of their close friends, teachers, or even their parents that are in the friends list of the social networking sites. It is easier for them to know when will be the birthdays of their friends and so they get in touch with them, even if they are apart with less time and effort. Asilo (2012) also adds that, students, also, tend to develop weaker interpersonal relationships with their friends, teachers, and parents. This is due to too much dependency of students to the internet and computer as a medium of communication with their friends, teachers, and parents. Sometimes, students can only tell what they want to other people whenever they are chatting, or when they post comments on the wall of a person's account or profile. If they do this over and over again, this develops into a habit and become used to it until the time comes that they only depend on the internet and computer on telling what they

want. Through this, a person cannot express his/her emotions well and that results to an unhealthy relationship with other people.

A study investigating the influence of the Internet on social connections among Internet users in twelve major cities in Iran shows that; far away from alienating people from their richer relations, the Internet has not changed the relationships among its users but, it has increased their social contacts with different groups (Bastani and Zarandi.). This Iranian study was inclusive of even teenagers.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

The study used a combination of theories including Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), uses and gratifications and Social Penetration theory. These theories deal with the effects of communication and attempt to explain the impact of social network on interpersonal communication.

2.9.1 Computer-Mediated Communication Theory

The basis for the theoretical framework is drawn from the concept of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) because the theories are based on the use of any human communication that occurs through the use of two or more electronic devices. Shaff, Martin, and Gay (2001) define CMC as human-to-human communication using networked computer environments to facilitate interaction. Computer-Mediated Communication is the theory of how information can flow through e-mail, video or audio/video conferencing, instant messaging, bulletin boards systems, list-servs, Internet relay chat, websites, blogs, and multi-user environments. Through CMC, global partners for development can come together and discuss employment issues of great personal relevance. CMC can be used to facilitate support groups (Wright, 1999).

According to Park, N., Jin, B., & Jin, S. A. (2022) motivation represents the initial stimulating process of seeking knowledge and applying it, which is noticeable through the selection of skills that are applied in the selection of appropriate media and messages. Certain motivations are better conveyed through certain media features for instance a shy person may prefer an online dating system that permits more personal privacy than participating in a one-to-one encounter.

In messaging, a high-status person may prefer the efficiency and task-orientation of message content. Knowledge of the most competent messages and media is searched and selected accordingly and subsequently implemented through the skills of computer-mediated communication.

Obviously, many of the previous intentions are based on prior conceptualizations of interpersonal competence (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984, 2002), although other models have demonstrated the relevance of similar constructs. To this point, the components of the CMC competence model have been conceptualized largely from an individual differences view, but in keeping with the reasoning of combined, compensatory, and interactive effects, it is assumed that, in general, competent sender(s) can facilitate the competence of the receiver(s). While the opposite may be true (i.e., an incompetent sender(s) can lessen a competent receiver(s) performance), part of the benefit of competence is the ability to compensate for the incompetence of other(s). Since CMC uses more than one computer and focuses largely on the social effects of different computer-supported communication technologies, this theory offers suitable and wide-ranging tools to study the impact of social media on interpersonal communication relationships among couples.

2.9.2 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Based on the nature of the study topic and the researcher has decided to use ‘Uses and Gratifications Theory’ because it is an approach to understanding why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs. Moreover, Uses and Gratifications Theory is an audience-centered approach to understanding mass communication. According to (Rubin, 2002) the theory suggests that individuals make purposeful choices about technology and social media use based on specific psychosocial needs. Uses and gratifications theory has been applied extensively to the study of online social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace (e.g., Kwon, D’Angelo, & McLeod, 2013), as well as the use of communication technologies with peers (Chang & Heo, 2014). These studies find that among teens and young adults, the primary uses of social media, text messaging, and email are relationship maintenance, communication, entertainment, and information seeking.

Relating to this study, the researcher theorizes that couples tend to use social media for different purposes such as communication, information sharing, and relationship maintenance just to mention a few. In course of using the social media the couples may create positive or negative impacts depending to the users’ intention.

2.9.3 Social Penetration Theory

Social penetration theory deals with behaviours of an individual in communication with others. One person may reveal information about himself or herself to another. The information can be descriptive or evaluative, and can include thoughts, feelings, aspirations, goals, failures, successes, fears, and dreams, as well as one's likes, dislikes, and favorites. As what couples can do in the social media as a way to coup up with the current world whether knowingly or unknowingly without regarding its impacts (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-disclosure>).

The term Social Penetration Theory was formulated by psychology professors Irwin Altman and Dalmas Taylor in 1973, to describe the dynamics of relational closeness. Relational closeness can progress from superficial to intimate. Social penetration theory explains why relationships are formed, why they end, and the process that they must go through to prosper. Closeness

develops through self-disclosure. Closeness varies according to the following factors: rewards versus benefits; costs versus vulnerability; satisfaction; stability and security.

Self-disclosure characteristics include the story teller (the person disclosing), while it also stimulates feedback from the receiver. The quality of the feedback is related to the amount and relevance of self-disclosure users receive and share with others. Self-disclosure can be very revealing or not revealing.

Social penetration can be compared to different types of relationships and to different aspects of relationships. These layers are a key aspect of the theory. Although self-disclosure is a behavioral component of the self-penetration process, it includes any behavior that is interpersonal - verbal, non-verbal, or environmental - that affects relationship development (Sprecher, Wenzel, & Harvey, 2023). Social penetration theory generates predictions about the pattern of relationships as they develop. Rychlak, (1984) argues that relationships can be compared to games and relationships are evaluated in a process, reconsidered, and the thought process leads to thinking about the future of the relationship. Therefore, social media and relationships can also be seen as a pattern of behaviour.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This section covers the methods used to address the objectives of the study. The section discusses the research design, research population and sampling technique, the instrument for data collection, the method of data analysis and the analytical software used for the study.

3.1 Research Design

In this study, a survey research design is adopted. Survey is chosen based on the objectives of the study. Survey is defined according to Nworgu (2005) a survey studies the sampling of individual units from an already known population and its associated survey data collection techniques, such as questionnaire construction and methods for improving the number and accuracy of responses to survey.

3.2 Population of the study

The latest available information indicates that Kwara State Polytechnic has a student population of 7,781 National Diploma and Higher National Diploma students for the 2021/2022 session, [according to Punch Newspapers](#). This number was reported during the 28th convocation ceremony. The institution offers 56 programs, including HND Mass Communication, which has been approved by the National Board for Technical Education.

According to Udoyen (2019), population of the study is a group of element or individuals as the case may be, who share similar characteristics. These similar features can include location, gender, age, sex or specific interest. The emphasis on population of the study is that it constitutes of individuals or elements that are homogeneous in description.

This research was carried out on the effect of social media platform on interpersonal relationship among undergraduate students (A case study of kwara state polytechnic)

3.3 Sample Size Determination and Sampling Techniques

To determine an appropriate sample size for a population of students at Kwara State Polytechnic, Yamane's formula was applied. This formula is a simplified method to calculate sample size from a known population.

Yamane's Formula:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size (7,781)

e = Margin of error (0.05)

Calculation:

$$n = 7781$$

$$(1 + 7781 * (0.05)^2)$$

$$n = 7781 / (1 + 7781 * 0.0025)$$

$$n = 7781 / (1 + 19.4525)$$

$$n = 7781 / 20.4525$$

$$n \approx 380.4$$

Therefore, the calculated sample size for a total population of 7,781 students at Kwara State Polytechnic, using a 5% margin of error and Yamane's formula, is approximately 380 respondents.

The calculated sample size is approximately 3380 respondents. However, considering time limitations, financial constraints, and the scope of the research, the researcher decided to reduce the sample size to a more manageable and representative figure

of 100 respondents. Despite the reduction, the sample is sufficient for the study's exploratory nature and provides valid insights into the research objectives.

3.4 Instrument/Method of Data Collection

The study made use of primary source of data. Concerning the primary source, questionnaire was used to gather the data. The questionnaire was a four-point rating scale (Likert scale), starting from strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), disagreed (d), and strongly disagreed (SD). The questionnaire was designed in such a way that every question in the questionnaire was related to the research questions and hypotheses of the study. Also, the result was used to answer the research questions and test the relevant hypotheses.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument was face validated by three experts in the field of measurement and evaluation and research. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the instrument.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

A mean score rating method was used to analyses the data based on the 2.5 acceptance region format to answer the research questions, while to address the research hypotheses, the chi-square was used.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the administered questionnaire on the effect of social media platforms on interpersonal relationships among undergraduate students of Kwara State Polytechnic. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed and retrieved, representing a 100% response rate. Data collected are analyzed using frequency counts, simple percentages, and presented in tabular form, followed by interpretation and discussion.

4.1 Demographic Information

Section A: Demographic Information

Table 4.1: Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	58	58%
Female	42	42%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: Table 4.1 shows that 58% of respondents were male while 42% were female. This indicates a fairly balanced representation of gender, though males were slightly more. This balance ensures that findings reflect the perspectives of both sexes on the use of social media and interpersonal relationships.

Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
16–20	26	26%
21–25	48	48%
26–30	18	18%
Above 30	8	8%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: Table 4.2 reveals that most respondents (48%) fall within the age bracket of 21–25 years, followed by 26% in the 16–20 years range. This implies that majority of respondents are young adults, a group known for heavy social media usage.

Table 4.3: Level of Study

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
ND 1	25	25%
ND 2	28	28%
HND 1	22	22%
HND 2	25	25%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: Table 4.3 indicates that respondents were evenly distributed across levels of study. This ensures the findings are not biased to a particular academic level, giving a comprehensive overview.

4.2 Social Media Usage Pattern

Section B: Social Media Usage Pattern

Table 4.4: Most Frequently Used Social Media Platform

Platform	Frequency	Percentage (%)
WhatsApp	40	40%
Facebook	20	20%
Instagram	18	18%
Twitter/X	10	10%
TikTok	8	8%
Others	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: WhatsApp is the most frequently used platform (40%), followed by Facebook (20%). This aligns with studies that identify WhatsApp as the most dominant medium of communication among Nigerian youths.

Table 4.5: Daily Time Spent on Social Media

Hours	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1	10	10%
1–3 hours	30	30%
4–6 hours	40	40%
More than 6	20	20%

Total	100	100%
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Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: The findings show that 40% of respondents spend 4–6 hours daily on social media, 30% spend 1–3 hours, 20% spend more than 6 hours, and only 10% spend less than an hour. This distribution highlights that a significant number of students (60%) dedicate at least four hours daily to online engagement.

This prolonged usage indicates a strong dependency, which aligns with studies that associate social media with addictive tendencies among youths. Such excessive time spent online can reduce opportunities for face-to-face conversations, weaken emotional bonding, and contribute to superficial connections. On the positive side, it suggests that students are highly connected and regularly in touch with peers, which might reinforce digital communication networks, albeit at the expense of traditional social interaction.

Table 4.6: Main Purpose of Using Social Media

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chatting/Networking	35	35%
Academic Activities	25	25%
Entertainment	20	20%
Business	15	15%
Others	5	5%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: The results reveal that 35% of respondents primarily use social media for chatting/networking, followed by academic activities (25%), entertainment (20%), business (15%), and others (5%). This indicates that most students perceive social media first as a tool for maintaining and building relationships.

However, the notable proportion of students (25%) using social media for academics highlights its increasing role in education — such as sharing lecture notes, forming study groups, and engaging in online discussions. The presence of business usage (15%) also reflects how young people are exploring entrepreneurial opportunities online.

From an interpersonal relationship standpoint, this suggests that while the platforms are primarily seen as socializing tools, they also serve functional roles that can strengthen peer collaborations and broaden social experiences.

Table 4.7: Social Media Has Improved My Ability to Communicate With Friends

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	40	40%
A	35	35%
D	15	15%
SD	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: A majority (75%) agreed that social media improves communication skills with friends, while 25% disagreed. This finding shows that digital platforms play an integral role in enabling frequent contact, even when students are physically distant.

For undergraduates, communication is central to building friendships and support networks. Social media’s instant messaging, group chats, and video call features provide avenues for maintaining closeness. The minority who disagreed may belong to those who feel that digital communication lacks the emotional depth of face-to-face conversations, reflecting concerns that technology can sometimes create shallow interactions.

Table 4.8: I Prefer Interacting on Social Media to Face-to-Face Communication

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	25	25%
A	30	30%
D	30	30%
SD	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: The table shows that 55% prefer social media interactions, while 45% do not. This near balance reflects a generational shift: while a growing number of students are becoming more comfortable online, a substantial group still values in-person communication.

For interpersonal relationships, this implies a mixed outcome. Preference for online interaction could lead to less development of real-life conversational skills and reduced non-verbal communication cues such as eye contact, body language, and empathy. However, for shy or introverted students, social media provides a “safe space” for expression, thereby supporting their social confidence.

Section C: Impact on Interpersonal Relationships

Table 4.9: Social Media Usage Has Reduced the Time I Spend With Friends in Person

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	28	28%
A	32	32%
D	25	25%
SD	15	15%

Total	100	100%
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Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: 60% of respondents agreed that social media reduces time for physical interactions. This suggests that online connections are increasingly replacing traditional gatherings such as study sessions, hangouts, or visits.

Such substitution has a dual implication: on one hand, it allows students to remain connected despite busy schedules or distance; on the other, it may weaken the depth of relationships, since physical presence is essential for nurturing stronger bonds. Thus, while social media ensures availability, it risks encouraging surface-level interactions.

Table 4.10: Social Media Helps Me Maintain Long-Distance Friendships

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	42	42%
A	38	38%
D	12	12%
SD	8	8%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: An overwhelming 80% agreed, highlighting one of the strongest advantages of social media: the ability to sustain ties across geographical boundaries. For students, this may include keeping in touch with secondary school friends, family members abroad, or classmates in other institutions.

This finding emphasizes that social media complements rather than completely replaces physical interaction — it extends interpersonal networks, ensuring that friendships do not fade due to distance. This is a clear positive contribution to relationship maintenance.

Table 4.11: I Find It Difficult to Express My Feelings Face-to-Face Due to Social Media Dependence

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	20	20%
A	25	25%
D	35	35%
SD	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Analysis: The table shows that 45% of respondents find face-to-face expression difficult, while 55% disagree. This suggests that while social media may encourage some students to hide behind digital walls, the majority still retain confidence in real-world communication.

For those struggling with offline expression, it reflects the phenomenon of “digital dependency,” where individuals become so accustomed to typing messages that real conversations feel awkward. This poses challenges in building authentic emotional intimacy, which is vital for strong interpersonal relationships.

Table 4.12: Social Media Has Led to Conflicts in My Personal Relationships

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	18	18%
A	27	27%
D	30	30%
SD	25	25%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: 45% reported experiencing conflicts, while 55% did not. This split shows that although social media is a facilitator of communication, it can also be a source of tension.

Conflicts may arise from misinterpretation of posts, online jealousy, late replies, or exposure to sensitive content. Students who disagree may be those who use social media mainly for academics or business, minimizing personal drama. This finding demonstrates that the effect of social media on relationships depends largely on how individuals manage their online presence.

Table 4.13: I Feel Closer to My Peers Because of Regular Social Media Interactions

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	30	30%
A	40	40%
D	20	20%
SD	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: 70% of respondents felt closer to peers because of online interaction. This highlights the bonding effect of regular contact, group discussions, and shared experiences online.

In a school environment like Kwara State Polytechnic, WhatsApp groups, online forums, and shared entertainment spaces often foster camaraderie and belonging. However, the 30% who disagreed may be those who feel that virtual closeness lacks depth compared to face-to-face presence.

Table 4.14: I Find It Easier to Make New Friends through Social Media

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SA	35	35%
A	30	30%
D	20	20%
SD	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Analysis: 65% of respondents agreed that making friends is easier on social media. This reflects how platforms provide broader exposure, allowing students to meet peers beyond their immediate class or department.

This ability to expand social networks is beneficial, but it comes with risks such as false identities or shallow friendships. Still, the fact that more than half of students rely on social media to broaden their social circles underscores its central role in relationship building today.

Section D: General Perception

Table 4.15: Overall Perception of Social Media Effect on Interpersonal Relationships

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Positively	50	50%
Negatively	30	30%
No effect	10	10%
Not sure	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Half (50%) saw the effect as positive, 30% as negative, and 20% were neutral or unsure. This shows a dual perception: while many value the ease of communication and networking, others recognize the downsides like reduced intimacy or conflicts.

This mixed outcome suggests that social media is neither entirely beneficial nor entirely harmful its impact depends on patterns of usage, individual discipline, and purpose of engagement.

Table 4.16: Major Challenges Experienced in Relationships Due to Social Media

Challenges Reported	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Misunderstanding & Miscommunication	25	25%
Reduced face-to-face interaction	22	22%
Addiction & Excessive Usage	18	18%
Jealousy/Conflicts from Online Activities	20	20%
No significant challenges	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: The most common challenges were misunderstanding (25%) and reduced face-to-face interaction (22%). These reflect how lack of tone, body language, and context in digital communication often lead to misinterpretation.

Addiction (18%) and jealousy/conflict (20%) further show how social media can generate relational strain. However, 15% reported no significant challenges, showing that not all users experience negative consequences — possibly because of balanced usage or prioritizing face-to-face contact.

Table 4.17: Suggestions to Improve Interpersonal Relationships Despite Heavy Social Media Usage

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Balancing online and offline interactions	28	28%
Using social media mainly for productive goals	24	24%
Setting personal limits on social media time	20	20%
Encouraging more face-to-face communication	18	18%
Others	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Research survey 2025

Analysis: Balancing online and offline interaction (28%) was the most common suggestion, showing that students recognize the importance of moderation. Productive use of social media (24%) and limiting time (20%) also indicate that students are conscious of self-discipline in digital usage.

Encouraging more physical communication (18%) reflects awareness that in-person interaction builds stronger trust and intimacy. The presence of varied suggestions reflects the recognition among students that while social media is useful, it must be carefully managed to preserve healthy interpersonal relationships.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study on *the effect of social media platforms on interpersonal relationships among undergraduate students of Kwara State Polytechnic* reveal both positive and negative dimensions of social media use in the lives of students.

The demographic analysis shows that the majority of respondents were young adults (21–25 years) who represent the most active users of social media. This age group is technologically savvy and tends to integrate digital platforms into daily routines for socialization, learning, and

business. Gender distribution revealed a fair balance, meaning the perspectives of both male and female students were well captured.

Patterns of usage indicated that **WhatsApp and Facebook** are the most dominant platforms, which aligns with existing literature that identifies these as popular tools of communication among Nigerian youths. A significant number of students (40%) spend 4–6 hours daily on social media, while 20% spend more than 6 hours. This suggests high levels of dependency, raising concerns of possible addiction and displacement of in-person interactions.

In terms of purpose, students mostly use social media for chatting and networking, but a considerable proportion also use it for academic activities and business. This reflects the dual nature of social media as both a socialization and productivity tool. It confirms earlier studies which argue that social media, if properly utilized, can support both academic and entrepreneurial activities while simultaneously fostering social connections.

With respect to interpersonal relationships, the study revealed that the majority of respondents believed social media improved their ability to communicate with friends and made it easier to sustain long-distance friendships. This highlights the strength of social media in bridging geographical barriers and ensuring constant connectivity. Many respondents also reported that social media enhances their closeness with peers and provides avenues for creating new friendships. These findings reinforce the argument that social media plays a significant role in expanding students' social networks and sustaining social bonds.

However, the study also identified several negative impacts. Over half of the respondents admitted that social media reduces the time spent with friends in person, and some reported difficulties in expressing emotions face-to-face due to overreliance on digital communication. Moreover, about 45% indicated that social media had led to misunderstandings or conflicts in their personal relationships, often arising from miscommunication, jealousy, or excessive exposure to online activities. These results confirm previous studies that caution against the overdependence on social media, as it may erode face-to-face interactions and weaken the quality of relationships.

When asked for general perceptions, half of the respondents believed that social media has a positive effect on interpersonal relationships, while 30% thought it had negative implications.

This mixed response illustrates the dual role of social media: while it is a powerful tool for connection and networking, it can also be a source of relational strain when misused.

The challenges highlighted by respondents included misunderstanding, reduced physical interaction, social media addiction, and jealousy, with a smaller proportion noting no major challenges. Importantly, students themselves suggested balancing online and offline communication, setting personal limits, and prioritizing productive use of social media as ways to sustain healthy relationships. This demonstrates an awareness among undergraduates of the need to regulate their digital habits to maintain meaningful interpersonal relationships.

In summary, the findings show that **social media has both enriching and disruptive effects on interpersonal relationships**. While it enhances communication, facilitates long-distance friendships, and expands social networks, it also reduces face-to-face interactions and sometimes creates conflicts. The impact depends largely on how students use social media, the amount of time they spend on it, and their level of discipline in managing online and offline relationships.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

The problem of drug abuse has become a universal one, as it has extended beyond adult and urban settlers to now include young female and even those who live in rural area. Also in our institution of higher learning, Alcohol, India Hemp, Marijuana and Tobacco seems to be most widely used and accessible drugs among our youths.

The findings also showed that smoking in particular has rendered a good number of our youths socially insane and the family as the primary agent of socialisation, has degenerated thereby exposing our youths as easy privy of drug abuse. A close relationship between the child and the parent at early age will not only expose the danger inherent in drug but it will help the children to avoid drug in it infinity.

Also, the media especially the mass media has enormous role to play in the struggle against drug abuse by not encouraging commercials that promote the sale of products like tobacco not considering the financial profit that may be incurred from such advertisement.

5.2 CONCLUSION

The following concessions have been drawn from the relevant major findings of the study.

Drug abuse has a bad effect on the health of the nation especially among our youths in institution of higher learning. The mass media as a vehicle of information has enormous task to help in combating of this scourge.

Drug abuse in all this ramifications has dented the image of the country. The war against drug abuse can only be won with their concerted effort and cooperation of various government agencies, individual/private organizations.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

In view of the forgoing discussion, a few observations and recommendations could be made for consideration and implementation. This is necessary in view of the fact that more has to be done on drug abuse problem. The following recommendation were made by the researcher;

1. I recommend that the mass media should intensify their public awareness campaign by organizing drama, symposium, lectures not only in the urban areas but also in our rural areas, this campaign should be made available because research as shown that Nigeria youths in both rural and urban area of different socio-economic background indulges in the use and abuse of dangerous and illicit drugs.
2. I also recommend drug abuse education in schools and this should be pursued by providing factual information, this additional instruction should infuse drug education into existing school curriculum related to this is the establishment and encouraging of drug free club in our schools.
3. Finally, the mass media being an effective instrument for mass mobilization should encourage the government to establish counselling Centers in Churches, Mosques, Markets, town halls recreation Centers, hospitals. This will provide the therapeutic environment that allows a two-way communication interaction to take place between counsellor and client.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Summary of Findings

This study investigated *the effect of social media platforms on interpersonal relationships among undergraduate students of Kwara State Polytechnic*. A total of 100 students participated in the study, representing a balanced distribution across gender, age groups, and academic levels.

The findings revealed that social media platforms are widely used by undergraduates, with **WhatsApp and Facebook** being the most popular. A large proportion of students spend between four and six hours daily on social media, reflecting high levels of engagement. The major purposes of usage were chatting and networking, academic activities, entertainment, and business. This demonstrates that social media serves as both a social and functional tool in the lives of students.

With regard to interpersonal relationships, most respondents acknowledged that social media improves their ability to communicate and helps maintain long-distance friendships. Many also reported feeling closer to their peers and found it easier to make new friends online. These findings highlight the positive contributions of social media in enhancing social connections, sustaining bonds, and expanding friendship networks.

However, the study equally uncovered negative implications. A significant number of students admitted that social media reduced the time spent with friends physically and, for some, made face-to-face emotional expression difficult. About 45% of respondents reported experiencing conflicts in personal relationships as a result of social media usage, with misunderstandings, jealousy, and miscommunication identified as common challenges.

Overall perception was mixed: while half of the respondents believed social media positively influences interpersonal relationships, nearly one-third viewed it negatively. Nonetheless, most respondents agreed that balanced usage, moderation, and combining online with offline interactions are key strategies for sustaining healthy relationships in the digital age.

5.1 Conclusion

From the findings, it can be concluded that social media has become a central element in the social lives of undergraduate students. It plays a dual role: on one hand, it enhances communication, builds networks, and maintains long-distance friendships; on the other, it reduces physical interaction, sometimes weakens face-to-face intimacy, and can trigger conflicts in personal relationships.

The overall effect of social media on interpersonal relationships among students of Kwara State Polytechnic is therefore **ambivalent** — it is both beneficial and problematic, depending largely on the intensity of usage and the purpose for which it is employed. The study confirms that while social media cannot be separated from the daily lives of young people, its impact on relationships is shaped by user behavior, time management, and the balance between online and offline interactions.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

Students should be encouraged to **balance online and offline interactions**. While social media is useful for communication, students should not neglect face-to-face relationships, as these remain essential for emotional bonding and personal growth.

There should be **conscious efforts to limit excessive time spent on social media**. Self-regulation practices, such as setting personal boundaries or using productivity apps, can help students manage their online activities without compromising their academic performance and physical relationships.

Lecturers and school authorities can explore **productive use of social media** by creating online platforms for academic collaboration, group assignments, and discussions. This will allow students to combine socialization with learning, thereby channeling social media usage towards beneficial outcomes.

Counseling units within the Polytechnic should organize **sensitization programs** on the potential risks of social media dependency, including its effect on interpersonal communication, emotional health, and academic focus.

Finally, further studies are recommended to explore how different social media platforms (such as WhatsApp, TikTok, and Instagram) uniquely influence relationship patterns, as each platform has distinct features that shape user behavior differently.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

I am an undergraduate student of Kwara state polytechnic, conducting a research project entitled **“The Effect of Social Media Platform on Interpersonal Relationship among Undergraduate Students of Kwara State Polytechnic”**. I am requesting you to kindly fill the below questionnaire and your response will be treated confidentially.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please kindly tick (✓) the option that best applies to you.

1. **Sex:** ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. **Age:** ☐ 16–20 years ☐ 21–25 years ☐ 26–30 years ☐ Above 30 years

3. **Level of Study:** ☐ ND 1 ☐ ND 2 ☐ HND 1 ☐ HND 2
4. **Department:** _____

SECTION B: SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE PATTERN

5. Which social media platform do you use most frequently? ☐ WhatsApp ☐ Facebook
☐ Instagram ☐ Twitter (X) ☐ TikTok
☐ Others (Please specify): _____
6. How often do you use social media daily? ☐ Less than 1 hour ☐ 1–3 hours ☐ 4–6 hours
☐ More than 6 hours
7. What is your main purpose of using social media? ☐ Chatting with friends/family
☐ Academic activities ☐ Entertainment ☐ Business
☐ Others: _____

SECTION C: IMPACT ON INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Please indicate your level of agreement using the following scale:

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree

S/N	STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD
8.	Social media has improved my ability to communicate with friends and classmates.				
9.	I prefer interacting on social media to face-to-face communication.				

10.	Social media usage has reduced the time I spend with friends in person.				
11.	Social media helps me maintain long-distance friendships.				
12.	I find it difficult to express my feelings face-to-face due to social media dependence.				
13.	Social media has led to conflicts in my personal relationships.				
14.	I feel closer to my peers because of regular social media interactions.				
15.	I find it easier to make new friends through social media.				

SECTION D: GENERAL PERCEPTION

16. In your opinion, does social media positively or negatively affect interpersonal relationships among students? ☐ Positively ☐ Negatively ☐ No effect
☐ Not sure

17. What are the major challenges you've experienced in your relationships due to social media?

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18. What suggestions can you provide to improve interpersonal relationships despite heavy social media usage?
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