International Journal of Advances in Engineering and Management (IJAEM)
Volume 7, Issue 02 Feb. 2025, pp: 542-550 www.ijaem.net ISSN: 2395-5252

Impact of Social Media Usage on Secondary Schools Students' Attendance in Basic Science in Ikot Ekpene Local Government Area

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Date of Submission: 15-02-2025 Date of Acceptance: 25-02-2025

ABSTRACT
This study was conducted to access the impact of social media usage (SMU) on secondary school students' attendance (SSSA) in Basic Science (BS)in Ikot EkpeneLocal Government Area (LGA). The specific objectives were to: mention some aspects of SMU, determine the degree to which the types of information sought for on SM andassess the extent to which the frequency of SMUcould influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA.However, research questions and null hypotheses were formulated. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, was conducted with a total population size of 500 students which were drawn using simple random sampling technique. Data were gathered using researcher-made questionnaire and records. The questionnaire contents were validated and reliability tested using Cronbanch's Alpha (α). A 5-Point Likert Scale was used to analyse data. The results showed thatα (0.96) was excellent. The male and female participants were 270 and 230 while JSS1 and JSS2 were 220 and 280, respectively. Predominant age brackets ($10 \leq y \leq 12$ years and $12 < y \leq 14$) recorded a total of 80% participants. Most students (75.20%) had access to SM platforms. Exactly 32.89%, 27.66%, 12.77%, 12.77% and 13.83% of the students used WhatsApp, You Tube, Instagram, TikTok and other(s), respectively. Indeed, 53.19%, 40.43% and 6.38% of the students used SM platforms to communicate with friends, for entertainment purposes and educational activities, respectively, and mostly thrice a day. Other aspects of SM that could impact SSSA were time spent on SM and permission given by schoolson SMU. The mean rating scores of both JSS1 and JSS2 students based on the type of information sought for on SM were statistically the same atp < 0.05, whereas that of the frequency of SMU were different.Anoticeable impact of SMU on SSSA in BS was observed since the mean rating scores were a bit more than the criterion value (3).Null hypotheses for H_0, and H_{01} were upheld while H_{02} was rejected. It was thereforere, recommended that effective monitoring of students during school hours, especially, those schools that permit the use of SM, should be strengthened. Period of SMU should be minimized, particularly during school hours. Guidelines should be established to ensure it supports learning objectives and attendance improvement.

KEYWORDS: Social media,Secondary schools, Students' attendance, Basic Science, Ikot Ekpene LGA

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Social media (SM) are means of communication among people in which they generate, share, and exchange information and ideas in cybernetic communities and networks (Attehet al., 2020). The global internet revolution has made substantial strides in information storage, retrieval, and sharing, particularly in education. It has altered learning, research, and communication, providing numerous online tools, including social networking sites (SNS), which have improved global linkages of people (Jon, 2023).Social media (SM) has become aninescapable part of daily life mostly for students, its impact extends into various

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domains, including education. As more students utilize platforms like WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok for communication and entertainment, SM also influences their academic outcomes, especially subjects like Basic Science (BS) (Diganta and Saurabh, 2019;Karpinski and Duberstein, 2019). SM could play a two-fold role both as aninstrument for promoting learning and as a latent disruptor of school attendance.SM offers prospects for students to involve with science beyond the classroom(Alalwan, 2022). Interactive content, educational videos, and peer teamwork through platforms can improve understanding and arouse interest in science, potentially leading to enhanced school attendance (Green, 2014; Martin, and Bolliger, 2018). Students can access graphic and illustrative resources that make complex scientific concepts more understanding, thus inspiring them to attend classes and partake actively in learning. However, SM is a major cause of distraction, with entertainment-focused programme which draws students away from academic tasks (Subair, 2019). Overuse of SM can reduce students' focus, resulting in absenteeism and poor academic performance (Kingsley et al., 2019). Additionally, misinformation spread on these platforms can confuse students, undermining their self-confidence in classroom instruction, mostly in science subjects where precision is critical. Mental health issues, aggravated by SM pressures, may also contribute to reduced school attendance. SM can impact students' attendance and academic performance both positively and negatively. However, the negative influences of SM cannot be overlooked. Excessive SMU negatively affected students' attendance,resulting to poor academic outcomes (Margaret and Chukujindu, 2022). A steady attendance in subjects like BS is crucial for developing analytical and critical thinking skills essential for future careers (Klein and Sosu, 2024). However, SM's influence has made this difficult, with many students showing diminished interest and lop-sided attendance in BS classes.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Attendance at school plays a dynamic role in a student's academic achievement (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).Attendance policies that impose regular attendance guarantee that students partake in class activities, involve in lessons, and get on-the-go teaching components. Frequent absences from school may leave children with knowledge gaps that deter their ability to stay up with their peers and harmfully impact their overall academic performance (Klein et al., 2022). BS serves as a fundamentalscience, that introduceslearners to basic scientific concepts and principles. With its complete coverage of numerous fields like biology, physics, chemistry and earth sciences, it offers learners a wider comprehension of the natural world (Ogundele et al., 2020). Hence, learners may find it difficult to comprehend more complex subjects in subsequent school stages if they fail to have a solid foundation in BS. In Ikot Ekpene Local Government Area (LGA), Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, and even other parts of the world, there are cases of academic deterioration among secondary school students (SSS) in BS which may be triggered by irregular attendance (Gabriel and Lawrence, 2019). This scenario experienced in Ikot Ekpene LGA may be linked to the impact of information types sought for and frequency of SMU on secondary school students' attendance (SSSA) in BS, and has become a key research concern.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main research objective was to access impact of SMU on SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA. Meanwhile, the specific objectives were to:

a) Mention some aspects of SMUthat could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA;
b) Determine the degree to which the types of information sought for on SM could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA; and
c) Assess the extent to which the frequency of SMU could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA.

1.4 Research Questions/ Hypotheses of the Study

The following research questions (RQs) were formulated to guide the study:

Main research question:

(a) What is the degree to which SMU could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA?

Sub-research questions were:

(b) What are other aspects of SMthat could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA?
(c) What is the degree to which the types of information sought for on SM could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA?
(d) To what extent does the frequency of SMU influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA?

The following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at 5% level of significance ($p<0.05$):

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Main Research Hypothesis:

a) H_{om}: There is no significant difference between JSS1 and JSS2 opinion to which SMUcould influence on SSSA in BSin Ikot EkpeneLGA.

Sub Research Hypothesis:

b) H_{o1}: There is no significant difference between JSS1 and JSS2 perception to which the types of information sought for on SM could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA.

c) H_{o2}: There is no significant difference between JSS1 and JSS2 opinion to which the frequency of SMU influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA.

Based on the foregoing, the independent variables were types of information sought for on SM and frequency of SMU whereas the dependent variable was SSSA in BS. The study would help school administrators recognize the impact of social media on student attendance in Basic Science classes, and this knowledge would assist them in developing effective strategies and policies to improve attendance and manage the influence of social media on academic performance.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design and Study Area

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design which allows the researcher to gather both quantitative and qualitative data on the influence of SM on SSSA and participation in BS classes.It was conducted in Ikot Ekpene, which is located in Akwa Ibom State, Niger Delta region, Nigeria.The main occupations in Ikot Ekpene include trading, crafts, and agriculture. The main language spoken is Ibibio. However, English is widely used, especially in schools and official settings, as it is the medium of instruction in education. Other local dialects may also be spoken, dazzling the cultural variety of the area.

2.2 Population, Sample Size and Sampling Technique for the Study

The population consists of secondary school students in Ikot Ekpene who were studying BS in public schools, and was found to be 14,357 students (Akwa Ibom Ministry of Education, 2024). Based on this data, the sample size was determined using Yamane's model in Equation 1 (Yamane, 1967). Assuming that the total population is N, and e represents accuracy level or marginal error (0.05), then the minimum sample size (n) was computed, thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+(Ne^2)} \quad (1)$$

$$n = \frac{14,357}{1+(14,357 \times [0.05^2])} = \frac{14,357}{1+(14,357 \times [0.0025])} = \frac{14,357}{1+(35.89)}$$

$$= \frac{14,357}{(36.89)} = 389.18 \approx 390 \text{ students}$$

Therefore, a total sample size of 500 students was selected using a simple random sampling technique from the 29 public schools in the area.

2.3 Sources,Method of Data Collection and Instrument

Data was collected through questionnairetitled "Social Media Usage and School Attendance Questionnaire" (SMUSAQ) as a primary source, attendance record from schools and Akwa Ibom Ministry of Education (secondary source).The questionnaire was designed to contain both close-ended and open-ended questions.

2.4 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

For validity, the SMUSAQ was reviewed by expert to confirm that it accurately measured social media and secondary student's school attendance.For reliability, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a small group and the data analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and t-test to ensure consistency and assess the statistical significance of social media's usage on school attendance.The computed reliability coefficient (Cronbanch's Alpha) was 0.96 (Mohsen and Reg, 2011).

2.5 Instrument Administration and Data Analysis

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to students to gather information on access to SM platform, SM platform often use, SM platform application and its usage frequency, and their impact on attendance in BS classes. The collated data, from a 5-point Likert Scale (VHE-Very High Extent, HE-High Extent, ME-Moderate Extent, LE=Low Extent, VLE-Very Low Extent), were statistically analyzed using quantitative method. Responses from copies ofthe questionnaire were coded and analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and t-test embedded inStatistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 19 at $p<0.05$.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic Data

The participants' classes, gender and their total number involved in the study are shown in Table 1.

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Table 1: Demographic Data

	Male	Female	Total
JSS 1	120	100	220 (44%)
JSS 2	150	130	280 (56%)
Total	270	230	500 (100%)

From Table 1, the total number of male students were 270 whereas that of female were 230. Again, total participants recorded in JSS1 were 220 (44%) while that of JSS2 were 280 (55%). However, their age brackets are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Age Bracket of the Participants

Age Bracket (Years)	JSS1	JSS2	Total
$8 < y < 10$	24	0	24 (4.80%)
$10 \leq y \leq 12$	176	24	200 (40.00%)
$12 < y \leq 14$	0	200	200 (40.00%)
$14 < y \leq 16$	24	52	76 (15.20%)
Total	224	276	500 (100%)

Note: The percentage was vertically computed.

From Table 2, 176 students in JSS1 were recorded as the highest the age bracket of $10 \leq y \leq 12$ years whereas 24 students each were found within the age bracket of $8 < y < 10$ years and $14 < y \leq 16$ years. In JSS2, the highest number of students (200) was found within the age bracket of $12 < y \leq 14$ years, followed by $14 < y \leq 16$ years (52) and lastly $10 \leq y \leq 12$ years (24). Generally, 24, 200, 200 and 76 students out of 500 were within the age brackets of $8 < y < 10$, $10 \leq y \leq 12$, $12 < y \leq 14$ and $14 < y \leq 16$ years, respectively.

3.2 Impact of Social Media (SM) Usage on Secondary School Students' Attendance in Basic Science

(a) Access to Social Media (SM) Platforms

The participants were asked whether they have access to SM platform or not. The response given is presented in Figure 1.

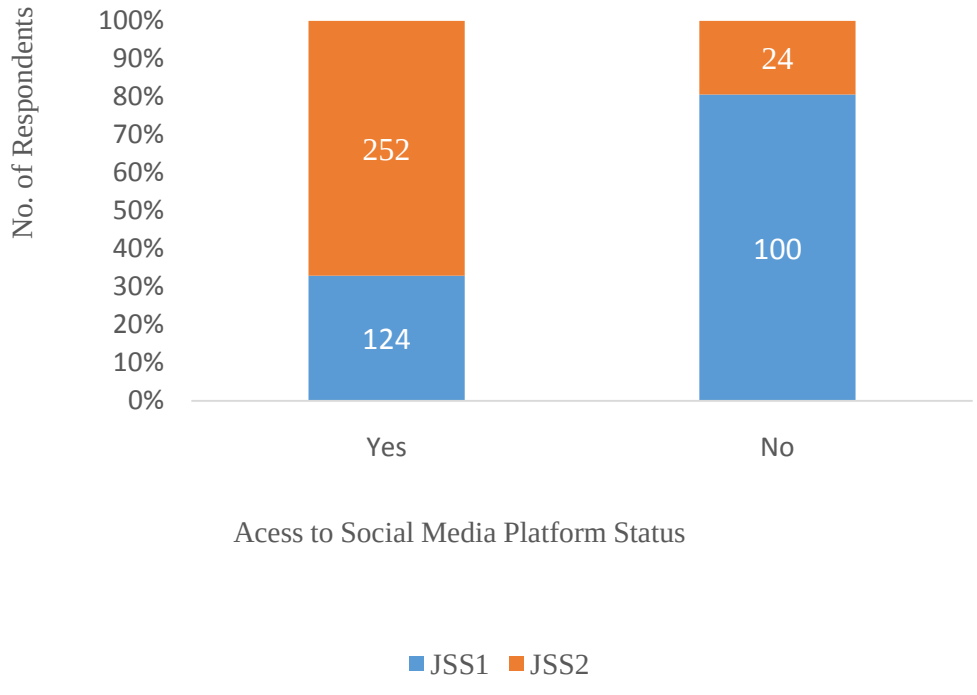

Figure 1: Access to social media platform status

As observed in Figure1, those that had access to SM platform were 124 and 252 students whereas those that did not were 100 and 24 students in JSS1 and JSS2 respectively. A total of 376 (75.2%) of 500 students / participants have access to SM platforms whereas 124 did not have access.

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(b) Social Media (SM) Platforms Often Use

The participants were also requested to indicate various SM platform they often use. Their responses were gathered and are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Social Media (SM) Platforms Often Use

Platform	JSS1	JSS2	Total
WhatsApp	24	100	124 (32.98%)
Instagram	0	48	48 (12.77%)
YouTube	52	52	104 (27.66%)
TikTok	48	0	48 (12.77%)
Other(s)	0	52	52 (13.83%)
Total	124	252	376 (100%)

From Table 3, JSS2 students recorded the highest number of those that often use SM platforms. Majority of both JSS1 and JSS2 students often use WhatsApp (124 [32.98%]) and You Tube (104 [27.66%]). The least platforms used included Instagram and TikTok (48 [12.77%]) whereas other(s) which may likely be Facebook, Skype, etc. which represented 52 [13.83%] of 376 students.

(c) Social Media (SM) Platforms Application and its Usage Frequency

The participants were asked to indicate what they normal use SM platforms to do and how often do they use during school hours. The responses collected are presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4: Social Media (SM) Platforms Application

Status	JSS1	JSS2	Total
Communicating with friends	48	152	200 (53.19%)
Educational activities	0	24	24 (6.38%)
Entertainment purposes	76	76	152 (40.43%)
Total	124	252	376 (100%)

Table 5: Frequency of Social Media (SM) Platforms Usage

Status	JSS1	JSS2	Total
Once in a day	48	0	48 (12.77%)
Twice a day	28	52	180 (47.87%)
Thrice in a day	48	100	148 (39.36%)
Total	124	252	376 (100%)

As seen in Table 4, most of the students (53.19%) used SM to communicate with friends. About 152 (40.43%) used SM for entertainment purposes while only 24 (6.38%) used it for educational activities. Besides in Table 5, 48 (12.77%), 180 (47.87%) and 148 (39.36%) out of 376 students used SM platform once, twice and thrice a day, respectively.

(d) OtherAspects of SM

Other aspects of SM that could influence SSSA in BS include time spent on SM, permission given by school on SMU, self-discipline, etc.

3.3 Research Hypotheses, Independent Variables and Verification

Based on the null hypotheses formulated, the participants were asked to indicate the extent to which the independent variables (types of information sought for on SM and frequency of SMU) had influenced SSSA in BSin Ikot Ekpene LGA using 5- point Likert Scale. The results of the data analysis are presented in Table 8.

(a) Sub Research Hypothesis

(i) H_{o1}: There is no significant difference between JSS1 and JSS2 perception to which the types of information sought for on SM could influence SSSA in BS in Ikot EkpeneLGA.

Table 8: T-Test Comparing Mean Rating Scores of How Types of Information Sought for on Social Media Influences Secondary School Students' Attendance (SSSA) in Basic Science

Components / Statements	Participant Type	N	Mean Rating Score	Std. Dev.	df	5% Level of Probability t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Sig.?	Null Hypothesis
Types of	JSS 1	124	3.280	1.220	374	1.733	1.967	No	Upheld

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Information Sought for on SM	JSS 2	252	3.024	1.570

Note: At 374 degrees of freedom (df), the table value of t-distribution (t_{tab}) is assumed to be 1.967 since df 300 is 1.968 and df 400 is 1.966. Calculated value of t- distribution (t_{cal})= 1.733 at $p<0.05$. The rule is that if $t_{tab} > t_{cal}$, there is **no** statistically significant difference between their mean rating values, then null hypothesis was upheld, else, there is statistically significant difference, and null hypothesis rejected.

(ii) H_{o2}: There is no significant difference between JSS1 and JSS2 opinion to which the frequency of SMU influence SSSA in BS in Ikot Ekpene LGA.

Table 9: T-Test Comparing Mean Rating Scores of How Frequent Social Media Usage Influences Secondary School Students' Attendance (SSSA) in Basic Science

Components / Statements	Participant Type	N	Mean Rating Score	Std. Dev.	df	5% Level of Probability t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Sig.?	Null Hypothesis
Frequency of SMU	JSS 1	124	2.991	0.917	374	-4.538	1.967	Yes	Rejected
	JSS 2	252	3.024	1.570					

(b) MainResearch Hypothesis:

H_{om}: There is no significant difference between JSS1 and JSS2 opinion to which SMU could influence on SSSA in BS in Ikot Ekpene LGA.

Table 10: Summary of the Aspects of SM that could that Influence Secondary School Students' Attendance (SSSA) in Basic Science

	Participant Type	
Independent Variables	**JSS1 Mean Rating Score**	**JSS2 Mean Rating Score**
Types of Information Sought for on SM	3.280	3.024
Frequency of SMU	2.991	3.434
N	2	2
Mean	3.136	3.229
Standard Deviation	0.204	0.290
df	2	
t_{cal}	-0.373	
t_{tab}	4.303	
Null Hypothesis	Upheld	

Note: If $t_{cal} < t_{tab}$, then null hypothesis was upheld, else, it was rejected.

3.4 Discussion

3.4.1 Demographic Data of the Participants

From Table 1, it was observed that male participants were more than the female. The result of the present study is in line with the work of Adegoke et al.(2024), where male students (57.9%) were more than females (49.6%) based on daily usage of SM from public and private schools in Ogbomoso, Nigeria. It appears that the researcher in the present study had visited more boys' schools than girls' schools. Age brackets $10 \leq y \leq 12$ years and $12 < y \leq 14$ years recorded the highest number of participants (400 out 500) which represent typical age bracket of junior secondary school students (Table 2). At these ages, the participants must have got much understanding on how to use SM platforms. Adegoke et al. (2024) reported that the older the adolescents, particularly 17-year-olds, could have the tendency to exhibit higher daily SMU.

3.4.2 Impact of Social Media (SM) Usage on Secondary School Students' Attendance in Basic Science

(a) Access to Social Media (SM) Platforms and Platforms Often Use

From Figure1, it would be noticed that number (376) of respondents / students that had access to SM platforms were greater than those without (124 students). A greater number of JSS2 students had more privilege to use SM platform. This may be attributed to the fact that they were

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older than those in JSS1 and had more experience on the use of SM platform. Again, many parents would want to entrust their gadgets (phones) to the hands of the older children than the younger ones believing that they can use and take care for them effectively. Since, the how old has to do with age, in a similar work conducted by Peter et al. (2021), revealed that majority of the students (52.1%), between the age 14 to 16 years had access to the internet. This is in accordance with the present study. Looking at Table3, WhatsApp and YouTube are used by the greatest number of students. This may be as a result of how easily and accessible these platforms are by any subscribers. A lot of young people like using WhatsApp to chat or make video calls with their parents / friends, etc. This platform requires only SIM registration where many parents can afford. They use YouTube to watch videos / films. Other platforms, for instance, Facebook, etc. may require rigorous registration and as such fewer number might have had access. Instagram and TikTok are like Facebook. JSS2 students may likely be more distracted in the classrooms since they assumed the greater number. Adegoke et al. (2024) discovered that smartphones (84.4%) were the primary means of accessing social media, and Facebook (62.7%) was the preferred platform. In another work, Kalejaiyeet al. (2018) revealed that the use of Facebook was the most preferred SM by students (64%). The present study is not in agreement with the study by Adegoke et al. (2024) and Kalejaiyeet al. (2018). The researchers must have worked on the senior secondary students who were older than those used in the present study.

(b) Social Media (SM) Platforms Application and its Frequency

From Table 4, the highest number students (252 out of 376) recorded by JSS2 must have been attributed to their increase awareness on the use of ICT in secondary. Since, greater number of students used SM platform for non-educational activities, it means that a greater % of the respondents would likely be distracted during BS lesson. Again, from Table 5, the predominant frequency of SMU was twice a day. It therefore implies at least two students were expected to use SM platform twice a day. The present work is in line with the finding of Mohammed and Awwal (2022) where students utilized SM for finding friends, watching movies, leisure and socialization, political matters, and uploading photos. Further findings were meagre academic performance, rowdiness and immoral attitude of the students as a result of SMU. In a similar work, by Hossain et al. (2020), most participants (80.95%) used SM for entertainment.

3.4.3 Independent Variables and Verification of Hypotheses

From Table 8, the mean rating scores of both JSS1 and JSS2 students based on the type of information sought for on SMwere not statistically different from each other, since t_{cal} values were less than t_{tab} at $p<0.05$, whereas that related to the frequency of SMU, in Table 9, were statistically different from each other. This implies a sort of agreement between both groups on their first responses, but no agreement on the second opinion. However, the participants mean rating scores were a bit above the criterion value of 3, except that of JSS1 students on the frequency of SMU. This suggests that the aspects under the study would likely trigger low students class attendance. The opinions of JSS1 and JSS2 on how a frequency of SMUcould influence class attendance in BS were different.Statistically, there was significant difference between their mean rating scores, since t_{cal} was greater thant_{tab}. By comparing the summary of mean rating scores for both JSS1 and JSS2 students, Table 10shows that their opinions on the impact of SMU on class attendance in BS were the same, since,t_{cal} (-0.373) was less than t_{tab} (4.303) at $p<0.05$.Thus, there was no statistically significant difference between their mean rating scores. Again, their mean rating scores imply conspicuous impact of SMU on their class attendance in BS. In general, since $t_{cal} < t_{tab}$ at $p<0.05$ for H_0 and H_{01}, their mean differences were statistically insignificant, null hypotheses were upheld, except for $H_{02}$where the mean difference was statistically significant, and its null hypothesis rejected.Therefore, certain measures should be put in place to restrict SMU during lesson to encourage students' full participation and attendance in the class lesson.

IV. CONCLUSION

In summary,male and female students were 270 and 230 whereas JSS1 and JSS2 were 220 (44%) and 280 (55%), respectively. The principal age brackets ($10 \leq y \leq 12$ years and $12 < y \leq 14$) gave a total of 400 participants. Moststudents (75.20%) had access to SM platforms. Exactly 32.89%, 27.66%, 12.77%, 12.77% and 13.83% of the students used WhatsApp, You Tube, Instagram, TikTok and other(s), respectively. Indeed, 53.19%, 40.43% and 6.38% of the students used SM platforms to chat

with friends, for entertainment purposes and educational activities, respectively, and typically thrice a day.Other facets of SM that couldinfluenceSSSAwere time spent on SM and permission given by each school on SMU.The mean rating scores of both JSS1 and JSS2 participants based on the type of information sought for on SM were statistically not different at α= 5%, while that of the frequency of SMU were not the same.A conspicuous effect of SMU on SSSA in BSwas observed since the mean rating scores were alittle more than the criterion value (3).Null hypotheses for $H_{0,}$and H_{01}were upheld while $H_{02}$was rejected. It wassuggested that active monitoring of students during school hours, particularly, those schools that permit the use of SM, should be strengthened. Period of usage should be curtailed, exclusively during school hours.Schools should not encourage the use of SM to boost attendance and participation in BS.Guidelines should be put in place to guaranteethat SMU supports learning objectives and improve attendance.

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