

## **T**HE EFFECTS OF MALLEABLE SOCIAL MEDIA IN TEACHING/LEARNING WRITTEN ENGLISH AMID COVID-19 LOCK-DOWN IN NIGERIA

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study seeks to examine the effects of Malleable Social Media in the Teaching and Learning Written English amid Covid 19 in Nigeria. one Research question guided the study. To achieve this, the descriptive survey research design was adopted. The study focused on the pupils of Blossom Educational School; hence, population consists of all the 310 pupils who were involved in the online during the lock down. The simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 60 students. A Questionnaire was used to collect data from the parents of pupils and teachers who participated in the online lesson. Simple percentage was used. Research findings showed that social media is affecting a great number of pupils positively in the aspect of written English. To this end, the researcher recommended that social media should be used for educational purposes as well; Social Networking Sites should be expanded and new pages should be created to enhance academic activities and*

### **Introduction:**

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

The notion of social media on the screen of a personal computer or smart phone has traversed vast conceptual territory. Our understandings of the computer as a language learning tool have gone from grandiose visions of a technology that could transform language learning and teaching to more sober expectations about what we can accomplish with technology over time, the initial excitement that was sparked by the many possibilities that social media represented has been toned down by the hard realities of

*avoid setbacks in the students' academic performance; and Students should be guided by teachers and parents on how they use these social media. This is to create a balance between social media and academic activities of students to avoid setbacks in the academic performance of the students in the aspect of written English.*

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Instructional contexts we have seen during Covid 19 pandemic. Nonetheless, we have come a long way both practically and conceptually regarding the nature of teaching writing with technology and our expectation of just what social media can do, (Ana, Carla & Joy, 1997).

*"The medium is not the message in a digital world. It is an embodiment of it." These are the words of Nicolas Negroponte from his book being digital. Social media are now fast becoming digital, that is changeable, no longer static. A major implication of this development is that learners can learn by doing rather than by interacting with preprogrammed instructional sequences. For example, software programs now commonly integrate tools such as word processors, paints programs, and image editors. Learners can manipulate information that is in, and can take on, multiple forms and formats. They can effect, recreate the material they see on the screen. This material, be it video, audio, text, or graphics can be used, changed, read and reconstructed by language learners. This aspect of newer digital technologies is exemplified in several of the newly released products in which, for example, the use of electronic notebooks and electronic portfolios allows students to transform the content within an application, (Ana, Carla & Joy, 1997).*

Such developments suggest that our quest for the online teaching of writing skills may not be getting us the answers we need as language

teachers in Nigeria, rather, the implications of manipulating multiple forms of target language material by our students. In addition, many social media applications permit learners to cut, paste, and incorporate material in different forms into their personal or collective online spaces, combining or linking material in diverse forms is fast becoming a common feature, for example, cutting material in one form and pasting into another environment where it becomes combined with material in another form.

The world today is celebrating the improvement in communication technology that has broadened the scope of communication through (ICT) information and communication technology that has turned the entire world into a global village. But as it is, every phenomenon has both the negative and positive effect. Technology exposes mankind to better way of doing things; it keeps individuals updated with news that are far away from them. Some of commonly used social media applications in Nigeria include; Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp messenger, yahoo messenger, skype, blackberry messenger(BBM) etc. These applications are mostly used by friends (old and new). The world has rapidly change due to the gradual development of technology; this has resulted into the use of technology as the best medium of teaching and learning amid Covid 19 access the wide area of knowledge, (Bala,2018).

The social media applications have transformed the thought of global village into a reality where, billions of people communicate through social networking sites. Numerous benefits have been obtained through distance communication with the aid of the social media. Social networking practices are a routine part of many young people's life; we need to seek ways to promote positive impacts of these. Limited intergenerational understanding of young people's ability to navigate online environments can contribute to a disproportionate emphasis on the risk of social media usage (Acma, 2009, Bauman, 2007). Online forum and social media can support the continuation and extension of learning and discussion outside formal classroom setting.

According to Bala,2018, spoken language, much of the meaning is determine by the contest, sharp contrasts with written language in which

more of the meaning is provided directly by the text. In written language the truth of the opposition is determined by common sense reference to experience, therefore, in written language a greater emphasis is placed on logical and coherent argument. Similarly spoken language tends to convey subjective information, including the relationship between the speaker and audience, whereas written language tends to convey objective information. The relationship between written language and spoken language is complex. Within the field of linguistics, the current consensus is that speech is an innate human capability and written language is a cultural invention.

Researches suggest schools administrators the need to explore the use of online social networking sites amid the new normal in education. In fact, developed nations recognize the potential value of using social networking sites (SNS) in the classroom, recommending that school board members find ways to attach the educational value of social networking, chat rooms and collaborative online learning. In a study of the use of alternative social networking sites in education, Brady et al. (2010) put forward that, the higher educational community has been noticeably slow in adopting social networking technologies curriculum.

Since 1990's when social media came into existence in Nigeria, it's assumed that the academic performance of students has been neglected and numerous focus turns to social activities. There is a deviation from academic performance, based on observations; students devote more time to social media than their academics, (Bala, 2018).

Although social networking sites have been recognized as an important source of education today, studies have however, shown that students use social media such as Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp messenger, yahoo messenger, Skype, blackberry messenger (BBM) for fun, to kill time, to meet existing friends and make new ones (Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe 2007). Although it has been put forward that the students spend more time on participating in social networking activities, with so many students blaming the various social networking sites for their steady decrease in grade point average (Kimberly, Jeong & Lee, 2009). It also shows that only a few students are aware of the academic and professional networking opportunities the site covered.

According to Halil (2015) in his paper “Contribution of social media to student’s academic development”, social network sites help to fulfill communication needs and wants. It is a convenient method of communication and provides the ability to stay connected with friends and family, but on the users own rate and time. It is on this background that this study intends to find out the effect of malleable social media in teaching/ learning written English amid Covid 19 in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions:**

This study seeks to answer the research question:

1. The use of social media affects pupils in the aspect of written English positively during the lock down.

### **The Study**

The research design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey. This design is considered apt because it enables the researcher to generate data through the standardized collection procedures based on highly structured research instrument(s) and well defined study concepts and related variables.

A well-constructed and self-developed questionnaire titled “the effects of malleable Social Media in teaching/learning written English Questionnaire” was used to get the desired information from the parents at their various homes during the lock down.

### **Population of the Study**

The population consists of all the private pupils of Blossom Educational School who were engaged in online learning during the lock down, Kuje Area Council, FCT, Abuja.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

A total sample size of 60 students were randomly selected using confidence interval of 5 and confidence level of 95% (0.05) from the total population of 310 pupils who were engaged in the online learning by the school.

### Method of Data Analysis

The responses of the participants were analyzed through simple percentage. Results and their interpretations will be presented in tabular form, referring to each item included in the questionnaire.

$$R/TS \times 100/1 = P$$

Where

R = Respondents

TS = Total Sum

P = Percentage of Respondents

### Analysis and Presentation of Result

**Table 1:** The use of social media affects pupils in the aspect content area of written English

Positively.

Responses	No of Respondent	Percentage
Strongly Agree	35	60%
Agree	15	26%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
Disagree	5	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

In table1 above, that the use of social media affects pupils positively in their written English as shown from the table above: (SA) have the highest percentage which is 60%, (A) is having 26%, (SD) is having 5% and (D) is having 9% respectively.

### Summary of Major Findings.

The following are the major findings from the study:

- The content-based language curriculum sent through the social media takes into account the interests and needs of the learner.
- It incorporates the eventual uses the learner will make of the target language.
- It builds on the students' previous experience



- It allows a focus on the use as well as usage
- It offers learners the necessary conditions for writing in the second language by exposing them to meaningful writing exercises.

## DISCUSSION

The finding of this study shows that pupils exposure to social media network has significant influence on their written English academic performance. This is contrary with the findings of Olubiyi (2012) which states that todays' students are so engrossed in the social media that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been observed that some students are always busy ping, 2going or Facebooking, while lectures are on. Hence most students' academics suffer setback as a result of distraction from the social media.

The finding of this study shows that Use of social media has significant impacts on the academic performance on the pupils in Blossom Educational School in the aspect of written English. This goes in line with the observations Nicole Ellison, (2007) which noted that, the improved usage of Websites has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite some time. What began out as being a hobby.

## Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Learners at any level of Education should be educated on the effect of Social media on their academic performance in the aspect of written English.
2. Learners should be guided and encouraged by teachers and parents on a website that will be of benefit to them in the aspect of written English.
3. Teachers should ensure they use the social media as a tool to improve the written English academic performance of learners in schools.

## Conclusion

The result from the findings of study has shown that, though Social media have negative effects on students such as lack of privacy, distracting

students from their academic work, taking most of their productive time, they also have benefits when learners are guided and the social media used appropriately. For instance, students can form online communities in order to plan for a project, have group discussions about class material for instance on WhatsApp, or use the Social networking sites(SNS) as a way to keep in contact when a student who has absented themselves and be updated on current academic information.

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