

EXPLORING THE ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA USE, LONELINESS AND SOCIAL ISOLATION AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined the associations between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among Nigerian youths. For the study, researcher surveyed 300 University of Nigeria, Nsukka students ages 18 to 25 about how social media affects their social lives. For the study, 7social media platforms, which include, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snap chat, and Whatsapp where used. Descriptive survey research design and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was adopted. The Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980). The Lubben Social Network Scale and 21 items linkert scale based on Young's (1996) measurement of Internet addiction, was modified with additional items for measurement.*

All the measures for each construct were adopted from the existing literature and the wording changed slightly to fit the current research context. The result showed statistically significant correlation was between Loneliness and hours spent on social media. $p < 0.05$, the relationship between the number hours used and factors of heavy social media use $p < 0.05$ While the correlation between hours spent on social media and less social engagement is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Keywords: Social media, Loneliness, Social isolation, well-being, Depression.

INTRODUCTION

Social Media is an interactive media format that allows users to interact with each other as well as send and receive content from and to each other generally by means of the Internet, (Sanusi, Gambo, & Bashir, 2018).

Social media originated as a way to interact with friends and family but was later adopted by businesses which wanted to take advantage of a popular new communication method to reach out to customers. The power of social media is the ability to connect and share information with anyone on Earth or with many people simultaneously. (Dollarhide, 2019)

According to Bryer and Zavatarro, (2011). Social media are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation by stakeholders across boundaries, time and space. These technologies include: blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Face book), and virtual worlds

The rise of social media sites as another platform on the internet has gained popularity over the last decade. The sites have attracted millions of users worldwide (Boyd, & Ellison, 2007) due to this fact many people are changing the outlets where they search for news, information, business and entertainment. These social media sites let those who use them create personal profiles, while connecting with other users of the sites. Users can upload photographs and post what they are doing at any given time. (Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2008).

Global Digital (2019) reports: that there are 5.11 billion unique mobile users in the world today, up 100 million (2 percent) in the past year. There are 4.39 billion internet users in 2019, an increase of 366 million (9 percent) versus January 2018. And there are 3.48 billion social media users in 2019, with the worldwide total growing by 288 million (9 percent) since this time last year. Global Digital (2019) further indicated that despite controversy around privacy, hacking, fake news and all the other negative aspects of online life, the world continues to embrace the internet and social media. Global digital growth shows no sign of slowing, with a million new people around the world coming online every day. This growth is clearly fuelling social media use. 45% of the world's population are now social media users: a whopping 3.5 billion people, 3.26 billion people use social media on mobile devices in January 2019, with a growth of 297 million new users representing a year-on-year increase of more than 10 percent. (Global Digital, 2019).

Huishan (2018) opined that social media have an increased influence on society, and the use of social media has penetrated into every aspect of life. Because of online use of social media, individuals are connected through screen virtually, but isolated from each other physically.

In a poll conducted, 22% of teenagers were found to log on to their favorite social media sites more than ten times a day, and more than half of adolescents log on to a social media site more than once a day (National Poll, 2009). Hinduja, (2007), found out that 75% of teenagers owned cell phones, and 25% used them for social media; 54% used them for texting, and 24% used them for instant messaging. Ajewole, Olowu, and Fasola, (2012),

concluded in their study that majority of the Nigerian youth spend more time on social networking sites than their studies. Ezeah, Euphemia, Asogwa and Obiorah, (2013) found out that students view social media for the purposes of leisurely entertainment, to watch films, to expose themselves to phonographic, discuss serious national issues like politics, economy, and religious matters on the new media.

Previous conventional offline social life is decreasing and new psychological problem arises: loneliness. Huishan (2018) in his study found that despite the fact that this generation has more devices and technologies that help people to stay connected, the feeling of loneliness in 21st century is the highest of all times so far. .Therefore, this study will explore the associations between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among Nigerian youths at University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- 1.What is the association between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among youth?
- 2.Does engagement in the social media affect loneliness of youths in real world situation?
- 3.Does engagement in the social media decrease social engagement of youths in real world situation?
- 4.Does the length of hours spent on social media correlate with factors of isolation among young people?
5. Does the length of hours spent on social media correlate with factors of loneliness among young people?

Purpose of the study

The study has the following objectives. They are:

1. To identify the association between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among youth
2. Examine whether engagements in the social media affect loneliness of youths in real world situation
- 3.Investigate whether engagements in the social media decrease social engagement of youths in real world situation
4. Find out whether the length hours spent on social media correlate with factors of isolation among young people
5. Find out whether the length hours spent on social media correlate with factors of loneliness among young people

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although loneliness and social isolation are frequently discussed together and share roughly comparable prevalence rates ranging between 10% and 30%,(Theeke, 2009) and more recently reported approaching 43% (Nicholson, 2015) the terms are not synonymous or equivalent. Neither term has a universally accepted definition, but a number of characterizations have been offered for each. (JoAnn, 2013).

There is a clear distinction between feeling lonely and being socially isolated (for example, a loner). In particular, one way of thinking about loneliness is as a discrepancy between one's necessary and achieved levels of social interaction, (Peplau; Perlman, 1982).

While solitude is simply the lack of contact with people. Loneliness is therefore a subjective experience; if a person thinks they are lonely, then they are lonely. People can be lonely while in solitude, or in the middle of a crowd. What makes a person lonely is the fact that they need more social interaction or a certain type of social interaction that is not currently available. A person can be in the middle of a party and feel lonely due to not talking to enough people. Conversely, one can be alone and not feel lonely; even though there is no one around that person is not lonely because there is no desire for social interaction. There have also been suggestions that each person has their own optimal level of social interaction. If a person gets too little or too much social interaction, this could lead to feelings of loneliness or over-stimulation. (Suedfeld, 1989).

Solitude can have positive effects on individuals. One study found that, although time spent alone tended to depress a person's mood and increase feelings of loneliness; it also helped to improve their cognitive state, such as improving concentration. Furthermore, once the alone time was over, people's moods tended to increase significantly. (Larson; Csikszentmihalyi; Graef, 1982)

Solitude is also associated with other positive growth experiences, religious experiences, and identity building such as solitary quests used in rites of passages for adolescents. (Suedfeld, 1982). Loneliness can also play an important role in the creative process. In some people, temporary or prolonged loneliness can lead to notable artistic and creative expression, for example, as was the case with poets Emily Dickinson and Isabella di Morra, and numerous musicians[who?]. This is not to imply that loneliness itself ensures this creativity, rather, it may have an influence on the subject matter of the artist and more likely is present in individuals engaged in creative activities.

Concept of Social Isolation

Social isolation is defined as the absence of relationships with family or friends on an individual level, and with society on a broader level. The absence or weakness of a person's social network indicates whether the person is socially isolated.(Griffin, 2010). Other researchers in this area define social isolation in a more structured manner, describing it as an objective and quantifiable reflection of the paucity of one's social contacts and the reduced size of their social network. (Stephoe, Shankar, Demakakos, Wardle, 2013). Nicholson (2009) defines social isolation as the following: a state in which the individual lacks a sense of belonging socially, lacks engagement with others, has a minimal number of social contacts and they are deficient in fulfilling and quality relationships

Social isolation is a state of complete or near-complete lack of contact between an individual and society. It differs from loneliness, which reflects temporary and involuntary lack of contact with other humans in the world. Social isolation can be an issue for individuals of any age, though symptoms may differ by age group. (Khullar, 2017)

Social isolation has similar characteristics in both temporary instances and for those with a historical lifelong isolation cycle. All types of social isolation can include staying home for lengthy periods of time, having no communication with family, acquaintances or friends, and/or willfully avoiding any contact with other humans when those opportunities do arise. (Melissa Davey, 2015)

Social isolation, a state in which an individual lacks a sense of social belonging, true engagement with others, and fulfilling relationships (Nicholson,2012).The construct of social isolation includes both objective social isolation—the actual lack of social ties—and subjective social isolation—the feeling of a lack of engagement with others. These facets of social isolation are related but not the same: One may be objectively isolated but not feel a

sense of loneliness, and one may be objectively connected to others but still feel lonely, (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, Baker, Harris & Stephenson, 2015).

Recent increases in social media use (SMU) via platforms such as Face book may provide opportunities for alleviation of perceived social isolation, For example, if people feel isolated because of their physical environment, they may be able to access supportive networks online, (Primack, Shensa, Sidani, Whaite, Lin, Rosen, & Miller, 2017).

Similarly, social media use may facilitate forming connections among people by increasing social support. (Steinfeld, Ellison & Lampe, 2008; Ellison, Steinfeld & Lampe, 2007; For example, they may help individuals with rare or stigmatizing conditions form support systems otherwise be difficult to establish. SMU has increased in particular among young adults, who are navigating critical stages of social identity formation. (Roisman, Masten, Coatsworth ,& Tellegen, 2004) Primack , Karim , Shensa , Bowman , Knight , Sidani .(2019)examined the association between positive and negative experiences on social media (SM) and perceived social isolation (PSI), the finding indicated that having positive experiences on social media is not associated with lower social isolation, whereas having negative experiences on social media is associated with higher social isolation. These findings are consistent with the concept of negativity bias, which suggests that humans tend to give greater weight to negative entities compared with positive ones.

However, it may be that social media use in this population may counter intuitively increase perceived social isolation. For example, frequent users may substitute social media use for face-to-face social interactions. Similarly, frequent exposure to highly distilled, unrealistic portrayals on social media may give people the impression that others are living happier, more connected lives, and this may make users feel more socially isolated in comparison. Primack, Shensa, Sidani, White, Lin, Rosen, & Miller, (2017) study concluded that perceived social isolation (PSI) is associated with substantial morbidity and mortality. The individual may attempt to justify their reclusive or isolating behavior as enjoyable or comfortable. There can be an inner realization on the part of the individual that there is something wrong with their isolating responses which can lead to heightened anxiety. (Khullar, 2017).

Research by Cole and colleagues showed that perceived social isolation is associated with gene expression—specifically, the under-expression of genes bearing anti-inflammatory glucocorticoid response elements and over-expression of genes bearing response elements for pro-inflammatory NF- κ B/Rel transcription factors. (Cole, Steve W; Hawkey, Louise C; Arevalo, Jesusa M; Sung, Caroline Y; Rose, Robert M; Cacioppo, John T (2007).

This finding is paralleled by decreased lymphocyte sensitivity to physiological regulation by the hypothalamic pituitary adrenocortical (HPA) axis in lonely individuals, which together with evidence of increased activity of the HPA axis, suggests the development of glucocorticoid resistance in chronically lonely individuals.

Social isolation can be a precipitating factor for suicidal behavior. A large body of literature suggests that individuals who experience isolation in their lives are more vulnerable to suicide than those who have strong social ties with others. (House, James, 2001).

A lack of social relationships negatively impacts the development of the brain's structure. In extreme cases of social isolation, studies of young mice and monkeys have shown how the brain is strongly affected by a lack of social behaviour and relationships. (Makinodan, Manabu; Rosen, Kenneth, 2012)

Social behaviour includes how an individual's thoughts, feelings and behaviour influences, and is influenced by, other people. Creating social relationships is central to human well-being, and not just due to the pure joy of being with friends, or when learning social norms (No Isolation.2017).

Concept of Loneliness

Loneliness may be seen as the epitome of relational deficit, and as an experience that may hold dire ramifications for health and well-being. Hence, it has become a phenomenon of growing interest among researchers (Jacob, Stein and Rivka, 2015). Loneliness is a common human experience. According to Hawkley and Cacioppo (2010, p. 218), as many as 80% of those under 18, and 40% of adults over 65, report being lonely at least sometimes, with levels of loneliness gradually diminishing through the middle adult years, and then increasing in old age.

Loneliness has been defined as "a sad or aching sense of isolation: that is, of being alone, cut off, or distanced from others. This is associated with a felt deprivation of or longing for, association, contact, or closeness." (Parkhurst & Hopmeyer, 1999, p.58) Loneliness is a common experience among children as well as adults (Asher, Hymel & Renshaw, 1984) and is associated with other risk factors (Galanaki, Polychronopoulos & Babalis, 2008). The causes of loneliness are varied and include social, mental, emotional, and physical factors. (Cacioppo, John; Patrick, William, 2008) Throughout decades loneliness has commonly been described by philosophers, psychologists and in the literature as ubiquitous and even as an essence of human being (Mijuskovic, 2012).

Nevertheless, a low quantity and diminished meaning of social contacts has also been related to loneliness. Sociodemographic characteristics are partly associated with loneliness. In general women seem to report loneliness more frequently than men, (Gierveld & Van, 2010) although the gender differences may disappear when controlling for other factors such as widowhood, depression, mobility problems, age, education, and social contacts (Dahlberg L, Andersson L, McKee, Lennartsson, 2015).. However, research also suggests that lonely feeling people sometimes tend not to use their social skills in order to reconnect with others, but instead act in self-protective ways that actually further alienate them from others (Cacioppo et al. 2017). Valtorta, Kanaan and Gilbody et al. (Valtorta et al. 2016) have, through a systematic review and meta-analysis, showed that deficiencies in social relationships are associated with an increased risk of developing coronary heart disease and stroke. Scholars have also identified loneliness as a significant risk factor for self-harm, depression and suicide, among other things (Lalayants & Prince 2014; Majorano et al. 2015)

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the social cognitive theory developed by Bandura (1986). One of the dominant features of social cognitive theory is self-regulation, which can be defined as the "ability to exert control over one's own inner states, processes and responses" (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1994, p. 6). Self-regulation is also one of the structural elements of loneliness. According to Cacioppo and Patrick (2008), individuals who experience higher levels of loneliness become unable to self-regulate, leading to distorted cognitions that impact their ability to evaluate social situations, others, and

themselves. As Bandura suggested, thoughts can regulate actions, which ultimately will exert some influence on thought patterns and emotional responses. The theory of self-regulation is also applicable to social isolation and social media addiction. Research has found that individuals with deficient self-regulation are unable to properly assess and control their social media use, which may lead to problems in their face to face human interactions (Caplan, 2010; LaRose, Lin, & Eastin, 2003). The importance of self-regulation is also true for effective and production human interactions. Students who are able to self-regulate their activities in social media as well as their academics and physical human interactions (Nota, Soresi, & Zimmerman, 2004; Zimmerman, 1990). Self-regulation, one of the central features of the social cognitive theory, provides the theoretical connection between the main variables of this study.

METHODOLOGY

This session discussed the various methods used in the study. It contains and explains the following: Research design, Population of the study, Sampling technique and sampling size, description of research instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

Participants

A total number of 300 undergraduate students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka constituted the respondents for the study. Among the participants 170 (55.7%) were females and 130 (44.3%) were males. Their age ranged from 18 to 25 years with a mean of 23.38 and standard deviation of .97. Additionally, all the participants have accesses to Internet connection to their personal computers and/or to their mobile phones.

Measurement

The tool that was used to measure loneliness was the Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980). This scale consists of twenty questions and is designed to measure how lonely an individual feels. They are asked a series of questions, then respond on a 4-point Likert scale in which 1 signifies "never" and 4 signifies "often". "I lack companionship" is an example of one of the questions, and "I feel in tune with the people around me" is an example of a question that would be reverse-scored. The scale used to measure social isolation was Lubben Social Network Scale. This scale is a self-report measure of social engagement including family and friends. There are two versions of this scale included; the short, 6 item scale and the 12 item scale. The short version which consist of six item Internal reliability.83, Reliability of the family questions = .84 - .89 Reliability of the non-kin questions = .80 - .82, the total score was calculated by finding the sum of the all items. To measure social media use a Likert scale consisting of 21 items was used to measure social media use in relation to social isolation and loneliness. This scale was based on Young's (1996) measurement of Internet addiction, but was modified with additional items and the response set ranged from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree'. However factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to reduce many individual items into a fewer number of dimensions. Factor analysis used to simplify data, such as reducing many variables into few factors. The 21 item was reduced to six factors. To measure those associations between the variables, the researcher used person's correlation coefficient. All

the measures for each construct were adopted from the existing literature and the wording changed slightly to fit the current research context.

DATA COLLECTION

Participants filled out a questionnaire on how long they are using Internet, how many times they use Internet per day, how long they spent on the Internet per day, what kind of activities they perform and what kind of sites they use on social and how social media use affects the physical interactions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In order to run the Pearson correlation analysis, the researcher took the average of the UCLA Revised Loneliness Scale, Lubben Social Network Scale, and social media use a Likert scale (adapted from Young’s (1996) measurement of Internet addiction) The averaged Loneliness scale scores had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.94 the Lubben Social Network Scale scores had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.92. While the 21 Likert scale had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.92. The researcher ran each of this scale to correlate with hours spent on social media; the aim was to determine whether the more hours student spent on social media is significantly related to loneliness and less social engagement. The result shows statistically significant correlation was between Loneliness and hours spent on social media. $p < 0.05$., the relationship between the number hours used and factors of heavy social media use $p < 0.05$ while statistically significant correlation was While the correlation between hours spent on social media and less social engagement is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Research Question One: What is the association between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among youth?

Table One: Responses on the association between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among youth

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
I often find myself using social media longer than intended.	3.2367	1.03807	Accepted
Life is boring without social media.	3.1733	1.05847	Accepted
I often neglect interacting with my friends because of my usage of social media.	3.8867	1.46318	Accepted
I get irritated when someone interrupts me when I am using social media.	3.2367	1.03807	Accepted
No day could pass without me feeling the need to use social media.	3.0800	1.07585	Accepted
Time passes by without me feeling it when I am using social media.	3.0000	1.12734	Accepted

I often feel lonely after using social media	3.0533	1.12608	Accepted
I find it difficult to interact with people shortly after using social media.	3.9067	.42255	Accepted
I have more friends on social media than tangible face-to-face relationships	3.9400	.34174	Accepted
My family frequently complains of my preoccupation with social media.	3.8333	.55369	Accepted
My physical interactions with people have decreased because of my social media usage.	3.1467	1.09658	Accepted
I often use social media while having physical face to face interaction.	3.1733	1.05847	Accepted
I often cancel meeting and appointment my friends because of my occupation with social media.	3.0233	1.16647	Accepted
I find myself thinking about my interactions in social media than my physical human face to face interactions	3.1533	1.09872	Accepted
I feel my social media usage has reduced significantly my human face to interactions	3.0167	1.13756	Accepted
I spend less time with face-to-face friends than online friends	2.9767	1.11667	Accepted
I spend more time with face-to-face friends than online friends	3.7833	.66674	Accepted

I would be upset if I had to cut down the amount of time I spend using social media.	3.8833	.44390	Accepted
I prefer socializing offline than socializing online	3.8600	.58441	300
I feel social media represent an ideal medium for fulfilling relationship?	3.7300	.72493	300
I have stronger online ties compared to my face to face/physical ties.	3.6700	.78090	300

Descriptive Statistics

The first output from the analysis is a table of descriptive statistics for all the variables under investigation. Looking at the mean, one can conclude that, I have more friends on social media than tangible face-to-face relationships, followed by *I find it difficult to interact with people shortly after using social media* and *I often neglect interacting with my friends because of my usage of social media* are the most important variable in the study. The result of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among youth?

Table 2: Pearson/Spearman Correlation Coefficient result measure of the relationship between the numbers of hours used and factors of heavy social media use Correlations

	hours	A-R scores for analysis 1-6	factor for
	Pearson Correlation	.298**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
Hours	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	1140.667	174.001
	Covariance	3.815	.582
	N	300	300
	Pearson Correlation	.298**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
A-R factor score for analysis 1-6	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	174.001	299.000
	Covariance	.582	1.000
	N	300	300

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result above shows that there is a significant relationship between number of hours spent in social media and factors of heavy social media use.

Research Question Two: Does engagement in the social media affect loneliness of youths in real world situation?

Table Two: Responses on the effect of social media engagement on loneliness of youths in real world situation

	Mean	Std. Deviation	REMARKS
I feel in tune with the people around me"	2.6833	.93415	Accepted
I lack companionship	2.4100	.93209	Rejected
There is no one I can turn to	2.7067	.92564	Accepted
I do not feel alone"	2.3033	.92998	Rejected
I feel part of a group of friends"	2.7067	.92925	Accepted
I have a lot in common with the people around me"	2.2000	.93430	Rejected
I am no longer close to anyone	2.7467	.92665	Accepted
My interests and ideas are not shared by those around me	2.7300	.92734	Accepted
I am an outgoing person"	2.7067	.93642	Accepted
There are people I feel close to"	2.7033	.91913	Accepted
I feel left out	2.6867	.92989	Accepted
My social relationships are superficial	2.4633	.90520	Rejected
No one really knows me well	2.7100	.93209	Accepted
I feel isolated from others	2.7333	.92289	
I can find companionship when I want it"	2.4967	.92782	Rejected
There are people who really understand me"	2.7033	.94071	Accepted
I am unhappy being so withdrawn	2.3033	.92998	Rejected
People are around me but not with me	2.6867	.92989	Accepted

There are people I can talk to"	2.7100	.93209	Accepted
There are people I can turn to"	2.4100	.93209	Rejected

The table above is the responses of the respondents on the effect of social media engagement on loneliness of youths in real world situation, the mean response shows negative relationships, and however the Pearson’s correlation coefficient result indicates significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Research Question Three: Does engagement in the social media decrease social engagement of youths in real world situation?

Table Three: Responses on the effect of social media engagement on so social engagement of youths in real world situation

	Mean	Std.Deviation
How many friends do you see or hear from at least once a month?	2.0167	1.36966
How many friends do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?	2.0267	1.36093
How many friends do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?	1.9933	1.35378
How many relatives do you see or hear from at least once a month?	2.0300	1.36454
How many relatives do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?	2.0200	1.36595
How many relatives do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?	2.0267	1.36093

The table above is the responses of the respondents on effect of social media engagement on so social engagement of youths in real world situation, the mean response shows positive association between social media engagement and social engagement of youths in real world situation. It shows that the more the youths are engaged in social media, the less they are committed to face to face human interaction with both family members and friends.

Research Question 4: Does the length of hours spent on social media correlate with factors of isolation among young people?

Table 4: Pearson/Spearman Correlation Coefficient result of measure of effect of hours spent on social media on isolation among young people using Lubben Social Network Scale

Correlations

hours of social media usage	hours of social media usage	How many relatives do you see or hear from at least once a month?	How many relatives do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?
hours of social media usage	Pearson Correlation	1	-.053
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.361	.188

	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	1140.667	-42.200	-60.800
	Covariance	3.815	-.141	-.203
	N	300	300	300
	Pearson Correlation	-.053	1	.924**
How many relatives do you see or hear from at least once a month?	Sig. (2-tailed)	.361		.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	-42.200	556.730	514.820
	Covariance	-.141	1.862	1.722
	N	300	300	300
	Pearson Correlation	-.076	.924**	1
How many relatives do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?	Sig. (2-tailed)	.188	.000	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	-60.800	514.820	557.880
	Covariance	-.203	1.722	1.866
	N	300	300	300
	Pearson Correlation	-.105	.922**	.942**
How many relatives do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?	Sig. (2-tailed)	.068	.000	.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	-83.733	511.760	523.840
	Covariance	-.280	1.712	1.752
	N	300	300	300

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 5: Does the length of hours spent on social media correlate with factors of loneliness among young people?

Table 5: Pearson/Spearman Correlation Coefficient result of measure of effect of hours spent on social media on factors of loneliness among young people Correlations

	hours of social media usage	Average Score of the UCLA Revised Loneliness Scale
	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.149**
hours of social media usage	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	80.867
	Covariance	.270
	N	300
Average Score of the UCLA Revised Loneliness	Pearson Correlation	.149**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010

Scale	Sum of Squares and	80.867	258.547
	Cross-products		
	Covariance	.270	.865
	N	300	300

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table above is Pearson's correlation analysis of the average score of the UCLA Revised and hours spent on social media by students.

The result shows statistically significant correlation exist between Loneliness and hours spent on social media. $p < 0.05$

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Although social media are considered a boon for people's life, addiction to it adversely affects the emotional health of young people. The present study was designed to investigate the association between social media use, social isolation and loneliness among undergraduate students. Results obtained in descriptive statistics in table one indicates social media use interferes and decreases face to face physical interactions. This might happen because the use of Internet has significantly affected everyone's life, specifically undergraduate students leading to a generation who has forgotten the line between online and real world interaction. The existence of addictive social media use may exert detrimental effects on human face to face interaction among young people. The Pearson/Spearman Correlation Coefficient result measure result shows statistically significant correlation exist between Loneliness and hours spent on social media. $p < 0.05$., the relationship between the number hours used and factors of heavy social media use shows $p < 0.05$ While the correlation between hours spent on social media and less social engagement is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. The researcher was particularly interested in the correlations analysis. The pattern of the results for both of these correlations, were statistically significant, this shows that more hours students spent on social media, the more lonely and less socially connected they become.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the associations between social media use, loneliness and social isolation among Nigerian youths. This research is relevant due to the disputed previous research on social media which has produced conflicting evidence in how high use effects users. In some cases for instance research stated that social media can actually increase self-esteem while others say it is detrimental to mental wellbeing due to various factors including social isolations, loneliness. addiction, This research found significant evidence within a factor analysis to conclude that using a high number social media platforms, for example Snap chat, Face book, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter frequently can indeed lead to negative outcome by decreasing social isolation in real world situations and a substituting for real connection. This paper has served as a benchmark finding which can later be compared with other research in relation to Nigerian context.

The following recommendations are made drawing from the findings of this study:

1. There is need for the introduction of some tools of awareness in order to offset any potential risk of social media creating negative emotional states.
2. Awareness campaigns as well as potential policy implementation on a national level in order for this information to be incorporated into the education system in Nigeria.

3. Campaigns for the promotion of digital Sabbath which is a recent trend that involves people switching off all screens for once in a week in order to relax and spend their time doing other activities.

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