

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF
STUDENTS IN JESUS AND MARY SCHOOL LIMITED, ACHIMOTA,
ACCRA**

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The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central torch with a flame, set against a background of a sunburst or starburst pattern. The emblem is surrounded by a decorative border.

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Anita Gyebi Koranteng declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:.....

Date:.....



Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Yayra Dzakadzi

Signature:.....

Date:.....

DEDICATION

To God Almighty for His supplicating and sufficient grace in my life and the people who have supported me throughout my education.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study	6
1.4 Objectives of the Study	6
1.5 Research Questions	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Delimitation of Study	8
1.8 Organization of the Study	8
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE OF REVIEW	10
2.0 Introduction	10
2.1 The Concept of Social Media	10
2.2 Students' Experience of Social Media Usage	15
2.4 Writing Skills	22
2.5 English Proficiency	23
2.6 Effects of Social Media Language Style on Writing Skills	24

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28
3.0 Introduction	28
3.1 Research Philosophy	28
3.2 Research Approach	29
3.3 Research Design	30
3.4 Population of the Study	31
3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique	31
3.6 Data Collection Instrument	32
3.7 Validity and Reliability of the questionnaire	33
3.8 Data Collection Procedure	34
3.9 Data Analysis Procedures	34
3.10 Ethical Considerations	35
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	36
4.0 Introduction	36
4.1 Demographic Data of Respondents	36
4.2 Analysis of Research Questions	37
4.2.1 Research Question 1	37
4.2.2 Research Question 2	41
4.2.3 Research Question 3	45
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	49
5.0 Introduction	49
5.1 Major Findings	49
5.2 Conclusions	50
5.3 Recommendations	51
5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies	52

REFERENCES	53
APPENDIX: Students' Experience and Effects of Social Media Usage Questionnaire (SEESMQ)	60



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1:	Demographic distribution of the respondents	36
2:	Students' experience of social media usage	38
3:	Effects of social media usage	42
4:	Measures to reduce the negative effects of social media usage	46



ABSTRACT

This study sought to assess the experiences and effects of social media usage on the English proficiency (oral and writing) of students in Jesus and Mary School Limited, Achimota in the Greater Accra Region. The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for this study with a population of ninety-one students from Jesus and Mary school limited were used for the study. All the 91 students were involved in the study. A structured questionnaire self-designed by the researcher was used to collect data for the study. The findings of the study revealed that the experiences of the students towards the use of social media language style are positive because to some extent, the use of social media improves their oral communication. The study also found that students use social media as a source of gathering educative materials/information, developing their writing skills and English terminologies and changing students' way of communication. Based on the findings, the study concluded that since social media usage among the students was identified as effective and for both educational and social purpose, parents are to guide their wards towards social media usage for their academic, social and educational development. The study on the other side recommends that parents, guardians and teachers should ensure that they educate and sensitize their students or wards on the positive and negative effects of social media.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This is the introductory chapter of research work which deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and the organization of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

In the world today, many people use various communication technologies, like computer-aided equipment, the internet, and so on. In information communication technologies, people use social media as one of the tools with which to exchange their ideas in everyday communications. Hence, the present study aimed at examining social media usage in improving English language proficiency from the viewpoint of medical students among Ethiopian public university students. Information communication technologies are vital in all walks of life (Kris, 2019). In the world today, many people use various communication technologies, such as computer-aided equipment, the internet, and social media as one tool to exchange ideas in their everyday communications (Kriss, 2019).

New technologies have played an important role for human beings not only in how they communicate but also in improving learners' social behavior (Sahabuddin & Ahmad, 2011). In this regard, Sahabuddin and Ahmad explained that learners are no longer little versions (variations) of people as they may have been in previous decades. Interactions through ICT tools and computer and mobile applications like Facebook, and Twitter make learners more active in their own lives (Zourou, &

2012). Learners who originated from countries in which English is used as a foreign language (e.g. Ghana) have changed their views on learning information communication technologies. They can socialize with other students who speak the English language well and those who have developed their competency in English. Social media provide a number of platforms that help students to create and grasp ideas and interact with large audiences (Yu, Tian, Vogel, & Kwok, 2010). In the world today, most of the non-English speaking countries, such as Ghana, have adopted different kinds of learning programs that assist learners to learn the English language. Thus, having knowledge of the English language through using new technology (eg Facebook, wikis, etc.) is one possible way to learn, among others.

Within English as an instructional language in the Ghanaian educational setting, social media have initiated new educational practices that can be justifiable methods of language learning and teaching. This is because it is important to deduce whether or not such technologies have been viewed as an active force by teachers and students.

The emergence of the internet and the consequential array of social media networks have, without doubt, resulted in an exponential increase in new types of written language: blogs, tweets, Facebook posts and LinkedIn profiles to mention just a few. But with English being the most dominant language on the internet, how has social media changed the English language? There's no denying fact that social media has had a drastic impact on the sheer volume of people we are now able to communicate with, it has also had an impact on the frequency with which we are able to communicate with them. This has led to us being exposed to a myriad of different personalities, perspectives, and approaches when we use social media to

communicate. With the exception of social media professionals and academic journalists, the majority of what is written by the general public on social media is not edited, supervised or checked to ensure that proper use of the English language is taken into consideration.

According to Behrmann (1994), social media is one of the best technological inventions in the history of man. With its development, advancements and the dive the global communities have taken into it, almost everyone is faced with the challenge of having to meet up and cope with the drastic change the technology has brought into almost every facet of human life. It has brought substantial and pervasive changes into communication between organizations, communities, and individuals.

Gelderblom (2002) stated that, the world is celebrating the advancements and productivity of communication technology today simply because it has broadened the scope of social, business and communication interaction even across national and international borders which have ultimately turned the entire world into a “Global Village”. The aim of Social Media is to create and develop social interaction among people and businesses where they share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks in a language style they understand and have created for themselves but as it is, just like the two sides of a coin, this great advent has brought with it both negative and positive influence.

One of the requirements that must be fulfilled by students to graduate from the Junior High School is passing all subjects especially the core including English Language. English Language, as a subject in Basic education has variant aspects; grammar usage, writing, reading and comprehension. Grammar is the way we arrange words to make proper sentences. Word level grammar covers verbs and tenses, nouns, adverbs

etc. Sentence level grammar covers phrases, clauses, reported speech etc. Composition or writing is the way a writer assembles words and sentences to create a coherent and meaningful work. Reading, in English is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us.

Comprehension is the understanding and interpretation of what is read. To be able to accurately understand written material, children need to be able to decode what they read, make connections between what they read and what they already know and think deeply about what they have read. Since the advent of social media sites in the 1990s, variant aspects of the English language have suffered diverse challenges in the hands of the students in our basic schools. These challenges to a larger extent have brought about a rapid decline in their general academic performance. A direct relationship exists between social media language usage and the English competence and performance; however, the darker side of this technological evolution has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback in the speaking and writing skills of English Language among students. As a result, there is the need to investigate the influence social media language style has on the reading, writing and the oral communication skills or proficiency of the students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The ability of the social media to reach a very large audience in a short period of time makes its negative influence on English Language proficiency spread like wild fire among students who are its major users. According to media research sources, it has

been observed that students' participation in social media sites is having an increasingly negative impact not only on their general academic performance, but also on their ability to employ formal literacy of English Language in communicative events, hence the alarming mass failures of students in English Language during BECE. In recent times, social media has been a focus of most students at every level regardless of age or location. As a result of this, physical communication or interaction among students and even teachers is gradually fading and has actually affected the way we speak and write English particularly among students. This was evident in the average performance of final year students of Jesus and Mary School Limited during their final year examination.

The researcher observed that, pupils' academic performance such as end of term examination in English Language composition proves abysmal and complicated to read by the researcher. This as a result contributes to their low marks hence affecting them in their Basic Education Certificate Examination. It has also been observed by the researcher that most often than not, the students showcase poor handwriting skills with most of them writing in short hand, such as LOL (laugh out loud), OMG (Oh my God), TTYL (talk to you later). On the evidence of the problem identified, studies have been conducted to curb the menace. For instance, it has been established that adopting web-based communication tools is vital at all educational levels in the world (Yu, et al., 2010). For example, Girma (2018) conducted a study on potential uses of social media in educational practices. Girma examined the opportunities that social media usage provides for today's neo-millennial students and found that learners have developed their own learning styles through using different interactive media and reading and commenting on other people's posts on social networking sites.

Likewise, Taye (2016) conducted a study on the advantages of SM for teachers' language teaching at Unity University College, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and found that teachers who seek to utilize social media make their students take an active role in their everyday learning. In line with this, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education for instance, pointed out that higher educational institutions still rely on traditional platforms, like learning management systems, that do not capitalize on the pedagogical benefits. Kline (2017) also investigated the overall outcomes of SM on pupils' learning at Amhara colleges of teacher education and found that learners may use SM sources like WhatsApp, Facebook and other social networking sites to improve their reading, writing and speaking skills. However, it appears that none of these studies was conducted in Achimota in the Greater Accra Region neither was any of such studies found to focus on only JHS1 pupils. As a result, there is the need to conduct an empirical study to investigate the influence social media language style has on the English proficiency (reading, writing and speaking) of JHS1 students in Jesus and Mary School Limited, Achimota in the Greater Accra Region.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study sought to assess the experiences and effects of social media usage on the English proficiency (oral and writing) of students in Jesus and Mary School Limited, Achimota in the Greater Accra Region.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Explore the experiences of Jesus and Mary School Limited students about social media language style on their listening and speaking skills.

2. Identify the effects of social media language style on the reading and writing skills of students in Jesus and Mary school limited.
3. Assess the measures that can be adopted to curb the negative effects social media has on the English proficiency of students in Jesus and Mary Schools Limited.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the experiences of Jesus and Mary School Limited students about social media language style on their listening and speaking skills?
2. What are the effects of social media language style on the writing skills of students in Jesus and Mary School Limited?
3. What measures can be adopted to curb the negative effects of social media has on the English proficiency of students in Jesus and Mary Schools Limited?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant to the teachers, parents and students. This study will serve as a guide and help the teachers of the school to know the influence social media has and is still wielding over the academics of students especially on their English speaking and writing abilities, and also as an eye-opener for them to assist in enlightening and creating awareness for the students, enumerating to them the possible negative influences it could have on them if not checked. The study is of significance to the parents in the sense that they will have an informed knowledge of the possible negative impact of social media on their children and serve as a watch-dog to help check the unnecessary exposure of their children to the social media networking sites, after all, the parent is the first teacher of any child.

In the same vein, the study will enable the students to have an understanding that apart from the social benefits of these social media networking sites which are more projected, using the sites for irrelevant and unhealthy purposes will pose possible dangers to their lives. It will be relevant in assisting students in understanding the diversity of social media. It will provide relevant material for students and other researchers undertaking similar research. While social media helps official agencies and experts share important information with students such as during a disease outbreak like Covid 19, it has a downside. Social media is a two-way street and allows non-experts to share information just as rapidly as health agencies, if not more so. It is this future that teachers and educationists as well as parents will need to plan for to protect their wards/students about the wrongful writing styles that are likely to take over the web space.

1.7 Delimitation of Study

This study focused on the influence of social media on the English Proficiency of students in Jesus and Mary School Limited. The scope of the study was also delineated to only basic seven (7) students in Jesus and Mary school limited. The study was also limited to the English proficiency of the students in Jesus and Mary school limited, Achimota in the Greater Accra Region. Again, the findings and conclusions of this study were from the quantitative research approach with close ended questionnaire.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study comprises five main chapters. The first chapter constitutes the introduction to the study, and it highlights relevant aspects such as the background to the study, diagnosis of the perceived problem, evidence and causes emanating from the problem,

statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives, research hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitations, as well as the organization of the study. Chapter Two deals with the review of the related literature and the summary of the literature review. Chapter Three focuses on specific procedures and methods employed to generate data for the procedure, and these include the research design, population, sample and sampling and data analysis. Chapter Four compares the pre-intervention results with the post-intervention and highlights Major findings. Lastly, Chapter Five provides a summary of the study, conclusion and a few recommendations for modifications for future improvement of subsequent research work on the problem under study.



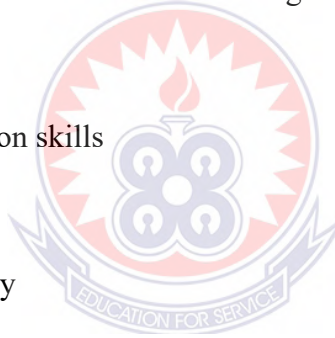
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE OF REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter involves the review of related literature concerning the topic under investigation. The literature is reviewed based on key variables in the study as well as the objectives of the study. It also highlights the views of experts and researchers in the field of social media and English proficiency. The review is structured under the following themes:

1. The concept of social media
2. Students' experience of social media usage
3. Language style
4. Oral communication skills
5. Writing skills
6. English proficiency
7. Effects of social media language style on writing skills
8. Measures to curb the negative influence social media English proficiency



2.1 The Concept of Social Media

The term social media was first known in 1994-1995, when the first web-based social networking site, Geocities, was founded (Goble, 2012; Kithcart, 2011). Later, in 1997, American Online (AOL) instant messenger and Sixdegrees.com were launched, however, social networking sites hit when Friendster launched in 2002, and a year later LinkedIn and MySpace were launched. Then, the most popular site, Facebook, was launched in 2004, followed by another well-known social media technology, Twitter, in 2006 (Goble, 2012; Kithcart, 2011). Facebook has become the most

successful social media because of its features platform that set itself apart from other social media (Goble, 2012). The arrival of 'Facebook' and the massive use of the site brought about the word, '*Social Media.*'

The terms *social media* and *social networking* are used interchangeably. Social media is a digital technology that facilitates the sharing of texts and multimedia through virtual networks and communities. Davis III, Deil-Amen, Rios-Aguilar and González Canché (2012) defined social media technology (SMT) as web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage, and share ideas or existing content in various forms of communications in digital environments.

Social media is the social interaction among people in which they create, share or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Andreas Kaplan and Michael Heinlein define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that are built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. It is a mobile and web-based technology that create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content which has introduced substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities, and individuals. It is a website that does not just give you information but interact with you while giving you information and has become one of the major channels of chatting through platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram, 2go, BB chat etc. The usage effect of these social media, according to Nielsen (2012) is that, students continue to spend more time on social media than any site and that the total time spent on social media across mobile devices increased by 37%, which is an estimate of 121 billion minutes in July 2012

compared to 88 billion minutes in July 2011. Currently, 59% of the world's population uses social media. The average daily usage according to Global Social Media statistics is 2 hours and 31 minutes as at January, 2023.

Ghanaian education has felt its taste of social media since its introduction. Social media in Ghana started as a slow process like other African countries but has grown steadily over the past years. According to the Ghana National Communication Authority (2016), report; the total mobile subscription increased by 1.3% from 36,138,706 in the first quarter of 2016 to 36,613,987 at the end of the second quarter. Also, the number of mobile data subscribers in the country has increased dramatically. Mobile data subscription for the second quarter of 2016 was 18.8 million with a penetration rate of 67.6%. This indirectly means there will be more accessibility to the internet which of course includes social networking sites. The study conducted by Owusu and Agatha (2015), titled "use of social media and its impacts on academic performance of tertiary students" revealed that the majority of students in Ghana were engrossed in social networking sites. It also brought to light that most users utilized these sites for chatting and downloading purposes only which affected their academic performance negatively. This finding corroborates the revelation of Mingle and Musah (2015), that most respondents in their study experienced negative effects such as poor grammar spelling, late submission of assignments, less study time and poor academic performance. Though part of these studies affirmed some benefits of social media usage in the academic life of students, it is necessary as educators to be concerned about its negative effects which seem to be outweighing the advantages as far as education is concerned in Ghana.

Social media are a computer-mediated tool that allows people to create, share or exchange information, ideas, and pictures/videos with other friends or relatives. Social media plays an important role in this present competitive and technological era. Various tools of Social Media are commonly used among university-level mature learners like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn etc. It is clear from the results of previous research studies and practical observations of various active users of Facebook, WhatsApp and other tools of social media that it has a positive effect on the English language learning proficiency at the university level. Most of the young students at the university level use various social media tools for social interaction, popularity, social relations, and English language learning purposes. Different research studies in advanced countries have highlighted the importance of Social Media sources like (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Skype). Social Media plays a pivotal role not only in one single skill or competency of the English language but plays a great role in the four basic skills of language i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing and also develops the vocabulary and grammar competency of the English language in a very proper way. The most important aspect of social media sources in English language learning is that it makes the EFL learners autonomous to do the practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing at home, in a guesthouse, on-road or a shop without any difficulty.

It is a fact that integration of technology, use of various online social media sources i.e. (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and Skype) and thinking of innovative teaching methods and learning approaches in recent years stimulated educators to teach in a much more enjoyable, motivating and practical learning environment. It is due to this fact learners' interest is limited to those directions which are accessible for them without too much hard work and struggle like before to read

different textbooks in libraries. Nowadays the old traditional paper-based methods of the teaching-learning process have shifted to electronic and digital technology to a greater extent. The energetic learners want to enhance meaningful learning while using new strategies and then relate it to their real life experiences, for example, they use various social media sources like Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Skype because it facilitates collaboration, teamwork, peer assessment and provide a practical environment of sharing information with their class-fellows and friends in the easiest possible way (Williams, 1992).

Those students who are using Social Media may share subject-related information easily and they can get feedback from their class-fellows and especially from those teachers who use social media sources like Facebook. It is a student centered approach and beneficial for them because they can use their knowledge, get new knowledge, get facilitation to express their ideas without any hesitation with their connected instructors and teachers (Meenus, Questier & Derks, 2006).

According to (Van Looy, Goegebeur & Vrijssen, 2000) the basic idea is that students must learn to reflect on their functioning so that after they have completed the course they may be able to continue working on their development consciously, but this is possible only through the proper use of new technology and use of various social media sources to get new fresh information from the surrounding and the world to improve hidden capabilities according to the changing era.

Another important benefit of social media is that it provides the EFL learners self-regulated learning environment, and makes the learners able to set goals for their learning and then attempt to regulate, monitor, and control their cognition, motivation and behaviour as guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in

the environment”(Pintrich, 1999, p. 453). According to (Alexioua&Fotini, 2010, p. 3050) the highly self-regulated learners approach the learning tasks in a “mindful and confident manner, set goals provocatively, and develop a plan for attaining those goals”

2.2 Students’ Experience of Social Media Usage

A direct relationship exists between Social media usage and the academic performance of students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. However, the darker side of technological evolution has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback of real values of life, especially among students with a strong effect on the way they speak and write the English Language in recent times.

Online social networking sites focus on building and reflecting social associations among people who share common interests and or activities and with so many social networking sites displayed on the internet, students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends and acquaintances. Many students are now addicted to the online rave of the moment with a special interest in Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp which has drastically affected their English Language ability as a result of word coinage and abbreviations of English words.

Today most youths and students possess Facebook accounts. The reason most of them perform badly in school and especially in English grammar-related subjects might not be far-fetched. While many parents are so quick to blame the poor quality of teachers, they might have to think twice, if they have not heard about the Facebook frenzy (Oche & Aminu, 2010). In (Obi, Bulus, Adamu & Sala’at 2012), it was observed that the use of these sites also affects students’ use of English and grammar. Olubiya

(2012) noted that these days students are so engrossed in 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 with BB pinging, 2go or Facebook chat, even while lectures are going on. Since most times, these chatting just buzzed in at unexpected times, the only way to quickly respond without delay is by using short abbreviations to save time and space.

2.3.2 Conclusion explicitness

Explicitness is the degree to which a message source makes her or his intentions transparent in the message itself. Whereas explicit messages require little or no guesswork regarding the speaker's wants, inexplicit messages necessitate more interpretation, thereby demanding a longer cognitive route from utterance to meaning (Blum-Kulka, 1987). This overall point is qualified by frequency of usage. "Could you pass the salt?" is so commonly used to mean "Please pass the salt" that it seems unlikely that there is substantial difference in cognitive effort or processing time between the two. Nonetheless, there may still be important relational implications to be drawn from the two formulations. There is an enormous body of work on explicitness as a property of language. However, the research linking it to persuasion is more narrowly focused on explicitness as a property of the message's conclusion. An explicit conclusion is sometimes contrasted not with an inexplicitly stated conclusion but with no conclusion at all. Explanatory accounts include:

- Messages with unstated conclusions are most effective because recipients who are required to form their own conclusions must engage the arguments to a greater degree (Hovland & Mandell, 1952).

- Explicit conclusions display persuasive intent that will likely stimulate reactance and subsequent counter persuasion (Brehm & Brehm, 1981).
- Explicit conclusions are most persuasive because they provide clear direction, even to recipients who are uninvolved with the topic (Cruz, 1998). Due to the fact that the overall database is small, considerable caution is needed when interpreting the literature. But, with that in mind, quantitative summaries of the literature support only the third explanation (Cruz, 1998; O’Keefe, 1997): conclusion explicitness promotes persuasion.

There is no indication that conclusion-drawing influences source credibility nor that audience involvement moderates the effect of explicitness on persuasion. In its current form, the literature supports an unqualified $X \rightarrow Z$ model (explicitness causes persuasion without moderators). Persuasion studies of explicitness seem not to have committed any gross errors in terms of defining the concept under study. Although definitions are often casual, the operationalization affords plausible precision of inference, and there is no obvious indication of multiple components to the notion of conclusion explicitness, thereby avoiding problems of heterogeneity among those components. If any criticism can be brought to bear it is that the persuasion studies seem not especially ambitious. Better linkages to treatments of explicitness in the language literature more broadly might encourage researchers to reach further.

2.3.3 Powerful and powerless language

Powerless speech is language that conveys a speaker’s uncertainty or ambivalence about his or her position. It manifests as the frequent use of hedges (e.g., “sort of,” “I guess”), hesitations (e.g., “uh,” “well,” “you know”), tag questions (e.g., “...don’t you think?” “Don’t you agree?”), intensifiers (e.g., “really,” “so”), disclaimers (e.g., “I’m

not sure, but...,” “others may see it differently, but. . .”), and politeness (e.g., “Please,” “If you don’t mind”). Broadly, he found that these features of language tended to co-occur and that they did so in the speech of low-power/status witnesses. The reverse was true of persons with relatively high social power, such as parole officers and physicians. In other words, powerful speech was marked by the absence of forms that signal a lack of commitment or confidence. Although the database is small, a quantitative summary indicates that powerful speech is favorably associated with source credibility and with persuasion (Burrell & Koper, 1998). Efforts to explain powerful(less) language effects can be summarized as:

- Powerful language conveys certainty, and judgments of source certainty because belief change in message recipients (Erickson, Lind, Johnson & O’Barr, 1978).
- The effect of powerless forms is moderated by the medium of presentation, such that they are most potent in fast modalities such as audio or video and least potent in slower modes such as print (Sparks, Areni & Cox, 1998).
- Some components of powerless language influence depth of message processing, whereas others function as peripheral cues (Blankenship & Holtgraves, 2005). Differences in theoretical account aside, there are several potentially important qualifications to the possibility of a general powerful(less) effect. For one, there is remarkably little evidence that the linguistic markers of power are part of an overall style. O’Barr’s (1982) assertion remains the gold standard on this point, and, as noted, it was based on highly contextualized courtroom interactions. Communication in legal settings may be coherent and consequential in ways that remain distinct from behavior in other contexts. And the degree to which a powerful(less) style is

distinguishable from other language elements is uncertain. In this vein, one potential problem of classification was alluded to earlier: should the phrase “Don’t you agree?” be viewed as powerlessness or as a rhetorical question? There is also the question of the regularity with which powerless forms naturally co-occur. Is it true that persons who use hedges are also likely to use hesitations and tag questions? Or to what extent is there a single X construct? This issue is rendered complex by evidence that different forms produce differences in perceived power in the context of a job interview (Bradac & Mulac, 1984). To the extent that such findings hold in other contexts as well, it means that components of powerless language cannot be substituted on a one-to-one basis.

2.3.4 Domineering language

Experimental studies frequently operationalize domineeringness as commands or orders (e.g., “You must” or “You will”) versus formally polite (e.g., “Please”) or qualified terms (e.g., “Perhaps” or “You may wish to”). As the examples suggest, domineering messages are often explicit about what action is wanted from the target. But they are more than just explicit (Miller, Lane, Deatrack, Young & Potts, 2007). They convey something of the speaker’s intensity about the issue and they imply a relationship in which the hearer is subordinate. Both themes—speaker intensity and speaker–hearer relationship—are manifest in the theories that have been brought to bear on domineering language:

- Reactance theory emphasizes the control aspect of domineering language (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). It supposes that individuals have the freedom to

choose their own positions and that domineering language causes a perceived threat to freedom.

- Politeness theory highlights the relational aspect of language (Brown & Levinson, 1978). All social actors are presumed to possess a desire for autonomy. What is termed domineeringness here would be labeled a threat to negative face by Brown and Levinson, that is, language that threatens the hearer's desire for autonomy. Because these two theories orient toward different outcomes, they cannot be viewed as competing positions and, thus, cannot be discriminated on the basis of data. But the effect of domineeringness is not controversial: it typically produces a counter persuasive effect (Quick, Shen & Dillard, 2013; Rains, 2013). This sometimes manifests as no persuasion relative to some nondomineering control group or as a boomerang. But both cases can be represented as $X \rightarrow Y \rightarrow Z$, where Y is an amalgam of anger and negative cognitions (Quick et al., 2013).

One colorful application of domineering language can be seen in Pennebaker and Sanders's (1976) research in which they posted two differently worded signs on college bathroom walls. One read "Do not write on these walls under any circumstances" whereas the other read "Please don't write on these walls." Two weeks later, the walls with the domineering message had substantially more graffiti on them. Rains (2013) meta-analysis offers empirical support for the general nature of the effect, as well as for the cognitive and emotional processes that underlie it.

2.3.5 Oral communication skills

Speaking skill is known as a productive skill. It requires people to use the vocal tract and brains to correctly produce language through sound. Speaking is used to

communicate with others, extend information, convey ideas or feelings and make the relationship among people in the world because it is one of the important abilities to carry out a conversation. According to Ur, (1996, p. 120), Speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as „speakers“ of that language as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing; and many if not most foreign language learners primarily interest in learning to speak.

Speaking English is not easy and not simple, because the speaker should also master several important elements, such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. However, Brown and Yule (1983, p.4) said that “Most speakers of English produce spoken language which is syntactically very much simpler than written language. The vocabulary is usually much less specific.” Brown and Yule (1983, p.25) also stated, “Spoken language production is often considered one of the most difficult aspects of language learning for the teacher to help the student with”. English learners should have the capability of English speaking to communicate with others. Speaking skill mastery is very important to be mastered because it can help English learners to communicate with others who use English as their mother language and also since English is being an International language now. English is very important in our life. Not only it is used for communication with people in the world but also it is used for getting better jobs or work in the future.

Speaking plays a crucial part in foreign/second language teaching-learning. It has occupied a significant and delicate rank through the history of language teaching. Despite its importance, teaching speaking has been undervalued and it is just in the last two decades that has gained its right to be an independent branch of teaching (Hosseini, Nasri & Afghari, 2017). Speaking then is not dependent only on

pronouncing words. English teachers, therefore, devoted paramount time to speaking as being essential in facilitating the enhancement of English learners' proficiency. It is worth mentioning that the four skills are described in terms of their direction as far as language teaching is concerned, that is to say, the language generated by the learner (in speech or writing) is referred to as "productive" while, Language directed at the learner (in reading or listening) is called "receptive".

Another important idea is "the channel", which refers to the medium of the message (aural/oral or written). Thus, speaking is a productive aural/oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal "utterances" to convey meaning. Speaking yet is a skill that deserves attention, the learners often need to be able to speak with confidence to carry out many of their most basic transactions. It is the skill by which they are most frequently judged and through which they may take or lose opportunities in life (Namaziandost, Abdi Saray & Rahimi Esfahani, 2018). It is the vehicle of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and business. Perhaps then, the teaching of speaking merits more thought.

2.4 Writing Skills

According to Brown (2001, p. 336), writing is a thinking process. He stated that writing can be planned and given with an unlimited number of revisions before its release. Elbow (1973) in Brown (2001, p.336) also stated that writing is a two-step process. The first process is figuring out the meaning and the second process is putting the meaning into language. In addition, Rivers (1981, p. 294) stated that writing is conveying information or expression of original ideas consecutively in the new language. Writing skill is also known as a productive skill. It is important for the student in learning the English language. Through the mastery of writing skills,

students can communicate their ideas, feelings, and emotions to others. For some people, communicating in written words is easier than communicating by speaking. People who have difficulties in communicating orally will be helped by media writing. In addition, to assist the communication process, good writing skills will help learners to acquire better jobs. Thus, it can be said that skills writing is very important to the students. According to Khan and Bontha (2014), “Writing is the most difficult skill compared to the other main language skills”.

2.5 English Proficiency

English is undeniably important and had been recognized as an international language since decades ago. The origin of English is apparent due to the studies conducted by archaeologists, a finding stated that “The oldest known writing of the real Old English words appears was found in 1981 at Undley Common, Suffolk. It was formed by two words which were “mægæ media”, written in an Anglo-Saxon version of the runic alphabet, the meaning of these words is “reward for a kinsman”. These words were expected written between AD 450 to 480, which was not long after English was separated from the Continental Germanic languages. Before 1981, a roe-deer anklebone found in Norfolk and bearing a single word interpreted as “roe-deer” which was also written in the fifth century, it was a common finding that used by people as a proof on the study of old English.” (Geoffrey Sampson, 2014). Therefore, we can assume that the English Language was originated in the fifth century. However, the growing transformation of culture and technology has made the world concern about efficiency and effectiveness.

The English Language is different from the past, it had been separated into two categories which were Old English and Modern English. Old English, was used by the

Anglo-Saxons in the ancient England and Scotland during the mid of fifth century (Crystal & David, 2003). On the other side, research from Otto Jespersen stated that Modern English, was spoken since the Great Vowel Shift in England (Labov, William, 1994), which began in the late fifteenth century. Language proficiency can be defined as the ability of an individual to perform and speak a particular language. Hence, English proficiency is the ability to speak, read and write in English. To attain high language proficiency, one should be able to have advanced abilities in all three areas of communication. There are tons of methods to test English proficiency. In Malaysia, the most common test is Malaysia University English Test (MUET). The grading system for MUET test was separated into six levels, band one is the lowest and band six is the highest grade.

2.6 Effects of Social Media Language Style on Writing Skills

Though there may have been some social, economic, and environmental factors that have added to the pressure of students in the past years, however, with more and more students being preoccupied with social media networks, it is becoming increasingly difficult to concentrate on academic excellence even as one of the top academic areas that many school professionals are concerned about are English and advanced literacy among others (Williams, 2008). The current generations of teens live in a fast-paced technological world with many different types of communication happening all at the same time. For example, with the advanced technological features on the most mobile device, it's possible to be speaking to someone on the phone and still be chatting with another contact on any of the social network applications.

It was estimated that 90% of school students owned a mobile phone, and 96% used text messaging. This shows that young people are more active 'texters' (Plester et al.,

2008) than adults who would prefer to call than send text messages, but because typing is much slower than speaking, and to also save cost, words abbreviation and new words creation becomes an alternative. Although social media sites have been recognized as one of the most important resource avenue for education today, but studies however have shown that students are only exposed to the fun and entertainment side of the innovation such as Facebook, Whatsapp and the like basically to have fun, kill time, meet existing friends or make new ones (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe 2007) and are not aware of the academic and learning opportunities the sites could offer even to their own benefits. In view of this, they spend more time on the social network site according to Nielsen (2012) for unproductive activities which has been identified as one of the major reason for steady decrease in student's grade point averages in academics (Kimberly, Jeong & Lee, 2009) and low proficiency in English Language competence and performance.

Ellison et al. (2007) stated that the students use social networking websites approximately 30 minutes throughout the day as part of their daily routine life. Lenhart and Madden (2007) revealed through a survey that students strongly recommend among themselves the social networking websites to stay in touch with friends and get carried along in whatever is happening in the social circle. According to Nielsen (2012), the total time spent on social media across mobile devices increased by 37%, 121 billion minutes in July 2012 compared to 88 billion minutes in July 2011. While the current body of research contributes to the understanding of both the advantages of social media one of which is helping students improve writing skills; (Kabilan et al., 2010; Shih, 2011; Yunus & Salehi, 2012; Yunus, Salehi & Chenzi, 2012) and the disadvantages which includes creating a bad habit of short forms in writing which has led to grammatical errors (White, 2009; Yunus, Salehi &

Chenzi, 2012). The communication-style of social networking users is observed to be rather similar especially among students, as the usage of these slangs shows how updated and current they are among their circle of friends and in the social media trend. The present study investigates how Internet slang used on Social media sites and mobile phones differs from Standard English.

There is no gain-saying the fact that social media has completely changed the way people interact globally. In one sense though, it has led to positive changes in the way people communicate and share information. However, it has a dark side, which seems to be so gloomy than its bright side. Social networking can sometimes result in negative outcomes, and some with long-term consequences even as terrible as death. Of course we have heard stories of such incidence, the recent was a young girl who met some guys online and was lured into meeting physically for further relationship only for her to be raped to death and buried. That was how harmful it could be.

The preoccupation of students with the various social media networks these days is quiet alarming. It is very rare to see a senior class secondary student without an internet enabled mobile device while walking on the road and even in the school environment. Although some secondary school authorities are trying not to encourage this by not allowing students bring mobile device to the school environment, but some parents will insist they allow their children because that is the only way to monitor their movements and know where they are at any point in time. Though the reason may sound genuine, but the negative impact on the long run is unimaginable because this will only give them unrestricted and unguarded freedom particularly if its internet enabled device.

The body of literature reflects a significant number of studies in the area of the effects of social media on the linguistic output of non-native speakers of English (NNSs). According to Chomsky (2014), our language is constantly, inevitably, and naturally changing, transforming, and becoming more adaptive to its users due to the changes in our contemporaries. More particularly, the inception and rapid development of social media networks as eminent pastime has led to the establishment of a distinctive language system necessary for operative communication (Attila, 2017).

Baldwin (2012, p.58) posits that social media can be both a friend and a foe for natural language processing. While he considers social media a cause for “spelling inconsistencies, the free-form adoption of new terms, and regular violations of English grammar norms,” he refers to the advantage of ‘lexical normalization’ in the same linguistic milieu. In this regard, Thurairaj, Hoon, Roy and Fong (2015) investigated whether social media networks were ‘making or marring academic English’ and whether occasional online code-switching and erratic spelling affect NNSs’ language learning process. Their statistical findings revealed that the discourse utilized on social media had not affected the participants’ English language proficiency due to their enhanced consciousness of the differences between their online informal meta-language and their formal academic language.

Lin, Warschauer and Blake (2016, p.143) claim that “language use on the Internet is often criticized as being less correct and less coherent than other forms of language use, and as having disrupted adjacency.” Tariq, Mehboob, Khan, and Ullah (2012) reported negative effects of social media on their Pakistani students’ L2 learning process. Similarly, Akram and Albalawi (2016) found Facebook to be a negative learning distraction with their Saudi students.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology employed for the study. This includes the research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, research instrument, data collection procedure and analysis and ethical issues relevant to the study.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The study is rooted in the positivist philosophy as postulated by Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2012) that it is the philosophy of science that information derived from logical and mathematical treatments and reports of sensory experience as the exclusive source of all authoritative knowledge, and that there is valid knowledge (truth) only in this derived knowledge. Verified data received from the senses are known as empirical evidence. Positivism holds that society, like the physical world, operates according to general laws. Introspective and intuitive knowledge is rejected. Although the positivist approach has been a recurrent theme in the history of western thought, the modern sense of the approach was developed by the philosopher and founding sociologist, Auguste Comte, in the early 19th century. Comte argued that, much as the physical world operates according to gravity and other absolute laws, so does society (Comte, 1945). In positivism studies just like evaluating the professional practices of teachers in this case, the role of the researcher is limited to data collection and interpretation through objective approach and the research findings are usually observable and quantifiable. The principles of positivism, depends on quantifiable observations that lean themselves to statistical analysis. It has been noted that “as a philosophy, positivism is in accordance with the empiricist view that knowledge

stems from human experience. It has an atomistic, ontological view of the world as comprising discrete, observable elements and events that interact in an observable, determined and regular manner” (Collins, 2010, p. 38).

Wilson (2010) stated that a positivist philosophy to a study implies that the researcher is independent and purely objective and that maintains minimal interaction with the research respondents when carrying out the research. For that matter, the researcher restricted himself from interfering in the result obtained thereby maintaining the objectivity expected. In other words, studies with positivism are based purely on facts and consider the world to be external and objective. However, there are some degree of weaknesses found in positivism. Houghton (2011) is of the view that empiricism and objectivity are not suitable in social phenomenon which tests human behaviour.

3.2 Research Approach

The study assumed the quantitative approach in investigating the influence social media language style has on the English proficiency of students. This approach permits approximate fraction of the population that is, the sample through data collection process of asking questions for the purpose of generating research findings to be generalised to the entire population as recommended by Fraenkel and Wallen (2003). Taking into consideration the nature of the phenomenon, the quantitative approach from the positivists’ paradigm is allowed as it aids in the description of relationships, cause, effects, and social reality to any research phenomenon irrespective of the researchers’ viewpoint (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). For this approach, the social reality could be measured through the use of questionnaires and observation which is also considered for this study.

Again, it supports the use of both descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis which is evident as the variables concerned lend themselves more to inferential statistical analysis in an attempt to reveal the existing reality of the objectives. It is justifiable that the quantitative approach was chosen instead of a qualitative approach because it requires collecting a large amount of descriptive information from a large population in a short amount of time. Therefore, a quantitative approach was both appropriate and practical for this study.

3.3 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive, cross-sectional survey research design. The cross-sectional survey design allows the collection of data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning current status of the subjects under investigation (Amedahe, 2003). For the purpose of generalisation from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristics, attitudes, and behaviours of the population, this design has been commended (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Hall, 2011). The choice of this design was as a result of the notion that, influence of social media can best be explained through self-reporting instruments (Hall, 2011).

The cross-sectional survey design has the advantage of evaluating perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in their original happening without external manipulations through recording, coding, analysing and reporting the conditions (Best & Kahn, 2009). The design was considered suitable for the study since it involves gathering data from members of the population in order to determine its current status with regard to one or more variables such as students' English proficiency in the case of this study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). Jackson (2009) opined that, the cross-

sectional survey design describes existing relationship between variables hence, it was adopted for this study.

3.4 Population of the Study

The population for the study was 91 students from Jesus and Mary School Limited, Achimota in the Greater Accra Region. The population was made up of both male and female students from JHS1. The purpose of the population was based on the assumption that JHS1 is the first entry point to JHS2 and finally to their final examination hence, the researcher wants to establish the negative impact of social media on pupils' academic performance and possibly devise a mechanism to curtail the menace if not completely eradicated. The population was therefore chosen based on its convenience for data collection. The population was students taking the English Language as a subject.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

In a sample representativeness of the population, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) maintain that the researcher has to consider the extent to which it is important that the sample, in fact, represents the whole population in question if it is to be a valid sample. As well, the researcher needs to be clear on the population being represented. Therefore, the sample size for the study was 91. This means that the entire population was chosen for the study hence, the census technique was used. As the number of respondents was relatively small, the researcher found the census sampling technique more convenient. Thus, data was collected from 91 respondents.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument for the data collection was designed by the researcher based on the objectives of the study and it was structured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from; Untrue of what I believe (1), Somewhat untrue of what I believe (2), Neutral (3), Somewhat true of what I believe (4) and True of what I believe (5). The instrument was named, Students' Experience and Effects of Social Media Usage Questionnaire (SEESMQ). The SEESMQ was structured with close-ended items divided into four sections. The first section consists of the bio-data of respondents including their gender, and class/form. The second section of the SEESMQ focused on the experience of the students while the third section also was on the effects of social media language style on the reading and writing skills of students. The last section of the SEESMQ solicited information on the measures that can be adopted to curb the negative influence social media has on the English proficiency of students. The SEESMQ was appropriate for this study because it is effective for seeking information about opinions, characteristics and attitudes of a subject (Kelling, 1997).

The purpose for the use of the questionnaire was also on the notion that it is more reliable since its anonymity encourages greater honesty than interview (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). As a self-reporting instrument, the SEESMQ might have some demerits such as respondents not necessarily reporting their beliefs and attitude to portray them in good light, as well as data being affected by the respondents' knowledge, experience and motivation. However, its use for this study was coined from the postulation of Oliver (2010) that the questionnaire serves as the most appropriate and useful data-gathering tool in research if properly constructed and administered because it has a wider coverage and can reach respondents more easily

than other tools. On this note, the SEESMQ was used to elicit responses from the respondents.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of the questionnaire

The SEESMQ was taken through face, content and constructs validity procedures. Assessment of the content and construct validity were achieved by the use of non-statistical approaches including peer and expert reviews as recommended by Cohen et al. (2007). The face validity of the SEESMQ was ascertained by effecting the comments from my supervisor. The initial SEESMQ was given to a measurement and evaluation expert to check the structure, layout and conformity to the research objectives and questions and item construction procedures. After that, the recommendations from the experts were used to restructured the questionnaire used for the data collection. Content validity on the other hand was ensured with the assistance from my supervisor who is well grounded in educational research. The supervisor examined the SEESMQ in relation to the research objectives and questions in determining how well an item measures what it is intended to measure (validity). The pre testing helped to determine how consistent the results of this study will be when used in another setting under similar test environment (Cohen et al., 2007). Hence, the reliability of the SEESMQ was determined using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Method. The pre testing recorded a Cronbach's Alpha .83 reliability. This means that the SEESMQ was appropriate to be used for this study because Pallant (2010) suggested that a reliable data of a Cronbach's Alpha greater than .7 is classified good for data collection.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

Since the study involved human beings, all ethical principles were adhered to during the data collection. The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Department of Educational Foundations of the University of Cape Coast to seek permission from the principal of Jesus and Mary school limited for the data collection. The researcher personally visited the school to familiarise herself with the school authorities and the students and also inform them about the purpose of the study and their expected role during the data collection. The purpose of this introductory letter was to solicit for cooperation and also to create the needed rapport with the students and the school authorities.

In doing so, a consent statement was read out to the respondents for acceptance before administering the questionnaires. Confidentiality of the respondents was maintained as required. The respondents were made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to decline at any time during the study. The questionnaires were then distributed to the students after which the researcher ensured independency as they responded to the items. Each respondent spent within 10-20 minutes to respond to the questionnaire. The researcher self-administered the questionnaires to the respondents in their respective classrooms. The retrieved questionnaires were kept in an envelope and sealed for safe keep.

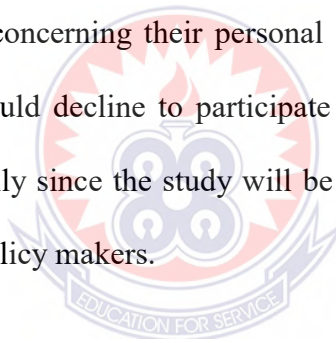
3.9 Data Analysis Procedures

The collected data was cleaned using SPSS and computed descriptively. This means that frequency and simple percentages as well as means and standard deviation were used to analyze the demographic data and the research questions respectively. The frequency counts and simple percentage was used to analyze the demographic data of

the respondents while means and standard deviation was used to analyze research questions 1, 2 and 3. For the purpose of determining the agreement or otherwise of the respondents concerning the items, a standard mean of 3.00 was used as yardstick to measure the responses. This means that responses lesser than 3.00 were considered as negative/unfavorable while those equal or higher than 3.00 were considered as favorable or positive responses.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

All issues with ethics as far as social and educational research are concern were adhered to. The respondents were assured of their optimum confidentiality and anonymity hence, their names nor name of their schools were requested on the questionnaires. Nothing concerning their personal identify was required. They were also assured that they could decline to participate in the study however, they were encouraged to partake fully since the study will be for the benefit of themselves and their parents as well as policy makers.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This section of the study focused on the presentation and analysis of the collected data as well as a discussion of the findings that emerged. The results were descriptively analysed using frequency counts, simple percentages and mean and standard deviation. The next section talks about the background characteristics of the respondents.

4.1 Demographic Data of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic distribution of the respondents

Variable	Sub-variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	47	51.6
	Female	44	48.4
Class/Form	JHS 1	30	32.9
	JHS 2	39	42.8
	JHS 3	22	24.2

Source: Field Survey (2021)

The result presented in Table 1 shows that most of the respondents who participated in the study were males (51.6%) followed by 44 (48.4%) females. Table 1 further revealed that out of the total of 91 respondents, 39 (42.8%) were in JHS 2 while 22 (24.2%) were in JHS 3 and 30 (32.9%) of them was in JHS 1. This means that the majority (42.8%) of the respondents were in JHS 2 at the time of the study. These respondents were identified as people using mobile phones hence the likelihood that they are either negatively or positively affected by the kinds of language used on

social media and its advert effect on their oral communication skills. The preceding sections focus on the analysis of the research questions and discussion of the result.

4.2 Analysis of Research Questions

The second section of chapter four focused on the analysis of the research questions to assess the experience and effects social media usage has on the English proficiency of the students. The analysis of the research questions was done based on the scale and standard mean set for this study (refer to data collection instrument and analysis procedures). The results are presented in Table 2, 3 and 4.

4.2.1 Research Question 1: What is the experience of Jesus and Mary School

Limited Students about social media language style on their oral communication skills?

The first objective sought to examine the experience of the students regarding the kinds of social media language styles that they use on their oral speaking skills. The information obtained in this case, was from items 3-10 on the SEESMQ self-designed by the researcher. The result was analysed using mean and standard deviation as presented in Table 1.

Table 2: Students' experience of social media usage

Statement	Mean	Std.
Addiction to online social networks is a problematic issue that affects my oral communication.	2.99	1.57
Online social networks distract me from reading books to shape how I speak.	2.26	1.32
Hours spent online can never be compared to the number of hours I spend reading and reading to stories.	3.26	1.32
There is no improvement in my speaking since I became engaged into these social networking sites.	3.03	1.58
I will not perform well in my English Language even if I stop using social media.	3.58	1.16
Males are more effective at using social networking sites for non-academic purposes like reading and writing.	4.22	.99
The usage of WhatsApp for research helps to improve my performance in reading a writing.	2.68	1.70
Engaging in academic forums on WhatsApp for instance will reduce my rate of reading and writing.	4.09	1.42
Mean of Means	2.89	1.38

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Scale: Untrue of what I believe (1), Somewhat untrue of what I believe (2), Neutral (3), Somewhat true of what I believe (4) and True of what I believe (5)

The result presented in Table 2 shows that as far as the use and experience of social media language skills are concerned, students of Jesus and Mary School Limited are not negatively affected in terms of their oral communication skills. This is so because they disagreed to most of the statements resulting in an average mean score of $M=2.89$, and a standard deviation of $SD=1.38$. The response of the students, therefore, suggests that although the literature has it that the use of social media language has both negative and positive effects on the oral communication skills of

students, they disagreed with the assertion hence the item means and that of the average mean are less than 3.00 why is the standard mean set for this study.

However, though the mean of means ($M=2.89$) is lesser than the standard mean ($M=3.00$), most of the individual items are higher indicating that the respondents agreed to the statements. Therefore, the experience of the students towards the use of social media language style is positive as it affects their oral communication. The individual items according to the result in Table 2 throws lighter on the experience of the students concerning their use of social media. For instance, the result shows that less than half ($M=2.99$, $SD=1.57$) of the students believe that their addiction to online social networks is problematic as it can affect their oral communication. They also disagreed that in terms of reading and learning, online social media sites do not distract their attention and their speaking skills ($M=2.26$, $SD=1.32$). The response also suggests that the respondents disagreed that the use of WhatsApp for instance does not improve their performance in reading ($M=2.68$, $SD=1.70$).

However, further analysis shows that the respondents agreed to some of the statements about the effect social media language has on their oral communication. For instance, on the item of the number of time spent on social media compared to reading their hardcopy material, it emerged that the respondents agreed that spending much time with their reading materials oughtwigh the time spent on online sites ($M=3.26$, $SD=1.32$). They were also of the view that their engagement and over-reliance of social media will affect their oral performance. This was ascertained in the mean score of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 1.58 of the respondents who agreed that they do not experience any form of improvement in their speaking skills since they have adopted the use of social media. Likewise, the result shows that more than

half ($M=3.58$, $SD=1.16$) of the respondents agreed that they will not perform as expected in their oral communication because of their over-reliance of social media if they do not stop. This accounted for a mean of 3.58 and a standard deviation score of 1.16.

Additionally, the result shows that the respondents agreed ($M=4.22$, $SD=.99$) to a high extent that male students are more result-oriented in terms of the use of social media for purposes other than reading and writing. This presupposes that there is a gender difference in the negative use of social media as against academic use as far as the nature of academics is concerned. The last item for the first section of the SEESMQ also revealed that the respondents agreed ($M=4.09$, $SD=1.42$) to the notion that when they engage themselves in academic activities on WhatsApp, it will negatively affect their reading and writing skills due to the kinds of language used.

The result agrees with available literature such as Oche and Aminu (2010) and Olubiyi (2012). The findings of Oche and Aminu for instance revealed that the major experience or interaction of students with social media is that they perform badly in school, especially in English grammar-related subjects might not be far-fetched. Oche and Aminu (2010) further revealed that while many parents are so quick to blame the poor quality of teachers or the overburden of students in the use of mobile phone for education purposes, they might have to think twice, if they have not heard about the Facebook frenzy. This means that they parents are aware of the extent to which students are using social media and how it affects their language proficiency.

Additionally, the study of Olubiyi (2012) on the involvement of students in the use of social media and it was found that these days students are so engrossed in social media that they are almost 24 hours online. The result of Olubiyi concluded that even

in classrooms and lecture theatres, some students are always busy with BB pinging, 2go, or Facebook chat, even while lectures are going on. Since most times, these chatting just buzzed in at unexpected times, the only way to quickly respond without delay is by using short abbreviations to save time and space. Hence, the use and reuse of social media platforms such as Facebook, tweeter, iTunes, etc have become a common phenomenon among students irrespective of the kinds of educational material waiting for them to read.

4.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the effects social media language style have on the writing skills of students in Jesus and Mary school limited?

Items 11 to 20 on the SEESMQ was used to gather relevant information on the effects social media language style has on the writing skills of the respondents and the result was analysed using mean and standard deviation based on the standard mean of 3.00. The result is thus presented in Table 3.

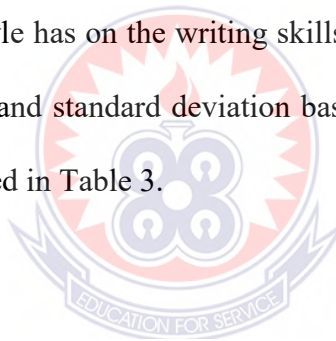


Table 3: Effects of social media usage

Statement	Mean	Std.
I use materials gotten from blogging sites to complement what I have been taught in class.	4.91	.59
WhatsApp leads to low performance in class exercises (reading and writing).	3.99	1.45
My reading skills is shaped by my use of social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and TikTok.	3.51	1.75
I use social media to sharpen my reading skills especially in the use of short hands in writing.	2.98	1.35
I refer to information given on social media like WhatsApp to do most of my reading and writing assignments.	2.48	1.73
The writing style in most social media platforms determines the literacy outcome of most students.	1.90	1.31
Social media improves my knowledge about new terminologies in English.	4.91	.35
Social media helps my vocabulary development.	2.76	2.00
Social media helps me speak the English Language very well.	3.25	1.60
Social media changes the way people communicate and share information	4.49	.81
Mean of Means	3.51	1.23

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Scale: Untrue of what I believe (1), Somewhat untrue of what I believe (2), Neutral (3), Somewhat true of what I believe (4), and True of what I believe (5)

From the analysis is emerged that the respondents agreed ($M=3.51$, $SD=1.23$) with the notion that social media language style affects their writing skills at school and at home. This was evident in the average mean score which is higher than the set mean and that of the individual items. Further analysis shows that the difference between the respondents who agreed and those who disagreed is large as the SD indicates that

there is a higher discrepancy between the data set. On the statement of the use of blogging sites as a further study site by the students, it emerged that the respondents agreed to the assertion ($M=4.91$, $SD=.59$). The result also shows that the respondents agreed that the use of WhatsApp positively influences the writing skills of students ($M=3.99$, $SD=1.45$). In as much as WhatsApp and TikTok has a positive influence on the writing skills of the students, it was also identified that Facebook also influences them positively ($M=.51$, $SD=1.75$).

Additionally, it was identified as presented in Table 3 that social media usage improves students' knowledge in the use of terminologies in English for the purpose of shaping their writing skills ($M=4.91$, $SD=.35$). the respondents were also in favour of the statement that social media usage helps them to speak good English because they learn a lot from it hence, their writing skills are sharpened ($M=3.25$, $SD=1.60$). More so, the respondents agreed to the statements in the sense that social media does not change the way students communicate and share information they have obtained. This accounted for a mean of $M=4.49$ and an SD score of 1.35. this simply means that helps them to communicate effectively through writing.

However, the result presented in Table 3 shows that the respondents disagreed to some of the items. For instance, they disagreed that the use of social media sharpens their writing skills particularly in the use of shorthands in writing ($M=2.98$, $SD=1.35$). more so, the result in Table 3 shows that less than 3.00 of the respondents agreed that they use social media to do most of their reading and writing assignments while in school and at home ($M=2.48$, $SD=1.73$). From this item mean ($M=2.48$), there is clear evidence that the respondents disagreed to the item. Also, only a few ($M=1.90$, $SD=1.31$) of the respondents agreed that the kinds of writing styles used in the social

media discourse determine the literacy performance of the students who have been involved. The last part of the questionnaire for the section second was on the vocabulary development of students who use social media and the result shows that it does not positively influence or affect how much the students understand and develop the use of vocabulary in their writing ($M=2.76$, $SD=2.00$).

From the analysis of the result for research question 2, there is clear evidence ($M=3.51$, $SD=1.23$) that social media language style affects the writing skills of students. Hence, the students use social media as a source of gathering educative materials/information, developing their writing skills and English terminologies, and to changing students' way of communication. The effects of social media usage on the oral communication skills of the students revealed that social media language has a negative effect on the reading and writing skills of students. This result agrees with the findings of Williams (2008) who indicated that more and more students are preoccupied with social media networks hence, it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to concentrate on their academic excellence even as one of the top academic areas that many school professionals are concerned about are English and advanced literacy among others.

Furthermore, the current result agrees with Yunus et al. (2012) in whose study it was discovered that there is no gain-saying the fact that social media has completely changed the way people interact globally. Again, Yunus, et al. revealed that social media usage among students has led to positive changes in the way people communicate and share information; however, it has a dark side, which seems to be so gloomy than its bright side. Social networking can sometimes result in negative outcomes and some with long-term consequences even as terrible as death. Of course,

we have heard stories of such incidence, the recent was a young girl who met some guys online and was lured into meeting physically for further relationships only for her to be raped to death and buried. Hence, social media changes the way people communicate and share information.

4.2.3 Research Question 3: What measures can be adopted to curb the negative influence social media has on the English proficiency of students in Jesus and marry schools limited?

The last section of the SEESMQ with items 23 to 30 was used to solicit the information needed concerning the measures that can be used to curb the effect (negative) of social media usage on the reading and writing skills of students. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyse the result as presented in Table 5.

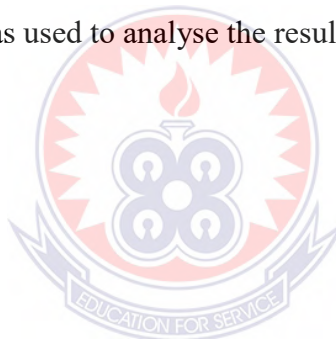


Table 4: Measures to reduce the negative effects of social media usage

Statement	Mean	Std.
School counsellors and teachers should sensitise students on the general influence social media has on communication skills.	4.70	.59
More educative web pages should be recommended to students by their parents instead of social media sites.	4.57	.72
Students who are adolescents should not be allowed to use social media platforms.	2.20	1.78
Teachers should encourage students to use social media sites like WhatsApp for only educational purposes.	3.51	1.52
Shorthand should not be allowed among adolescents/students who are now learning the English language.	4.91	.59
The use of social media as source of information should be discouraged among government agencies like the Ghana education service.	1.75	1.57
Parents should guide their children in the number of hours they spent on their phones especially in the use of informal language.	4.60	.61
JHS students should be banned from using mobile phones at school and home except under the watch of their parents (at home).	3.45	1.45
Mean of Means	3.71	1.10

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Scale: Untrue of what I believe (1), Somewhat untrue of what I believe (2), Neutral (3), Somewhat true of what I believe (4) and True of what I believe (5)

The analysis for research question 3 revealed that the respondents agreed ($M=3.71$, $SD=1.10$) with the statements with regards to the measures to curb the rising negative effects of social media language on the oral and written skills of students. It emerged that students should not be allowed to use short hands in their everyday life because they are now learning the English language ($M=4.91$, $SD=.59$). The respondents also agreed that the school counsellors should educate students on the influence social

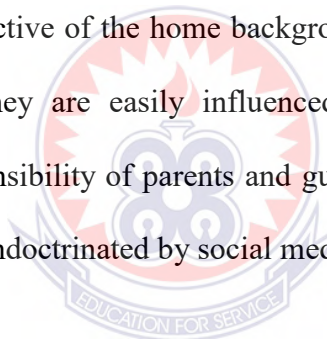
media has on their life, particularly on their communication skills. Particularly, they agreed that “School counsellors and teachers should sensitise students on the general influence social media has on communication skills” ($M=4.70$, $SD=.59$).

Again, the response suggests that parents should guide their children, especially the adolescents with regards to the number of hours they spend on their mobile phones and social media for that matter ($M=4.60$, $SD=.61$). On the case of difference in the use of web pages and social media for educative purposes, the respondents agreed that parents should recommend web [pages rather than social media to their children ($M=4.57$, $SD=.72$). They were also of the view that teachers should take it as their responsibility to encourage students to use social media sites like WhatsApp for only educational purposes. This response attracted a mean score of $M=3.51$ and a standard deviation of 1.52 which means that the respondents agreed with the statement. The result further revealed that JHS students should not be allowed to use mobile phones at school and home without an educative purpose and authorization by their parents ($M=3.45$, $SD=1.45$).

However, although the respondents agreed to most of the statements, they disagreed that social media platforms should not be used by adolescent students entirely ($M=2.20$, $SD=1.78$). This presupposes that JHS students should not be banned from the use of social media. The responses also revealed that they disagreed to the notion that “The use of social media as source of information should be discouraged among government agencies like the Ghana education service” ($M=1.75$, $SD=1.57$). But the responses presuppose that majority of the respondents agreed that in order to safely guide JHS students’ use of social media which has a negative effect on their writing and reading skills, parents and school counsellors should educate them on its general

effect on their education, guide them in the selection and use of social media sites for only educational purposes, and to guide them with regards to hours spent on the phone.

Therefore, the current result agrees with the study of Morrison and Shaffer (2003) who stated that counselling and parental guidance can best be applied to safe guide the overuse and abuse of social media on the academic performance of students. The result further agrees with the study of Crystal and David (2003) who revealed that counselling and teacher interventions as well as the support of parents is vital for minimising the rising effect of children and adolescents' dependence (addictiveness) to social media for social and immoral activities. Crystal and David in their study, also revealed that irrespective of the home background of the students of adolescents of school going age, they are easily influenced by the wave of social media. Therefore, it is the responsibility of parents and guidance to safeguard the life of the students who have been indoctrinated by social media.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the study emphasizing the methodologies adopted in collecting and analyzing data to come out with the major findings. Based on the major findings, conclusions were made to suggest applicable recommendations requisite to address the research questions and hypotheses formulated.

5.1 Major Findings

Based on the analysis and discussion, the following key findings emerged:

1. The study revealed that the experience of the students towards the use of social media language style is positive as it affects their oral communication.
2. The study also found out that the students use social media as a source of gathering educative materials/information, developing their writing skills and English terminologies and changing students' way of communication.
3. It was again identified that in order to safe guide JHS students' use of social media which has a negative effect on their writing and reading skills, parents and school counselors should educate them on its general effect on their education, guide them in the selection and use of social media sites for only educational purposes, and to guide them with regards to hours spent on the phone.

5.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions were made based on the results.

The study concludes that since social media usage among the respondents as effective and for both educational and social purpose, parents and guidance have a role to play in identifying appropriate social media sites for their wards. Furthermore, a neglect of parents to guide their wards towards social media usage has the higher propensity of affecting their academic, social and educational development. As such, there is the need for stakeholders to adopt best approaches that will positively influence the students towards academic excellence.

The researcher concluded based on the second objectives that though social media usage has been identified as helping students in their educational research and in their academic works, there is higher chances that their academic performance especially in oral communication skills will be developed. Hence, students who are guided in the use of social media will be positively influenced than those who are allowed to access any form of social media web.

The study finally concluded based on available literature and the finding on the measure to curb the negative rise of social media usage among students that ineffectiveness of school counsellors and parents who have a role to play in the education of the students will result to a dependency of students' social media language style. In so doing, the students will not be able to correctly communicate through both oral and written skills. On the other hands, the effective monitoring and coaching of the students on social media usage will increase their dependence and use of appropriate communication styles and/or language to improve their academic performance.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made with focus on the findings and conclusions:

1. On the basis of the first research objective which aimed to examine the experience of the students about social media language style on their oral communication recommends that parents and guidance as well as teachers should ensure that they educate and sensitize their students or wards on the use of social media as well as its negative/addictive effects.
2. With reference to the second objective which sought to identify the effects social media has on the reading and writing skills of the students, the researcher recommends that class teachers and the headteachers should strategies their school activities to include seminars and workshops to address the reading and writing deficiencies among students. It is believed that through workshops and seminars organized by the school, the students will understand and appreciate the rising effect of wrongful reading and writing skills on their academic performance.
3. Furthermore, the third objectives focused on the measures to curb the negative influence social media language style has on the academic of the students. Base on that, the study recommends that school counsellors and heads of schools should come up with more effective measures that will be appreciated by both students and parents in the fight against students over dependence on social media for other purposes other than academics.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

1. It is suggested that future researchers interested in examining the influence social media language style has on the reading, writing and the oral communication skills of students should focus their attention on its correlation with self-esteem and self-efficacy.
2. The study also suggests that more sophisticated statistical analysis tools should be adopted by future researchers for better investigation and understanding of the phenomenon.
3. It is also suggested that further research should be extended beyond Jesus and Mary school limited if the need be.



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APPENDIX

Students' Experience and Effects of Social Media Usage

Questionnaire (SEESMQ)

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

This questionnaire is meant to assess your opinion/views *on the 'experience and effects of social media usage on the English proficiency (oral and writing) of students*. This study is meant for academic purpose only. Your responses will be completely anonymous since no one who completes this survey will be identified. Please respond to the questions/statements by a tick [] in the spaces provided at the right-hand side of each statement that best apply to you.

CONSENT STATEMENT

I agree to participate in this study Yes () No ()

1. Indicate your sex: Male () Female ()
2. Indicate your class/form: JHS 1 () JHS 2 () JHS 3 ()

Students' experience about social media language style on their oral communication						
Use this scale: <i>Untrue of what I believe (1), Somewhat untrue of what I believe (2), Neutral (3), Somewhat true of what I believe (4) and True of what I believe (5)</i>						
s/n	Statement	Response				
		1	2	3	4	5
3	Addiction to online social networks is a problematic issue that affects my oral communication.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Online social networks distract me from reading books to shape how I speak.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Hours spent online can never be compared to the number of	1	2	3	4	5

	hours I spend reading and reading to stories.					
6	There is no improvement in my speaking since I became engaged into these social networking sites.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I will not perform well in my English Language even if I stop using social media.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Males are more effective at using social networking sites for non-academic purposes like reading and writing.	1	2	3	4	5
9	The usage of WhatsApp for research helps to improve my performance in reading a writing.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Engaging in academic forums on WhatsApp for instance will reduce my rate of reading and writing.	1	2	3	4	5
Effects of social media language style on students' reading and writing skills						
s/n	Statement					
11	I use materials gotten from blogging sites to complement what I have been taught in class.	1	2	3	4	5
	WhatsApp leads to low performance in class exercises (reading and writing).	1	2	3	4	5
13	My reading skills is shaped by my use of social media platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and TikTok.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I use social media to sharpen my reading skills especially in the use of short hands in writing.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I refer to information given on social media like WhatsApp to do most of my reading and writing assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
16	The writing style in most social media platforms determines the literacy outcome of most students.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Social media improves my knowledge about new terminologies in English.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Social media helps my vocabulary development.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Social media helps me speak the English Language very well.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Social media changes the way people communicate and share information	1	2	3	4	5

Measures to curb the negative influence social media has on students' English proficiency						
23	School counsellors and teachers should sensitise students on the general influence social media has on communication skills.	1	2	3	4	5
24	More educative web pages should be recommended to students by their parents instead of social media sites.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Students who are adolescents should not be allowed to use social media platforms.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Teachers should encourage students to use social media sites like WhatsApp for only educational purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Shorthand should not be allowed among adolescents/students who are now learning the English language.	1	2	3	4	5
28	The use of social media as source of information should be discouraged among government agencies like the Ghana education service.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Parents should guide their children in the number of hours they spent on their phones especially in the use of informal language.	1	2	3	4	5
30	JHS students should be banned from using mobile phones at school and home except under the watch of their parents (at home).	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your time