



## IMPACT OF THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

<sup>1</sup>Onyeka, N.C., <sup>1</sup>Ateko, B.C., <sup>1</sup>Ugwu, J.I., and <sup>2</sup>Amosa, B.M.G

<sup>1</sup>Department of Computer Science, Federal Polytechnic Ede, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Allbytes Consults Gbagada, Lagos, Nigeria

**Abstract:** The advancements in technology have seen students and young adults (youths) dominating the internet especially the social media. One wonders how they manage the use of social media and keeping up with their class activities. This study examined the use of social media by students and the impacts it has on their academic performance. Online questionnaires were administered through students Whatsapp groups for all the different classes in Computer Science Department, Federal Polytechnic Ede, Osun state. In all, 164 students responded to the questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The results showed that the students spend a lot of hours (3 hours and above daily) on the social media every day and are likely to lose track of time. The researchers recommended that tutors should engage their students the more using educational sections of the social media platforms they mostly use (Whatsapp in this instance).

**Keywords:** Social Media, Polytechnic, Academic Performance, Social media Platforms, Distraction

### 1 Introduction

With further advancement in Technology; recent years have witnessed an increase in the use of social media sites. Communication barriers have been reduced through technological advancement and new media are being introduced to connect global audiences (Hasnain et al, 2015). Social media start when people begin to communicate. Almost all college students in developed and many developing countries own a mobile phone. Today, most of these devices are "smart" meaning they are more than just telephones or texting devices (Al-Menayes, 2014).

Internet has become part of a child's life in today's generation, it offers countless applications, such as gamings, search engines and the phenomenal Social Media which anyone can easily access in the Internet for free (Tamayo and Cruz, 2014). Social media which are a form of electronic communication has become the highest activity on the internet (Apuke, 2016). In today's e-society, the role of the social media is increasingly gaining momentum (Mbodila, et al, 2014). These systems are referred to as social, simply because they allow communication with friends, course mates, teachers, project supervisors, lecturers etc. so easily and effectively (Apuke, 2016).

The use of social media has been in the lime light due to constant use by virtually everybody, especially youths who are mostly students and young adults. Lots of platforms exist today which aids communications and interactions. A lot of them are available both for android, iPhone and other operating systems. These social media platforms include Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegraph, Twitter, Zoom, Skype, Yahoo Messenger, Tiktok, Likee, Blogs, Snapchats, and many others

Social media has emerged to be one of the most vital communication means. It exists so as to ease communication among people regardless of the expanse, making it open to people to easily share information, files and pictures and videos, create blogs and send messages, and conduct real-time conversations ( Al-Rahmi and Othman, 2013).

Most of today's higher education students possess state of the art cell phone technology in their pockets and are the "Digital Native" generation since they can get used to these new technologies Web 2.0, mobile phone technologies and social networks in a short time (Mbodila, et al, 2014).

Attention has been shifted from visible to invisible friends, while important ventures like study and writing are affected in the process. This phenomenon has become a source of worry to many who believe in knowledge and skill acquisition (Asemah, et al, 2013).

It is noted that parents play a major role in their children Academic Performance, thus when their children's learning habit diverted into excessive use of Social Media which in turn have a great effect on the child's Academic Performance. Social Media in moderate usage does not directly affect the students' learning process but anything in excess is harmful (Tamayo and Cruz, 2014). This is why many parents are worried that their college students are spending too much time on Facebook and other social media sites and not enough time to study (Wang et al., 2011). In recent times, it is a common sight to see a youth chatting in sensitive and highly organized places like church, mosque and lecture venues. Some are so carried away that even as they are walking along the high way, they keep chatting. The manufacturing and distribution of equally sophisticated cellular phones has complicated the situation, as youths (students) no longer need to visit a cybercafé before they send and receive messages (Asemahet et.al., 2013). A survey from Cengage Learning (2014, as cited in Brooks, 2015) found that 59% of students are accessing social media in class.

Mansoor, et al, 2016 explained Social media as the interaction among individuals in which they create, share information and ideas in communities and also in networks. Social media rely on cell phone and internet-based technologies for developing most interconnected platforms which help people and groups to discuss, create, share out, and convert generated content. (Micheal 2012), refers social media as a wide range of internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created contents, or join online communities. He further classified social media into; Blogs, Wikis, social bookmarking, social networking sites, status update sites, virtual world content and media sharing sites. Social networking usage refers to online space which students use to connect, share, communicate, establish or maintain connection with others for academic, entertainment, socialization etc. Social networking as a communication medium is rising quickly, mostly in the prosperous increase of applications for mobile devices (Gupta and Bashir, 2018).

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and linkedIn have become a way of life in present times, one cannot imagine one's day-to-day life without the presence of these platforms. The first thing in the morning that pretty much everyone does is checking notifications on his/her subscribed social media platforms and keeps doing this at intervals throughout the day till one sleeps at night, (Financial Express (2018)). Social networking has become an international trend and has spread its reach to almost every corner of the world. These advancements brings a major concern in this age of huge technological development; social networking sites are becoming more and more popular among students (Hasnain et. al., 2015). (Mansoor, et. al., 2016) also noted that these technologies have made social communication easy and enable discussions among its participants. Social media has found huge application in many areas and higher education is one of the beneficiaries. Social network services such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace are the typical applications of Web 2.0 technology which have gained huge popularity and widespread use in higher education among multiple age groups in same or different educational institutions, places, and countries over the past few years (Mbodila, et al, 2014).

Over the years, social networking among students has become more and more popular. It is a way to make connections, not only on campus but with friends outside of school. Social networking is a way that helps people feel they belong to a community (Owusu-Acheaw and Larson, 2015). The students all want to create an impression to friends that they belong to a particular class or status by being online every second and minute of the day not minding what it costs their pockets or their studies. By being online always, how and when do they have the time to study or attend to assignments? This research examines the impact of the use of social media on students' academic performance of Computer Science students (both Higher National Diploma (HND) and National Diploma (ND)) of Federal Polytechnic, Ede, Osun state

### **Research Questions**

- a. Which of the social media platform is mostly used by students?
- b. Why do student visit their social media platforms?
- c. What amount of time do students spend on social media platforms daily?
- d. Does the use of social media have any impact on student's academic performance?

## 2 Review of Existing works

A number of researchers have explored the use of impact of the social media and students academics and found different ways the social media affects students' academic performance.

Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) revealed that the use of social media had affected academic performance of the respondents negatively and there was a strong positive relationship between the use of social media and academic performance. Their study further showed that 86.8% of respondents use the social media sites to chat rather than for academic purpose. (Wang et al. 2011), indicated that most college students would prefer to use social media and therefore spend vast hours checking social media sites.

The study of Apuke (2016), found out that most students (70%) in the institution prefer to chat than do any other thing on social media. It also revealed that students who spend more time on social media are likely to perform poorly in their academic activities than those who do not and this affects them negatively.

In Al-Menayes, (2014), the study showed that time spent using social media was a strong negative predictor of GPA and in other words, social media use impedes academic performance in a powerful way.

(Asemah et. al., 2013) presented that there is a relationship between time spent on social media and academic performance. the research by (Tamayo and Cruz, 2014) revealed that Using Social Media impedes student's learning and directly affects the students attendance in school; that Students with lower grades are Frequent users of Social Media while the occasional user tends to concentrate on school works and get satisfactory rating; that there is moderate relationship between Social Media and Academic Performance of the students. Talaue, et. al., (2018) revealed that social media becomes an integral part of the student's full life and took up most of his spare time. The studies of (Obi et al, 2012), and (Yeboah and Ewur 2014) revealed that social media affects students' use of English.

On the contrary, (Onyeka et al, 2013) showed that the use of social networking sites does not have any negative influence or effect on the studies of the students. (Al-Menayes, 2015) stated that the use of social media does not affect academic performance but it is the addiction and time spent on it.

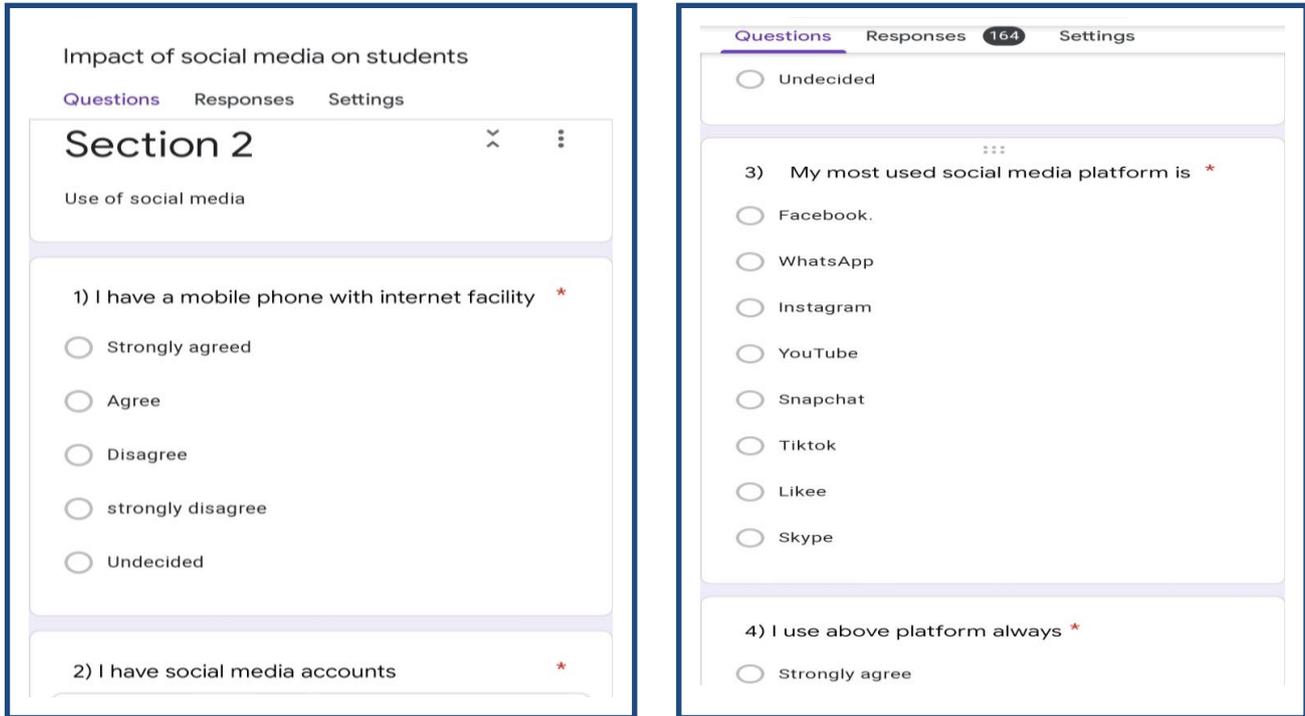
## 3 Methodology

An online questionnaire (Google form) was designed and distributed to the Whatsapp group platforms of both Higher National Diploma (HND) and National Diploma (ND) in Computer Science students at the Federal Polytechnic Ede. This study was conducted in the second semester of 2019-2020 academic year. The participants of this study were 164 students out of a total of 1059 students in Computer Science department. The survey questions consist of two sections having eighteen (18) close-ended questions. This was administered to students to determine the Impact of social media on students' Academic performance. Section two of the questions were made up of multiple choice questions as well as 5-point Likert scale to show their dimension of agreement or disagreement (strongly agreed (SA), Agreed(A), Disagreed (D), Undecided(U) and Strongly Disagreed(SD) ). It is worth to note that at the time of this survey, the use of Twitter was banned in Nigeria and as such it was not included as part of the social media platforms.

Fig 1 and 2: Screenshot of online questionnaire (Google form) used for data collection.

The figure consists of two screenshots of a Google Form. The left screenshot shows the title 'Survey on the Impact of social media on students' Academics' and introductory text: 'This is a medium to gather information about how the social media impacts students' academic life. This questionnaire is designed with your privacy in mind. (Your matric number and department are not needed, kindly give your honest response), thank you'. Below this is a progress indicator 'After section 1 Continue to next section 1' and a section header 'Section 2 of 3'. The right screenshot shows 'Section 1: Personal details' with two multiple-choice questions: '1) My class is' with options 'Higher National Diploma' and 'National Diploma', and '2) My age is between' with options '16 to 20 years', '21 to 25 years', '26 to 30 years', and '31 years and above'.

Fig. 3 and 4: Samples of online questions (Google form) used for data collection.



#### 4 Results and Discussion

From the questionnaire responses, the respondents were Higher National Diploma (51.2%) and National Diploma (48.5%) students who were within the age ranges of 16 to 20 years (11%), 21 to 25 years (62%), 26 to 30 years (23.8%) and 31 years and above (3.2%). This shows that the social media are majorly used by young adults of between 21 to 25 years (62%) which is in agreement with (Khan et al, 2019)

Most of the students agreed to having mobile phones with internet facility (97.6% of the respondents) with of 98.8% of them having social media accounts, this shows that even a few of them who do not own mobile phones use other facilities to get access to information/social media. This might be due to the fact that most of the information passed to students in Federal Polytechnic Ede is done through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) application as such students are encouraged to have mobile phones with internet facilities, this show that most students strive to be up-to-date with information.

The students were majorly males (68.9%) as against females (31.1%) showing that the male students are more involved in social media usage, this is in agreement with ( Rithika and Selvaraj, 2013) and (Alnjadat et al, 2019)

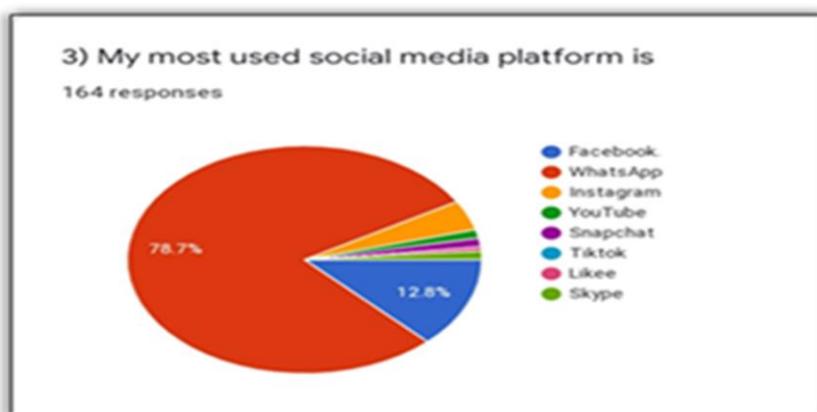
**Research question 1:** Which of the social media platform is mostly used by students of Federal Polytechnic, Ede?

**Table 1: Most used social media platform:**

S/N	Social media platform	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Facebook	21	12.8
2	Whatsapp	129	78.7
3	Instagram	7	4.3
4	YouTube	2	1.2
5	Snapchat	2	1.2
6	Tiktok	0	0
7	Likee	1	0.6
8	Skype	2	1.2
	Total	164	100

**Distribution of the most used social media platform**

The study shows from Table 1 that Whatsapp is the most used social media platform by students (78.8%) followed by Facebook with 21 number of respondents (12.8 %), instagram (4.3%), YouTube, Snapchat and Skype are having 1.2% each. Fig 5 below further displays the graphical distribution of the percentages



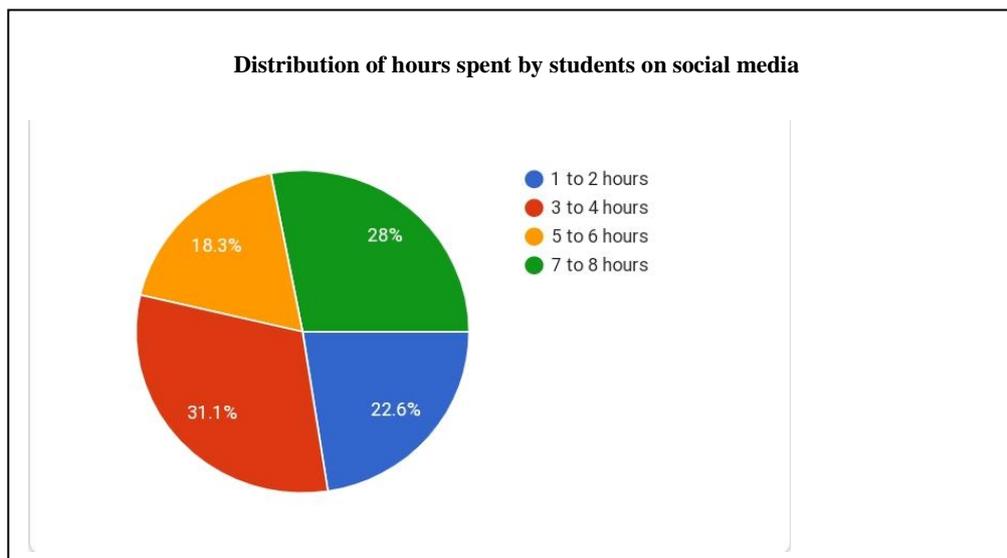
**Fig. 5: Representation of the most used social media platform**

**Research question 2:** How many hours do students spend on social media daily?

**Table 2: Period spent on the social media everyday**

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
1 to 2 hours	37	22.6
3 to 4 hours	51	31.1
5 to 6 hours	30	18.3
7 to 8 hours	46	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100</b>

The result from the Table 2 shows the time students spend on social media. Students agreed to using the social media platforms for 3 to 4 hours (31.1%), 7 to 8 hours (28%), 1 to 2 hours (22.6%) and 5 to 6 hours (18.3%) each day. This shows that most of the students (77.4%) use the social media for 3 hours and above each day thereby keeping them busy away from studies most times. This is concurring to the study by (Talaue et al., 2018); (Maqableh et al., 2015) which stated that students spend 3 hours and above on social media per day. (Apuke 2016) revealed that students who spend more time on social media are likely to perform poorly in their academic activities than those who do not. Fig 6 below further displays the graphical distribution of the percentages



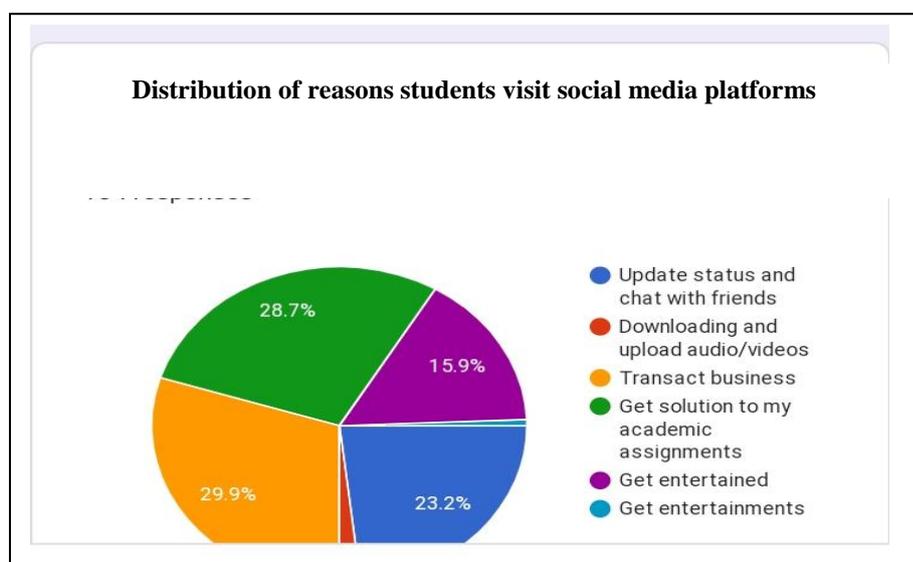
**Fig 6: Representation of hours spent by students on social media platform**

**Research question 3: Why do student visit their social media sites?**

**Table 3: Main aim for logging into the social media platform is to**

Responses	Number of respondents	Percentages (%)
Update status and chat with friends	38	23.2
Downloading and uploading audio/videos	3	1.8
Transact business	49	29.9
Get solutions to my academic assignments	47	28.6
Get entertained	26	15.9
Get entertainments	1	0.6
Total	164	100

Table 3 presents what student majorly do on the social media platform; 49 students representing 29.9% transact business, 47 students (28.6%) said they get solutions to their academic assignments, 38 students(23.2%) agreed to updating status and chat with friends. The transacting of business by students might be due to economy situation of the country, every student tend to fend for themselves by advertising products to their friends and the public in order to make a living. This also might distract them from their studies and affect their academic performance in school. Fig 7 below further displays the graphical distribution of the percentages



**Fig. 7: Representation of why students visit their social media platforms**

**Research question 4:** Does the use of social media have any impact on student’s academic performance? This research question was answered using a series of questions on the questionnaire as shown below.

**Table 4:** The impact of the use of social media on student’s academic performance.

Questionnaires	SA	A	U	DA	SA	Total
<b>I use social media platform always</b>	77 (47%)	78 (47.6)	0 (0%)	9 (5.4%)	0 (0%)	164 (100%)
<b>Social media has become a part of my daily routine</b>	70 (42.7%)	81 (49%)	0 (0%)	12 (7.3%)	1 (0.6%)	164 (100%)
<b>At times I use my social media platform in class while receiving lectures</b>	23 (14%)	69 (42.1%)	0 (0%)	46 (28%)	26 (15.9%)	164 (100%)
<b>I use my social media platforms to carry out my academic assignments</b>	80 (48.8%)	70 (42.7%)	8 (4.9%)	4 (2.4%)	2 (1.2%)	164 (100%)
<b>I use social networking sites for collaborative learning.</b>	73 (44.5%)	85 (51.8%)	0 (0%)	5 (3.1%)	1 (0.6%)	164 (100%)
<b>I use social networking sites to create my social identity</b>	43 (26.2%)	91 (55.5%)	0 (0%)	29 (17.7%)	1 (0.6%)	164 (100%)
<b>I lose track of time while using social media</b>	24 (14.6%)	56 (34.2%)	4 (2.4%)	73 (44.5%)	7 (4.3%)	164 (100%)
<b>I usually postpone my academic task for spending more time on the social media.</b>	14 (8.5%)	31 (18.9%)	0 (0%)	72 (43.9%)	47 (28.7%)	164 (100%)
<b>While using social media it is difficult for me to concentrate on my studies.</b>	21 (12.8%)	32 (19.5%)	2 (1.2%)	45 (27.4%)	64 (39%)	164 (100%)

From table 4, it can be deduced that students are always on the social media platforms as they agreed (155 students representing 94.6%) to using the platforms always. Majority of the students also agreed (92.1%) to social media being a part of their daily routine. This is true as many of the students cannot do without visiting the social media platform in a day because they are always attracted to it and this might deprive them time for their studies. More than half of the students (92 respondents representing 56.1%) agreed to using the social media platforms while receiving lectures in class while 72 respondents (43.9%) would not use the social media in class. This shows a lot of distractions as they will not concentrate on what lecturers say since they have divided attentions.

As to the use of social media platforms to carry out academic assignments, a large majority of the respondents (96.4%) agreed to using the social media for their academic works while only 6 respondents ( 3.6%) said they don’t use the social media for academic assignments. This shows that even with the distractions of social media, students still have in mind of being committed to their studies although their actions may say the opposite.

158 students (96.3% of respondents) agreed to using the social media for collaborative learning just as (Mbodila, et.al.,2014) observed that social media significantly increased impact on student’s collaboration and engagement.

Furthermore, 48.8% (80 respondents) of the students agreed to losing track of time while using the social media, 48.8% also disagreed to losing track of time, while 2.4% were not sure if they lose track of time or not when using the social media platforms.

As to postponing academic task for having more time on the social media, 72.6% of respondents disagreed to postponing their academic task just for having time on social media. This shows that the students also make efforts not to be distracted from their academic activities even as the social media pose as an agent of distractions to them.

From same Table 4, it can be deduced that 53 respondents (32.3%) agreed to finding it difficult to concentrate on their studies while using the social media, 109 (66.5%) of the respondents disagreed to difficulty in concentrating on their studies while 2 respondents (1.2%) were not sure if they concentrate or not.

## 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

The study showed that it is likely for students to lose track of time when using the social media platforms because there is bound to be distractions when students have divide attention by trying to attend to the social media platform and lectures at the same time. This for sure affects their academic performance on the short and long run.

Since some students stated that they attend to their academic assignments using social media platforms, tutors/ lecturers should make use of the social media platforms to better engage the students and make them reduce the time used for advertising wares, chatting, downloading videos but use the time allotted for the mentioned actions for better use like visiting educational pages for assignment, or watching educational videos etc.

Students should also make efforts to help themselves by making use of the educational parts of the platforms they like using, for example joining educational groups on Whatsapp, Facebook or other platforms which could help them grow academically.

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