

# **ETHICAL CHALLENGES OF USING X TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I, Nakato Christine Mugalu do solemnly testify that this dissertation is my original work and has never been presented to any institution for any academic, research, and/or professional award in any institution.

Signature ..... *Ncw* ..... Date: ..... *08 August 2024* .....

## APPROVAL

This dissertation entitled “Ethical Challenges of Using X To University Students” was written and submitted with the approval of the undersigned.

Supervisor

Sign.....



Date.....

8/08/2024

Mr. Semakula John

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my special family for the continuous support they rendered to me during time of study and more so the words of encouragement they provided when I felt I had lost courage and strength to continue with this research.

I also give thanks to the almighty Father, God for leading me through this journey to complete my degree.

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**Abstract**

The study examined the ethical challenges that university students face while using X. In this case, Uganda Christian University was used as the case study. The study specifically looked at students at university that use X. The study used a case study and interviews for finding. The research shows the ethical challenges university students face when using X, the impact of using X and other social media platforms and also some of the solutions to the challenges. The study enhances that university students should be careful with what they post on their social media platforms. In this case, this can help to protect their privacy and many other things.

And this will help in creating job opportunities for the students and improve their communication levels. In the same case, according to the study it is seen that violent and pornographic content is now allowed on X. And students are hence advised to block this content from appearing on their social media platforms and also they can go ahead and also report such content. This will hence reduce on the ethical challenges that students face while using X and other social media platforms.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

O'Reilly (2005) introduced the concept of Web 2.0, the second generation of web based online services, and the term has become widely recognise the way in the consumer relation and their content alter. In specifically, Web 2.0 gives a group individuals a new means of communication as well as a chance to obtain and exchange information among themselves (Solis and Breakenridge 2009, p. 37). As Web 2.0 evolved, users' interactions increased substantially across various social media services and included collaborative information, which has become common in communication. As a dominant social media service, X is known to enhance social interaction in education through interactions outside of the classroom that can have significant instructional value (Dunlap and Lowenthal,2009). It is anticipated that X will serve as a tool for students to find access and examine debates or topics such as discussion and critically analysing the points made in the debate on a specific subject (Chawinga 2017; Rinaldo et al. 2011; UNESCO 2019).

The aim of this study is to know the ethical challenges that are University students face while using X. And these may include lack of privacy, posting of violate and pornographic content, fake news and many others.

#### 1.2 Research Problem

The use of Twitter by university students raises significant ethical challenges that must be addressed to ensure responsible and ethical practices in both personal and academic contexts. Key ethical issues include:

1. Lack of consistency in students' approach to ethical concerns regarding social media use, with many recognizing the potential for misuse for example inappropriate messaging, watching pornographic content and excessive time spent on social media.
2. Ethical oversight and informed consent are critical when using publicly available X data for research purposes.

3. The self-selection bias of X users and the validity of measures derived from X data present methodological challenges that must be addressed to ensure the ethical and responsible use of this data source.

In summary, the integration of social media in higher education requires a comprehensive examination of the ethical implications for both students and researchers. Addressing these challenges is crucial to ensure the ethical and responsible use of X and other social media platforms in university settings.

### **1.3 Purpose**

The purpose of the research is to understand the ethical challenges university students face while using X.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

1. To understand the ethical challenges university students, face when using X and other social media platforms.
2. To assess the impact of X on university students.
3. To develop recommendation on how university students can use X in a way that is ethical and effective.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What ethical challenges do students face when using X?
2. What is the impact of X in learning to university students?
3. How can students use X ethically?

### **1.6.0 The scope of the study**

The study comprises of geographical scope, content scope and time scope as

#### **1.6.1 Geographical Scope**

The study involves students at Uganda Christian University especially those who use X. Uganda Christian University (UCU) is a private, Christian university whose main campus is located in Mukono, Uganda. Founded in 1997, it is one of the top-ranked

universities in Uganda, and is accredited by the Uganda National Council for Higher Education. This case, most students have been found guilty of using X and other social media platforms unethically. This through watching pornographic content, spread of wrong information and many other ways.

### **1.6.2 Contextual Scope**

The study should focus on the ethical challenges faced by university students in their personal and academic use of Twitter. This case, this most students have been found guilty to use X unethically. This case, they are seen posting fake news, pornographic content and many other things in order to get more likes and be popular.

### **1.6.3 Time Scope**

The research is going to be carried out in the period of June and July 2024.

## **1.7 Justification of the study**

X represents one of the fastest growing social networking sites in terms of audience, gaining more than 190 million global users who post 65 million tweets each day (Wauters, 2010). To add on that, around May, 2024 Elon Musk the owner of X officially updates X to allow circulation of pornographic and violate content on X. And in this case, students are using it to get more likes, reposts, followers and become famous.

## **1.8 Significance of the study**

The significance of the study is to understand the ethical challenges university students face while using X and also other social media platforms. And in this case, I will be able to fine out the challenges, which may include lack of content, spread of wrong information and many others.

Also, the significance is to show how university students use university students use X ethically in order to spread information and also get the followers that they want. in this case, this can be through giving of authentic information, non violate content and many others.

### **1.9.0 Theoretical framework**

By saying this, the study adopts to the social responsibility theory. The theory posits that entities, whether individuals or organizations, have an obligation to act in ways that benefit society. This theory is widely applied in the context of media and corporate behaviour, emphasizing ethical standards and accountability to the public (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1956).

According to the theory, organizations have a responsibility to act in a socially responsible manner and consider the impact of their actions on society. This extends to how university students use social media platforms like X.

#### **1.9.1 The assumptions for the theory are s seen below;**

The theory assumes a free and independent press that is not subject to undue government control of censorship. (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1956). This allows for the open flow of information and crucial element for holding institution accountability.

The theory also assumes that n informed public that actively engages with news and information. This requires citizen to be critical consumers of media and seek perspectives. (Deuze. M. 2019)

The theory posits that media organisations have a responsibility to be accountable to the public they serve. This means adhering to ethical codes, providing accurate information and correcting errors. (McQuail. 2018)

There is an implied social contract between the media and the public. Media enjoys certain privileges like free speech in exchange for acting responsibly and serving the public good. (Schultz,1991)

This theory often assumes individuals are rational actors who can make informed decisions based on the information they receive. However, this my not always be the case due to factors like cognitive biases and manipulative techniques. (Sunstein, Cass R, 2001)

The social responsibility theory provides a useful framework for understanding the ethical challenges of using X by university students. In this case, according to the theory, organisations have a responsibility and consider the impact of there actions

on society. This extends to how university students use different social media platforms like X.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITREATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter is going to review related literatures on the study topic case, for a concise and structured literature review, this chapter will be divided into the ethical challenges of using X, impact of X to university students and ways in which students use X ethically.

##### 2.1.1 Ethical challenges of using X.

Social media use among students is a growing phenomenon in contemporary society. Social media platforms offer them easy way to access and develop networks of friends, family and relevant professionals. Online communities of interest can be found to suit the interests of almost anyone. Such news, found on social media platforms, online discussion forums and blogs (to name a few) is typically rich, numerous and naturally occurring (Nat Cen, 2014).

Undergraduates use social media in so many ways which are- to communicate with friends, to get and share information, to stay-up-to-date with news and current events, to share opinions and details of everyday life etc. However, it has been observed through interactions, observations and previous studies that some students abuse the use of social media by engaging in various cybercrimes such as plagiarism, cyber bullying, defamation, piracy, hacking, identity theft, transaction frauds, illegal gambling, cyber war, illegal uploading, downloading, copying, stealing and misuse of intellectual property. etc.(Adenekan,2022)

The spread of misinformation and fake news is another major ethical consideration for social media users. False information can have serious consequences, from undermining democratic processes to endangering public health. Social media users should be aware of the importance of fact-checking and should strive to share accurate and reliable information. Finally, there is the issue of addiction to social media. Research has shown that excessive use of social media can negatively impact mental health, including depression, anxiety, and addiction. Social media users must

be aware of their usage habits and strive to use these platforms balanced and healthy. (Dhiman,2023)

### **2.1.2 Impact of X to university students.**

The impact of X to university students is both positive and negative as seen below

Social media has changed how people, including university students—and mainly female students—communicate, interact, and socialize over the course of their learning processes at educational institutions (Terzi, B.; Bulut, S.; Kaya, N,2019). This new form of media is playing a vital role in content sharing among universities students and the rest of society (Hossain, M.A.; Jahan, N.; Fang, Y.; Hoque, S, 2019). Students now have the opportunity to participate in social discussion by sharing images and pictures, posting their comments, disseminating ideas, and so on. (Kim, T.T.; Karatepe, O.; Lee, G.; Demiral, H, 2018). Hence students use social media platforms like X for communication and this also helps them to be updated about the current affairs that are happening around.

It has created opportunities for more affordable and highly viable internet promotions of goods and services, it offers new ways to deal and coordinate interactions between potential social media users, and it has spurred the creation of business opportunities and system correspondence (Hämeen-Anttila, K.; Pietilä, K.; Pylkkänen,2018). Consistently, a large number of social media users distribute their articles, photographs, videos, and recordings with the help of social media platforms, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, YouTube, Flickr, and WordPress, and they share such information with others (Salmerón, L.; García, A.; Vidal-Abarca, E, 2018). And in this case, this is seen when students post some of their works on x and it is acknowledged by professions. this work includes articles, photograph and many other things. And this helps in opening a job market for the university students.

Negatively, as students spend more time on social media, they spend less time socializing face to face or in person with other people, and these habits reduce their communication skills (le Roux, D.B.; Parry, D.A, 2017). The wasting of students' time on social media may also cause them to miss deadlines on occasion (Tella, A, 2014). As a result, students might not be able to communicate and socialize effectively in person, and it is well known that strong communication skills are a key to success

(le Roux, D.B.; Parry, D.A, 2017). Moreover, excessive social media use affects students' mental and physical health (Kelly, Y.; Zilanawala, A,2018).

### **2.1.3 Ways in which university students that use X can be ethical.**

O'Reilly (2005) introduced the concept of Web 2.0, the second generation of web-based online services, and the term has become widely known. Web 2.0 is known as the relational changes between users and what they post. Specifically, Web 2.0 gives group of a new means of communication as well as a chance to gather and share information together (Solis and Breakenridge 2009, p. 37). The evolution of Web 2.0 led to a significant increase in user interactions across several media platforms, including collaborative information—a term often used in communication. X, a well-known social networking platform, has been shown to improve social interaction in the classroom through exchanges that can yield substantial educational benefits. (Dunlap and Lowenthal 2009). It is anticipated that X will serve as a tool for students to find, assess, and examine debates or topics, such as discussing and critically analysing the points made in a debate on a specific subject. (Chawinga 2017; Rinaldo et al. 2011; UNESCO 2019).

The concept of the groundswell is similar to that of Web 2.0, and the technology is recognised as just enabler. The creation of a strong groundswell is achieved by bringing new members into the community and establishing direct connections between people in novel ways. These individuals are nearly always connected and carry technology with them. (Li and Bernoff 2011, p. 11). X is recognised as a powerful tool for the groundswell (Li and Bernoff 2011, p. X). Tweet communication allows information to be shared across time and distance, but it does not have the same richness as in-person communication. In their 2010 study, Kostakos and Venkatanathan described how a combination of trans-spatial and spatial communication modes served as a platform for social interaction on an individual basis. Therefore, this study attempts to expand the scholarly reach of students on X in addition to classroom learning.

Forrester Research Inc. released a report entitled 'Social Computing' (Charron et al. 2006), which identified a trend of people using online tools to connect in various ways. This trend involved exchanging information through member-driven news

sites, social networks, user-generated content sites, online tool services and Wikipedia (Li and Bernoff 2011, p. 9). The report also showed that a fundamental change in users' ways was happening online and defined it as *groundswell*:

People who are virtually always connected and carry technology with them, as well as those who bring in new members of the community, are what give the groundswell its power. (Li and Bernoff 2011, p. 11). X is recognised as a powerful tool for the groundswell (Li and Bernoff 2011, p. x). Communication by tweets lacks the richness of physical interaction but allows for communication across space and time. Kostakos and Venkatanathan (2010) reported the method of the mixture of spatial and trans-spatial communication modalities that ultimately acted as an individuals' platform for social engagement. Therefore, this study attempts to expand the scholarly reach of students on X in addition to classroom learning.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter shows the research method that is going to be used to collect the answers for the research problem and also gathering answers to the research questions. It includes the research design, methods, sampling, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

#### 3.1 Research design

A research design is a blueprint for conducting a research project. It outlines the methods and procedures that will be used to collect and analyse data in order to answer research questions. (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. 2014)

This study used the case study to explore and describe the ethical challenges of using X to university students of Uganda Christian University. And in this case, am going to use the Qualitative research method.

According to Pritha Bhandari, the qualitative research method involves collecting and analysing non numerical data like texts, videos or audios to understand concepts, opinions or experiences. It can be used to gather in depth insights into a problem and generate new ideas for research. In this case, in qualitative research method, research is carried out by use of theories.

Also, this method is used to by researches to explore sensitive topics understand the meanings and motivations of people, and generate new ideas and insights. Some of the common strategies that can be used in qualitative methods are; questionnaires, interviews and observation.

#### 3.2 Sampling: Purposive sampling

According to Kassiani Nikolopoulou 2022, she says that it refers to a group of non probability sampling techniques in which units are selected because they have characteristics that you need in your sampling. And in this case, purposive sampling is also known as a judgemental or selective sampling. And in this case, i went ahead and choose to carry out interviews with a few students from Uganda Christian University for sampling.

The reason why I choose students at Uganda Christian University is because they have knowledge on how to use X and also, they face the ethical challenges that I mentioned while using the platform. To add on that, the other reason I chose Uganda Christian University is because it is located Mukono and also, I study from there.

### **3.3 Methods (In-depth interviews)**

An interview guide will be used to solicit information some of the students from the university who use X. According to Amin (2005) interviews obtain information by means of spoken words and this is essential in obtaining more data and more clarity on the study problem. This was superior because it enabled the interviewer probe the selected students until the relevant data was got. It was very helpful since information was got first hand from representative or 'naturalistic' samples who were the desirable group to give the required information.

### **3.4 Data analysis method**

An in-depth interview guide with structured questions that will be used in data analysis method. And the questions to be asked are as follows;

1. Can you describe a situation where you encountered an ethical dilemma while using X? How did you navigate it and what did you learn from the experiences?
2. In your own opinion, how has X specifically impacted university students' social interactions and mental wellbeing?
3. When using social media platforms in general what are some ethical issues students might not be aware of?
4. Can you share some strategies you've found helpful for using social media responsibly and avoiding potential pitfalls?
5. Considering both X and social media in general, what are the biggest challenges in using them effectively for academic or social purposes while maintaining ethical behaviour?
6. If you could design features for X to promote ethical and responsible use among students, what would they be?

### **3.5 Ethical considerations**

Academic ethical values and confidentiality of respondents were considered during execution of this study. Majority of the respondents participated voluntarily on declaration that academic ethical values of anonymity and confidentiality of respondents were to be observed by the researcher. In addition, respondents were assured that data collection was for only academic purposes and evidence will be destroyed after the analysis of responses. As a result, majority of targeted respondents participated in the study.

### **3.6 Limitation of the study.**

The limitation of the study is as seen below

The study is often based on a single or a few cases, which may not be representative of the larger population. This can limit the generalizability of the findings.

The study is also often subjective and can be influenced by the researcher's biases and interpretations. This can affect the validity and reliability of the findings.

Lack of enough time to carry out the study. Since we were given a little time to compile down everything.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTAION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the ethical challenges of using X to university students. And in this case, the study explored the three research questions which came from the objectives as seen below;

1. What ethical challenges do students face when using X and other social media platforms?
2. What is the impact of X to university students?
3. How can students use X ethically and effectively?

With the research questions in mind, necessary data was collected from in depth interviews of university students who use Therefore, this chapter highlights the results and discussion of the study findings.

#### 4.2. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.

##### 4.2.0 Response rate

The study target population was 5 students. Out of the 5 contacted, 3 replied and the response rate of 60% was dimmed appropriate enough for the research to continue.

##### 4.2.1 Ethical challenges university students, face when using X and other social media platforms.

Most respondents said that they have never encounters an ethical dilemma while using X. This was respondent 1 and 2 who said that,

*“I don't think I really encountered an ethical dilemma myself, like, it would be hard to say that, oh, but I see other people, you know, there are inappropriate stuff, like inappropriate images there and that, so, it's just a matter of scrolling away. So, yeah, I don't think I really experienced, like, on a personal level, an ethical dilemma, because anything I say, you just scroll out.”*

But respondent 3 said she had ever encountered an ethical dilemma and this is how she said,

*“I don't know if this qualifies as an ethical dilemma, but there was a time when, because Twitter does not censor nudity and, like, pornography and all those things, so when something is trending, like, you just see it, and there's a time pretty, was it pretty Nicole's nudes that leaked? And they were, like, everywhere, yet she's underage, she's, like, a young child and everything, and of course, like, as a journalism student, you're not even supposed to be supporting these things, but, like, it's unavoidable because you open the app, you block one user, or you, like, you mute the account to make sure you're not, you keep, like, seeing it and seeing it and seeing it and seeing it, which I think is unethical, like, towards her because she's underage. Even though I'm not sexually harassing her directly, I don't think her content should be, like, viewed because Twitter doesn't have censorship measures where it protects, like, underage people.”*

And she said this is how she navigated the situation and what she learnt from it.

*“What I did, I first, I muted most of the accounts that were, you know, saying it. For some, didn't have the pictures, but they were just, like, oh, have you seen Pretty Nicole, what, what, what, what, and of course, the comment section had, some people were ridiculing us, the users, of you guys should not even be seeing such content. Other people were blaming Pretty Nicole and, like, the mother and everything, but what I learned from the entire situation was to be careful about, like, generally my phone data because there were rumours that apparently, she was hacked and whatnot. It could be true that it's private information, but then it made me realize that it could happen to anyone. So, to be very careful and also be careful of, like, the accounts I engage with and everything. And it also just taught me how brutal people on Twitter can be because there were very few people who were actually defending her. Everyone was blaming her. They were saying she's spoiled, she's this, the what. Yeah, so I just muted most of the accounts, but I learned that people are, they are mean.”*

The second question was about, how X has specifically impacted university students' social interactions and mental wellbeing. And each of my respondents had a different view.

Respondent 1 said, “.. from what I see, is maybe, like, all social media makes us more focused on the phones and in-person connections, so I think people can get more interested in associating with online people instead of their normal friends. And also, in other sense of mental, comparing yourself to other people, because, you know, people on Twitter can be having a nice lifestyle and what, and I think people compare themselves, you know, so they feel, like, lower self-esteem when they see others.”

Respondent 2 said “ Social interaction, it has been able to... There are so many people who have been able to have discussions on X even when they have not met physically. So, I think that's a way it aids their social interactions. And people are able to have interactions with different individuals despite their different geographical locations. Mental wellbeing, it does have both negative and positive impacts. Positively, it aids to their cognitive needs. Sometimes, if you need information, especially updates on what's happening with regards to news, one is able to check X. Negatively, there is comparison because very many people tend to post their achievements on X. And so, if there's a student out there who feels like they haven't achieved as much as person A, B or C, they are going to be compelled to compare themselves to other people and to be very anxious of what the future holds and things like that.”

And respondent 3 said “ I think X has been able to bring out, like, another side of people, which is both negative and positive. It's positive in the sense that some people naturally, in person, they are introverts, but they are more of, like, writers and readers. So, you could see someone in class who doesn't, like, talk a lot, but then they are very active on Twitter. Because, yeah, exactly. Like, they are more open online and they may not even talk to you in person, but Bambi, when you post something, they, like, engage with you. So even if you don't talk to this person, you feel like, okay, like, they may not be social like that in person, but at least, you know, they are backing up, like, your content and what. I've mainly seen it from Gisha becoming, like, her running for Miss Uganda. 80% of these people, I'm sure, don't even talk to her. But, like, you see people trying to, like, you know? And it has formed Bambi, like, a community in some way. Like, everyone just wants her to, like, win. Because it's mainly, like, social media, and especially, like, Twitter, where

*they are, like, pushing it and whatnot. So, it has helped our well-being in that way. The negative aspect, maybe, I would say, is how some of us students, how some people use, like, Twitter. I will not mention her name for privacy purposes, but there is a girl in the communications class who uses it for, like, sugar daddies and things like that. So, it's negative in that sense. And it would also impact our mental health badly from, like, comparison of people who are maybe living, like, lavish lives. You see someone who's your age, but they are making, like, twice the amount of money, or they've gone to this conference. They have classmates who don't even be in the country. We are in class. They are in Dubai. They are in Dubai. They are in some climate change”*

#### **4.2.2 Impact of X on university students.**

X has impacted university students both negatively and positively. In this case, the respondents gave in their different views. In line with the ethical issues students are not aware of and some strategies that they have found helpful when using social media helpful and avoiding the potential pitfalls.

Respondent 1 said *“I guess inappropriate stuff, like, especially on X, where it's not filtered, like, you can just see, like, nude images out of nowhere, like, danger, not even, like, in nude stuff, but, like, someone has been killed or something, and an accident, like, has happened, they don't, like, censor anything, they just put the whole thing, then you see the blood, the broken bodies or what, so there's that ethical thing of not being able to tell what to record and what not to record, you know? You get trapped in doing... Just doing in-person instruction. You get trapped in that cycle of just wanting to go viral, or just wanting to be unique with what you post, then you start posting other people's business, so I think that lack of privacy, like, lack of respecting other people's privacy, yeah, if you're not careful, most students, most people, they can feel sad.”*

Respondent 2 said, *” So, it's hard to find that someone does not know. For example, that you're not supposed to post personal information online, you're not supposed to dress indecently. Okay, some people dress indecently, but you're not supposed to dress indecently online. People know these things. So, when you ask things that people don't know...”*

And respondent 3 said, " I think they are not; I think a major issue they are not aware of is how much of their personal data is being used by these platforms, generally. Because you just put in your details, like, name. There's a reason why, we were actually learning it in class in media management yesterday. There's a reason why, these days, social media platforms, they want your age, your date of birth, your name. What are you saying? Exactly, like, location. Previously, they didn't need all that information like they do now. And they are using that to specify the content we receive, all that. But then they are also selling this information to other applications so that they can make apps and just make content that are tuned to us. And it's a negative thing because it's a potential safety hazard for us. And in addition to our data being sold, students need to be very careful that there are some evil people on social media. Like, people who just want to track you, they want to steal from you, they want to hurt your loved ones. But many times, we think social media is just free and we are just talking. Bread of roses. Yeah, you don't know who's watching and it's generally very risky. And even the things we post can affect your career and you think you're just saying something just for just, you go to apply for a job, they show you a tweet that was from over which year because they use this information against you."

The second question under this objective was about the strategies that they have found helpful for using social media responsibly and avoiding potential pitfalls. And they responded like this;

Respondent 1 said, " I guess you can, like, regulate the amount of time you spend on social media apps, and then you can, then also we should, like, remember that they are people, because people, like, but since you can be anonymous, people like just speaking, like, hatred and what, so I think it would be easier, like, no, not easier, like, to be better to remember that even though you're anonymous, there are still people at the end of the screen, sort of, like, bullying each other, cyberbullying and all that."

Respondent 2 said, " So, I avoid having conversations with such accounts and getting into public... What they call ex-woes or two-woes by them. Those things of arguments and whatnot. Because it has... Digital footprint. Yes, digital footprint. Also, with digital footprint, I am extremely careful with what I post. So, I think

*twice or even thrice about what I upload. Because people are able to look back so many years and try to trace what you have been posting. And they won't even care about where you were at that particular time in life. People don't care about those things. So, I'm extremely careful with what I post. I do not upload very personal information. Like where I stay, things like that. Because it has effects when it comes to security. Then also, sometimes, if possible, limit the time that I spend on social media. Because if you spend a lot of time on social media, it has negative effects. Be careful with interactions. Try to be at peace with people. Avoid taking political stance. Those things of, hey, I'm an NRM person, guy, you're posting it there. I'm an FDC person or NUP. ‘*

*And respondent 3 said, ‘I think a major one that I've found, because it's not very hard to tell which accounts are problematic. You know, there's accounts that always have either negativity or they have unnecessary things. So, a strategy that I have used a lot is muting the accounts. And like, also there's that function on apps like Twitter where you can press not interested in this post. And then after it shows you, okay, we'll try to show you less posts like this. And that means even users that are similar to that. So that way you're personalizing your own experience where you're seeing the content that's good for you because many times you just ignore what you're seeing, but then it floods your timeline with unnecessary things. Also, there are some people who are just provocative. You post your own things, even if it's not hurting them, they want to comment, they want to add. So, I appreciate the fact that these social medias, they have the blocking option. You can just block someone. They will never have to, they will never see your content. You can also not see the content yourself and everything. And then also like generally having a goal for social media, like knowing where I'm on a specific app. Cause now like me, Instagram is more of like my personal expression and like, just like creativity and everything. But Twitter is more of my professional app and whatnot. So, if someone says, if someone is trying to have a conversation that's different from that on Twitter, or they're trying to like attack me on a personal basis, I just remember that, okay, they are coming from an entertainment point of view. Me, I know I am here. So, it prevents me from replying or even like just commenting about that because I know it could hurt me potentially. So, knowing like why I'm using a specific, not just being aimless, because these days we don't have the liberty to just*

*use social media apps the way we used to use them. These days they actually, people have jobs to be social media managers and they can use this data like against you.”*

#### **4.2.3 Recommendation on how university students can use X in a way that is ethical and effective.**

Different recommendations were given by the respondents on how university students can use X ethically and effectively. In this case, they gave the recommendations in different ways that is to say challenges in using them effectively for academic or social purposes while maintaining ethical behaviour and the different features they could design for X to promote ethical and responsible use.

Respondent 1 said, ” *But I don't think, like, social media is made for academic purposes in the first place, it's just made for social purposes. How it can be difficult, maybe because the social aspect is connecting with other people is difficult, because everyone on the internet is, like, pretending to some degree, like, everyone is, like, beautifying their lives, I guess that can be, we need to be more genuine, maybe, which can be helpful. Helpful. But for academic purposes, me, I don't know how you use it for academic purposes.”*

Respondent 2 said, ” *One challenge I've faced with X is the fact that it has a limit with the characters that you're allowed to post in one post. So, I think it's 280. So, if you go beyond 280 characters, it's going to jump to... It's going to add onto another post. So, the fact that you have to squeeze in information in those 280 characters, there's a lot of miscommunications that can most likely happen when you are trying to compress all the information. And if you're not elaborately explaining yourself, someone may misinterpret what you have posted. And then people rarely check the second post. Yeah. So, they'll just check the first one. No one is going to check the second one. So, that's one major issue I've faced with X. Those things of people who have fake accounts....”*

And respondent 3 said, ” *I think the major challenge that we are facing as students is identifying which information is true and which one is fake. Because we have scenarios where even those so-called trusted media entities, these days everyone is in just, everyone is in a rush to just produce content faster. They don't question like the, they don't question the accuracy. They don't question. So, they just want*

*to post, post, post, post, post, post that they're up to date and whatnot. But sometimes it's like half true information. Sometimes it's not even true at all. Recently, New Vision and, I think it was New Vision, yeah, that was facing such. When they posted it, I'm told. Exactly. And she was just like, you're not even getting all the facts straight and everything. So, I think that's a major issue we have, like both on a personal, like just for entertainment and for education. Because you see celebrity things, you think they are true, yet they are not true. Or a social media app like tells you, oh, according to this and this, you run with it for your news. Because I know most of us, especially in the journalism class, Twitter is our newspaper. That's where you get from. That's where we get information, like we barely open like an actual newspaper or what. Instagram, that's when you're seeing celebrities' lives. So, if they ever lie about something, it's so easy for you to believe without even double checking."*

Lastly, the respondents were asked the different features that they could add on X to promote ethical responsibility and they spoke.

*Respondent 1 said, " A feature? I don't know. The features that exist is, like, reporting, like, inappropriate stuff, and, like, bullying, I don't think I would add on anything. Maybe they need to improve on their reporting, not reporting, but when, like, report something inappropriate, they need to find a way of it being more efficient, like, when they report some alleged blame, actually, face consequence"*

*Respondent 2 said, " Free number of characters for uploading. What's that? Like, you know, the current number of characters is 280. And it's premium. Yeah, and it's premium. So, I would make it open for everyone. So that you... Someone is not misunderstood with what they are posting because they are trying to compress everything into 80 characters"*

*And lastly respondent 3 said," I think the major ethical feature, I think I would, I don't even know how they would do it, but the feature I would suggest is one that kind of blocks nude content, should I say, like pornographic content in general. Violent and pornographic content. Yeah, because they try to do it, but it's not as strong, should I say. And I think they may go with the excuse of age limits are one, but I generally think if someone is like underage, Twitter should automatically be able to identify because even if they can't tell that the picture from a picture of*

*someone is underage, obviously someone in like the comments section or something like that, they will talk about it. So, I feel like even if it may not, through the moment something pops up like that, there should be a feature that like limits it or even just blocks it for all users. Because I actually still don't understand why there's so much pornographic material on Twitter.”*

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION REMARKS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter is going to focus on the discussion from my interview. And in this case, by using the information from the literature review and from the findings, am going to compare the information that is to give the conclusion.

#### 5.1 Discussions

##### 5.1.1 Ethical challenges university students, face when using X and other social media platforms.

The first objective was to understand the ethical challenges university students face when using X and other social media platforms. Findings from the interviews indicate that students rarely face ethical challenges when using X.

However, the study findings agree that students face ethical challenges while using X. However, it has been observed through interactions, observations and previous studies that some students abuse the use of social media by engaging in various cybercrimes such as plagiarism, cyber bullying, defamation, piracy, hacking, identity theft, transaction frauds, illegal gambling, cyber war, illegal uploading, downloading, copying, stealing and misuse of intellectual property. etc. (Adenekan,2022)

And also, there is a problem of addiction of using X and other social media platforms among students. However, it has been observed through interactions, observations and previous studies that some students abuse the use of social media by engaging in various cybercrimes such as plagiarism, cyber bullying, defamation, piracy, hacking, identity theft, transaction frauds, illegal gambling, cyber war, illegal uploading, downloading, copying, stealing and misuse of intellectual property. etc. (Adenekan,2022)

### 5.1.2 Impact of X on university students.

The second objective was to assess the impact of X on university students. Findings from the interviews indicate that respondents gave only the negative impact of X to university students.

In this case, they said there is lack of privacy on social media platforms, people are also addicted to using of X. In this case, they do not have personal time with their relatives or friends. However, they agreed with the literature review on the negative impact.

Negatively, as students spend more time on social media, they spend less time socializing face to face or in person with other people, and these habits reduce their communication skills (le Roux, D.B.; Parry, D.A, 2017). The wasting of students' time on social media may also cause them to miss deadlines on occasion (Tella, A, 2014). As a result, students might not be able to communicate and socialize effectively in person, and it is well known that strong communication skills are a key to success (le Roux, D.B.; Parry, D.A, 2017). Moreover, excessive social media use affects students' mental and physical health (Kelly, Y.; Zilanawala, A,2018).

But didn't not agree with the positive impact. That stated, it has created opportunities for more affordable and highly viable internet promotions of goods and services, it offers new ways to deal and coordinate interactions between potential social media users, and it has spurred the creation of business opportunities and system correspondence (Hämeen-Anttila, K.; Pietilä, K.; Pylkkänen,2018).

However, respondents 3 agreed with the author and said that X has opened doors and opportunities for her classmates. She said, *" You see someone who's your age, but they are making, like, twice the amount of money, or they've gone to this conference. They have classmates who don't even be in the country. We are in class. They are in Dubai. They are in Dubai. They are in some climate change"*

### 5.2 Conclusion

From the study findings and the subsequent discussions, it is hereby that university students face ethical challenges while using X and other social media platforms. In this case, they are advised to reduce their long-time exposure to social media and

also report any unethical behaviors they find on X or they can go ahead and block accounts that post unethical posts. In this case, they will be in position to reduce or end the ethical challenges that they face while using X.

They would also be advised to use other platforms like TikTok, Instagram and many others. Since some of these other apps lack inappropriate behaviors. That is to say, it is difficult to find a violent or pornographic image on TikTok. This is because when you report such behaviors, these accounts are either banned or even their content is removed from what you watch.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In line with the overall finding of the study, this study suggests that in order to reduce on the ethical challenges that university students face while using X, the following should be done;

Students are advised to be careful with what they post on different social media platforms especially X. In this case, as students we should put in account that this information that we post is going to be used against us in the future. That is to say while getting jobs or when you become famous. This information that you posted on X may be of a disadvantage or an advantage to you. Students should hence be careful with what they post on the different social media platforms.

Then also report or block any inappropriate behavior or posts that you find offensive when using X. Since it is so free and easy to post violate and inappropriate information on X, students are advised to block any of content that seems to be inappropriate to them. In this case, X has the block and report button so students are advised to put them in use so that they can prevent the ethical challenges while using X.

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