

THE IMPACT OF X (FORMERLY TWITTER) ON THE SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Hannah Blessed Padde

S21B04/033

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, MEDIA, AND
COMMUNICATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE OF BACHELOR OF JOURNALISM
AND COMMUNICATION OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

July, 2024



**UGANDA CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY**

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

ABSTRACT

This research study explores the relationship between the use of X (formerly Twitter) and the social well-being of university students. This study made use of a qualitative research study and in-depth open-ended interviews with six university students who frequently use X and revealed that students used X to seek and consume information, social interaction and self-expression. The data collected was analyzed using a thematic analysis to identify patterns in how students use X, reasons they use X and the positive and negative impacts X has had on their social well-being. This study's findings are relevant in understanding the crucial dynamics for developing the necessary strategies to overcome the negative impact of social media platforms and make the best use of them by maximizing the benefits.

APPROVAL

This dissertation titled The impact of X (formerly Twitter) on the social well-being of university students was written under my supervision and is ready for submission as part of the requirements for the award of a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Communication.

Signature: .....

Date: 3rd / 07 / 2024.....

Mr. Semakula John

(Supervisor)

DECLARATION

I, Hannah Blessed Padde, S21B04/033 hereby declare that this is my original work, it is not plagiarized and has not been submitted to any other institution for any award.

NAME: Hannah Blessed Padde. SIGNATURE.....*HB*..... DATE.....*31st July 2024*.....

TABLE OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT	i
ABBREVIATIONS	vi
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background to the Study.....	1
1.2 Research Problem.....	2
1.3 Purpose of Study	3
1.4 Specific Objectives	3
1.5 Research Questions	3
1.6 The Scope of the Study	3
1.7 Justification of the Study.....	4
1.8 Significance of the Study	4
1.9 Theoretical Framework/ Conceptual Framework/ Hypothesis	5
CHAPTER TWO.....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
2.0 Introduction	8
2.1 Overview of social media and History of social media	8
2.3 Rise of X (formerly Twitter) use among universities and students	11
2.4 How University Students Use X	12
2.5 Social Media and Social Well-being of University Students	13
CHAPTER THREE	15
METHODOLOGY.....	15
3.0 Introduction	15
3.1 The Research Approach	15
3.2 The Sampling Technique	16
3.3 Data Collection Method	16

3.4 The Scope	17
3.5 Data Analysis	17
3.6 Ethical Considerations.....	18
3.7 Limitations of the Study	18
CHAPTER FOUR.....	19
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	19
4.1 When university students use X.....	19
4.2 Why university students use X	21
4.3 The impact of X on the students’ social interactions.....	23
4.3.1 Positive Impacts of X on university students’ social interactions	23
4.4 Negative Impacts of X on university students’ social interactions	25
CHAPTER FIVE	28
CONCLUSIONS.....	28
5.1 The social well-being of university students is positively influenced by X to a certain degree.	28
5.2 The social well-being of university students is more negatively affected by Twitter than positively affected.	28
CHAPTER SIX.....	30
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	30
REFERENCES	31

ABBREVIATIONS

SNSs

Social Networking Services

UCU

Uganda Christian University

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The increased growth in the rate of use of social media platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram among students in higher institutions like universities is properly documented (Sponcil and Gitmo, 2013). Two studies that majorly focused on social media and engagement have successfully found a relationship between time spent on social media platforms and student engagement (Astin, 1984). In an era where technology is developing at a fast rate, the majority of the population especially the youth adapt to using social media sites. This is highly facilitated by easy access to the internet since electronic devices like laptops and mobile phones are very accessible. 80% of X (formerly Twitter) users access the social media platform using their mobile devices (Chow, 2013). YouTube, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Linked In, Pinterest, and Instagram are the most used social media platforms (Febriyantoro & Arisandi 2019; Musando Gambo, 2020). According to Katrmpouza et. al (2019), X (formerly Twitter) is a micro-blogging application that accepts sharing of information in a limited number of characters. Users of X (formerly Twitter) can upload information on the app also known as tweeting with not more than 140 characters (Fischer & Reuber, 2010; Junco, Elavsky & Heiberger, 2012; Thomases, 2010). X (formerly Twitter) has become a very popular social media platform among undergraduate and graduate students (David et al. 2018; Bista 2015; Sewell, 2013). Instructors or teachers can create learning spaces and communicate efficiently with many students at once since X (formerly Twitter) provides one-to-many or many-to-many communication channels (McArthur and Bostedo-Conway 2012, p291). Hennessy et.al (2016) conducted a study using X (formerly Twitter) at the University of Southampton on the role social media and anatomy education play in enhancing student learning and experience in anatomy. According to this study, 91% of the students used X (formerly Twitter) to aid their communication with their teachers and themselves, boosting morale among students and playing a role in reducing anxiety among the students since they were able to express their grievances hence receiving sympathy from their fellow students. The use of social media platforms such as X (formerly

Twitter) has various impacts on their learning patterns, social relationships and interactions, and even their sleep patterns (Singh, 2020). These positive impacts include improved interaction between students and teachers and increased engagement with educational material (Tur and Martin, 2014). Furthermore, other researchers have discovered that the use of social networking sites (SNS) plays a positive role in the academic performance of university students. (Malik et al. 2019; Junco et al. 2011, 2013; Lin et al. 2013; Mao 2014). On the negative side, some researchers believe that too much time and attention given to social media affects student's academic performance negatively. (Alnjadat et al. 2019; Flanigan and Babchuk 2015; Kirschner and Karpinski 2010). The aim of this research is to investigate the relationship between the use of X by students at Uganda Christian University and their social- well-being.

1.2 Research Problem

X, the micro-blogging social media platform that was launched in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams has since attracted more than 600 million accounts and about 300 million active users with an excess of about 500 million tweets per day (Holt,2013). According to the *use of Twitter across educational settings: a review of the literature*, Malik writes that there is a need for research to be carried out on the role X plays in forming friendships and connections and how effective these friendships are since there has been so much negative information on the use of social media platforms and how it has caused a drift in team work and cooperation among students. Further research on how social media can be used for positive impact can alter the negative press on the use of social media, foster unity and close barriers created by these platforms (Malik, 2019). In Twitter's capacity to support collaborative learning, Carpenter writes that research needs to be carried out in cases where strong bonds and friendships have blossomed into deep, lengthy collaborations. According to Carpenter, this research needs to be done so as to find out how best one can take advantage of the connections made on social media platforms (Carpenter et. al, 2016). Additionally, IA Alshaye, notes in that there needs to be in-depth research on how far X promotes the free expression of student's thoughts and ideas (Alshaye, 2023). Research needs to be done to find out why students use X for various reasons. According to Rohr, in *Exploring students' Twitter*

use in the online classroom across 4 years, we know that students use X but we do not understand why they use it therefore further research could aid in finding out the various reasons students use X.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between the use of X by students at Uganda Christian University and their social- well-being.

1.4 Specific Objectives

- 1.To establish when UCU students use X
2. To establish why UCU students use X
3. To investigate ways in which X influences UCU students' social interactions

1.5 Research Questions

RQ1: When do UCU students use X?

RQ2: Why do UCU students use X?

RQ3: How does X influence UCU students' social interactions?

1.6 The Scope of the Study

1.6.1 Geographical Scope

This study will be conducted at Uganda Christian University. The University is located in Uganda, Central Region, Mukono District, East of Kampala on the Kampala- Jinja Highway. Uganda Christian University is a Christian, private university with its main campus located in Mukono, Uganda. It was founded in 1977 and accredited by the Uganda National Council for Higher Education. UCU offers various undergraduate and graduate programs in many disciplines including theology, communications, law, dentistry, education, visual arts, business and many others. The specific target students for this study are third year students at the university pursuing a Bachelors of Arts in Journalism and Communication who are active X users.

1.6.2 Content Scope

This research seeks to investigate how the use of X affects various aspects of the social well-being of university students. These include analyzing the frequency of interactions on X and the impact on

their social well-being, investigating the effect of the use of X on the mental health of students with regard to the effect of stress levels, self-esteem and levels of anxiety. Furthermore, investigations will be made on the contribution of X to the academic performance of the students, and establishing if engagement on the social media platform has implications on students' grades. An assessment will be carried out to find out how X influences relationships and interactions between peers and between students and their lecturers. The relationship between online activity on X and social well-being will also be explored. These will include factors like cyberbullying and digital presence.

1.6.3 Time Scope

This research will be carried out in July because it is the month of the semester when students at the School of Journalism, Media, and Communication are on the semester.

1.7 Justification of the Study

This study is carried out to address the rising concerns of social media platforms like X on the mental health, self-esteem, and relationships of university students. Understanding the implications of social media platforms like X can aid the curbing of major challenges arising from the use of the platform. Miller (2015) writes in *“College students and risk-taking behaviour on Twitter versus Facebook”* that there should be more research done on how students use X in the rest of the world other than the United States of America since his study was limited to USA, research ought to be carried out in other countries (Miller, 2015). Therefore, studies in the area of the purpose of X use among students in Uganda is still limited.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are significant on several fronts.

1. It will guide students on the platform on how to engage positively on X without affecting their fellow students' well-being and maintaining healthy connections within the university.
2. Furthermore, this study adds to the growing research on the relationship between the use of X and university student's social well-being.
3. This study will be able to use the results of this study to develop policies or practices that address the social well-being needs of university students who use X.

1.9 Theoretical Framework/ Conceptual Framework/ Hypothesis

According to Katz et al (1974), “Uses and Gratifications theory aims to understand why people use particular types of media, how they use these media and what satisfaction they derive from using particular media”, but more specific was Lattimore et al., (2007) that people use media as entertainment; scan the environment; a diversion; a substitute for personal relationships; and a check on personal identity and values. Additionally, Katz (1959) writes that the big question is not “what does the media do to people” but rather “what do people do with the media?” This theory relies on the belief that consumers of media are not just a passive group of people, but they play a major part in choosing different media that suits their needs at that particular time. (Infante, Rancer & Womack, 1997; Lowery & De Fleur, 1983). This theory first advanced in the 1940’s by Lazarsfeld and Stanton (1944) but came into prominence in the late 1950’s and 1960’s when researchers discovered that the traditional effects theories like agenda setting theory did not properly reveal the relationship between audience experiences and mass media (Blumler, 1979; Swanson, 1979). Additionally, Becker (1979) points out that an individual who seeks gratification from one medium is most likely going to seek the same gratification from another medium so therefore gratifications are not media specific. In line with this study, Becker’s discovery explains why students use X. Some students use it to fulfill their cognitive needs, for entertainment, social validation or social connection and therefore impacts students’ social well-being positively or negatively.

According to Bernett et, al, the uses and gratifications theory is relevant to the use of social media because it is rooted in communications literature. In this study, Bernett et, al, takes note of four uses and gratifications frameworks that were selected because they explained the theory with respect to the use of internet by people. The chosen frameworks were: Palmgreen and Rayburn’s (1979), Korgaonkar and Wolin’s (1999), Papacharissi and Rubin’s (2000) and Ko et al. (2005) which revealed seven common themes; social interaction, information seeking, pass time, entertainment, relaxation, communicatory utility, and convenience utility.

There is a link between the users and gratification theory and social media however it is important to note that the use of social media among university students has both negative and positive effects.

With the rise of social media and social networking sites, uses and gratification research exploring reasons behind companionship and community has increased (Sheldon 2008). Sheldon (2008) writes that the motives for and gratification from using the social network site Facebook found that the largest proportion of students use it to cultivate friendships and maintain relationships with friends. Additionally, Kasirye (2022) notes that there is a need to interact with friends and family of late only with the integration of technology and social media networks unlike twenty years ago when social media was not a topic of discussion or an alternative for creating bonds between friends and family. Kasirye (2022) further notes that there is a need for people to feel connected to the other locations other than the locations they are in, need to feel affiliated to other individuals and to chat with friends and relatives irrespective of the distance between them. This has been possible through platforms like X where people can give their opinions on events transpiring in different countries or continents from where they are located like wars in different countries. People also feel affiliated to other individuals even when they have not met them when they engage with content through liking and commenting on posts.

Social media platforms are used by young adults to express themselves through uploading personal content on platforms to thousands of social media users. Other research studies (Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009) describe the concept as self-status seeking.

Several studies have already linked mental well-being with internet usage (Lin, et al., 2016). A 2017 study revealed that young adults used social media as a means of escapism especially when they were in bad moods. This was done through going through celebrity pages, searching for happy quotes or finding funny content so as to avoid having one on one conversations about how they are feeling (Radovic, Gmelin, Stein, & Miller, 2017). Therefore, unfortunately, with the initial intention to use social media to improve mood, this would according to Radovic, Gmelin, Stein, and Miller (2017) give rise to unintended consequences like social comparison among adolescents. This might indicate that adolescents and young adults may use social media as an outlet to express feelings in ways that might be uncomfortable or unsuitable in face-to-face interactions. Students on X express their frustrations with their day-to-day life on the social media platform and in most cases are afraid to

lay out these grievances in person. For that reason, self-expression seem to be an important component and gratification when analyzing social media use and mental well-being as it includes emotional as well as social aspects. The aim of this research is to investigate the relationship between the use of X by students at Uganda Christian University and their social- well-being.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section of the Literature Review, we take a look at the rise of social media, the rise of four of the most widely used social media platforms, their influence on the social well-being of university students, the reason students use X according to previous studies carried out, when they use X and the implications of these four social media platforms on the lives of university students. These are Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and X.

2.1 Overview of social media and History of social media

The definition of social media, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, involves electronic communication such as social networking websites and blogs, which allow users to form online communities for sharing information, ideas, personal messages, and various content like videos. Social media has been defined as a web-based service that is open to the public and allows users to generate personal profiles and connect with other users, create connections, read, react, and reply to messages sent to them either privately or publicly (Boyd & Ellison 2008). This is why everyone can create a social media account on any of the platforms available and they are free to upload content as long as it does not violate the community guidelines or choose to only consume the information from different platform users. The origins of social media have been the subject of various theories. "Technological advancements have continuously enhanced our ability to interact and connect with one another throughout history." (Carton, 2009). Many friendships and relationships have been able to thrive today even with the long distance because of the use of social media platforms that facilitate text, audio and video communication. During the late 1800s, Emile Durkheim, a renowned French sociologist considered the founding figure of sociology, and Ferdinand Tonnies, a German sociologist, are acknowledged as trailblazers in the study of social networks. Tonnies posited that social groups could form due to the sharing of values and beliefs or as a result of shared conflict, delving into the social contract conceptions of society. This applies today because groups of people with similar interests, goals or ambitions form communities or what we refer to as groups on social

media platforms because every individual in the group has a common goal. Durkheim integrated empirical research with sociological theory, establishing his own unique approach. (Rimskii, 2011, Wren, 2004). Social networks have grown over time to the versions of today that utilize digital media. With a remarkable 2.6 million social media users in January 2024 equating to 5.3 percent of the total population according to the Global Digital Report 2024. Despite its modern iteration, social media is not a recent development. Furthermore, its origins can be traced back to the telephone rather than the computer. In the 1950s, the practice of phone phreaking, which refers to the unauthorized exploration of the telephone network, emerged. This activity involved the use of homemade electronic devices to gain unauthorized entry into the telephone system for making free calls. Phreaks were capable of locating telephone company test lines and conference circuits to fulfill their objectives. According to Brett Borders, phreaks managed to infiltrate unused corporate voicemail boxes to pioneer the initial blogs and podcasts. (Borders, 2010). Email was first made available to the public in the 1960s, according to Borders (2010). However, it wasn't until 1991 that the public gained access to the internet. Initially, email functioned as a way to transmit messages between two internet-connected computers. Currently, email servers receive and store messages, allowing recipients to access their emails at their convenience. Social media experienced a significant surge in the year 2000 with the emergence of numerous social networking sites. This transformation greatly impacted the way individuals and organizations interacted, sharing common interests in music, education, movies, and friendship through social networking. Some of the platforms launched during this time included LunarStorm, six degrees, cyworld, ryze, and Wikipedia. The year 2001 saw the launch of fotolog, sky blog, and Friendster, followed by the introduction of MySpace, LinkedIn, lastFM, tribe.net, and Hi5 in 2003. Popular platforms like Facebook Harvard, Dogster, and Mixi evolved in 2004, and big names like Yahoo!360, YouTube, cyword, and Black planet emerged in 2005 (Junco, Heibergert, & Loken, 2011). Additionally, according to Goble (2012), SixDegrees.com was the first modern social networking website and it functioned by permitting users to engage with various contacts through profiles, messaging, and friend lists. Even though sixdegrees.com shut down in 2001, it was used by millions of users and is remarkably remembered for being the pioneer social

media platform and started a trend of social networking (Goble, 2012). Much later on social media experienced a surge and "online communities" were established with the emergence of social networking platforms like Facebook, Myspace, and Friendster in the early 2000s (Kim et al., 2011; Malesky & Peters, 2012)

According to Lenhart (2015), Facebook, X, Instagram, and Snapchat are the four leading social media platforms. Facebook is a social media platform that was created in 2004 and gained fast-rising popularity with over 21 million registered users by 2007 and 1.6 billion page views per day (Needham & Company, 2007). Reid (2011) investigated the use of social media platforms such as X and Facebook as instrumental tools in the social and academic development of students. Reid's findings show that Facebook can provide networking amongst students to facilitate learning and doing coursework assignments. This is possible because of the convenient interactions that happen on social media platforms. Additionally, platforms like X are a great source of information especially on topics like current affairs considered that they are from a trusted source. A study by Cheung, Chiu, and Lee (2011) showed that students were majorly motivated to join Facebook by the urge to have a social presence, the ability to connect instantly, and the ability to communicate quickly and easily.

Instagram is a photo-sharing mobile application that allows users to take and upload pictures with filters too. These pictures are shared on the app as well as other social media platforms (Stec, 2015). The high rate of misuse of this photo-sharing app leads to negative effects on one's psychological and social status (Kircaburun & Griffiths, 2018)

Snapchat is another popular social media platform that lets users share a photo or text to one person or multiple people for a limited amount of time. It was launched in 2011 by Evan Spiegel (Kotfila, 2014) Research conducted by Bell (2014) revealed that 77% of college students use Snapchat. A number of reports indicate that young adults use Snapchat to send sexually suggestive content such as videos, pictures, or texts (Weinstein, 2013; Whitehouse, 2013)

X, which is one of the microblogging social media platforms was started in 2006 and has now grown to be one of the most popular and widely used platforms together with Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram globally. (Alhabash & Ma, 2007). There is minimal research that explores how effective

Twitter is as a tool for learning in the classroom or the impact it has on the social well-being of students. The number of registered X users has increased widely ever since its establishment in 2006. X makes use of messages that are posted and they have been referred to as “tweets”. These posts can be seen by the different followers of the individual who has posted the message or by people who are following the use of a particular hashtag (Anderson, 2011). According to Dinesh & Odabas (2023) in October 2022, Elon Musk purchased Twitter and rebranded the platform from Twitter to X. Social media platforms were not originally intended for supporting educational and other learning-related activities, but their ability to facilitate networking and sharing content has made them well-suited for such purposes (Tess, 2013)

2.3 Rise of X (formerly Twitter) use among universities and students

Education institutions such as high schools, elementary schools, and colleges have slowly adapted to the use of social media platforms (Jordan, 2017; Wang, 2016). Furthermore, research has shown that using platforms like X in the learning process is appealing to students and often preferred by students too. (Diug, Kendal, Ilic, et al., 2016; Hull & Dodd, 2017; Welch & Bonnan-White, 2012). Additionally, X has been experimented with as a classroom tool in universities (Lin, Hoffman, & Borengasser, 2013; McArthur & Bostedo-Conway, 2012; Springer, 2014) where it has been examined as a tool to aid the learning process outside of the formally set classroom environment (Ebner et al., 2010; Kassens-Noor, 2012). On the positive side, according to Ebner et al., (2010), X was found to be very instrumental in aiding the learning processes outside the formal classroom setting since it facilitates open conversations through freedom of speech and a high level of what she referred to as ‘small talk’ among students. Furthermore, Ebner’s research showed that the informal learning process only happens when students can engage with each other on topics of discussion without any constraints since there is room to be part of someone’s learning process by ‘reading, commenting, discussing or simply enhancing it’ which therefore shows participation in the learning process. However, on the negative side, research made by Kassens-Noor (2012) where students tweeted about tasks given to them daily over a specified period to learn the content in a particular course revealed that X did

indeed aid the learning process outside the formal classroom setting but it played a downside since it restricted critical thinking.

2.4 How University Students Use X

Studies have generally discovered that X is a valuable educational resource, particularly within formal learning settings. Learning via digital platforms, particularly on X , is acknowledged as a popular and effective method for students (Diug, Kendal, Ilic, et al., 2016; Hull & Dodd, 2017; Welch & Bonnan-White, 2012). X has become increasingly utilized as a tool for scholarly communication in both formal and informal learning environments. Individuals from various academic fields, including students, scholars, and professionals, use the platform to interact with peers and the public, sharing information in line with their disciplines of interest in order to advance their academic interests and objectives (Holmberg & Thelwall, 2014; Veletsianos & Kimmons, 2016). X provides an opportunity for students to improve their learning process through networking (Anthony & Jewell, 2017; Bledsoe, Harmeyer, & Wu, 2014; Hennessy, Kirkpatrick, Smith, & Border, 2016; Marín & Tur, 2014) by giving an environment where students can engage with both their fellow students and lecturers, enable creativity through their thoughts shared on the platform, and also enjoy the learning process (Al Harbi, 2016; Becker & Bishop, 2016; Bledsoe et al., 2014; Kassens, 2014; West, Moore, & Barry, 2015). Junco, R., Heiberger, G., & Loken, E. (2011) carried out a study based on previous research on engagement and engagement in social media research by Chickering & Ehrmann(1996); Pascarella & Terenzini (2005); Kuh (2009) and HERI(2007); Heiberger & Harper(2008) respectively and found out that students used X for continuation of class discussions, asking questions in a state that made students comfortable considering the limitations in conveying messages through online communication like absence of face to face interaction (Kruger et al. 2005). Furthermore, students used X was for class discussions, class reminders, campus event reminders, academic enrichment through support from tutors, building strong connections between peers and their instructors, and creating and managing study groups.

Adolescents and young adults have been found to have negative mental health outcomes associated with their use of social media in several recent studies. Other studies have also pointed out the

downsides of integrating X into the educational setting. These studies have brought attention to the improper use, excessive exposure, damage to reputation, overwhelming amount of information, dependency, and other concerns related to content and personal privacy (Cho & Rangel, 2017; Kinnison, Whiting, Magnier, & Mossop, 2017; Rinaldo, Tapp, & Laverie, 2011). In a research study involving adolescents and their parents across the United States, Barry, Sidoti, Briggs, Reiter, and Lindsey (2017) discovered that there is a moderate and positive association between social media use and feelings of fear of missing out and loneliness reported by adolescents. Additionally, they found that social media use is also correlated with elevated levels of hyperactivity/impulsivity, anxiety, and depression reported by parents. Similarly, in a nationwide survey of young adults in the United States, Primack et al. (2017) uncovered that individuals who use 7 to 11 social media platforms have significantly higher odds of experiencing increased levels of depression and anxiety symptoms compared to those who use 0 to 2 social media platforms. Ra et al. (2018) conducted a recent longitudinal study on U.S. adolescents and discovered a modest but statistically significant link between increased digital media use and later symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

2.5 Social Media and Social Well-being of University Students

Social well-being is defined as a general term that refers to one's experience and ability in a particular society with regard to feeling a sense of peace and harmony, having an impact on their society, feeling accepted and welcome and many other social aspects (S. Chen et al., 2021; Keyes, 1998). Keyes (1998) notes that social well-being entails five domains which are social integration, that assesses one's relationship with society and community. Social acceptance which involves interpreting society based on the characteristics and qualities of others as a general category. Social contribution which pertains to the belief that one is a valuable member of society and has something meaningful to offer the world. Social actualization that evaluates society's potential and direction. Lastly, social coherence involves perceiving the quality, organization, and function of the social world, including a concern for understanding the world (Keyes, 1998). Larson (1993) states that social

well-being evaluates the quality of interactions with family, peers, and social circles, encompassing an individual's internal reactions to stimuli and their emotions, thoughts, and actions indicating contentment or discontent with their life and social surroundings. According to World Health Organization, social well-being is an essential component of overall health, in addition to physical and mental well-being. It contributes significantly to enhancing quality of life, social competence, and social functioning (Breslow, 1972). Research has been carried out in the past to show the relationship between use of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and X and the health of the users and their well-being with just a few contrasts (Liu et al., 2019; Wright et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2021). Social media generally has effects on the social well-being of its users, some are positive and others are negative. However, it should be noted that the negative effects outweigh the positive effects as widely discussed by Nienstedt, C. et al. (2023). He notes that moderate use of social media is what yields positive effects and excessive use of social media yields negative effects (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2017). Moderate use of social media encourages adolescents to be active in extracurricular activities (Blomfield & Barber, 2014; Romer et al., 2013). In a study conducted by Johnson (2011), students considered the credibility of social tweets from instructors compared to the ones received with a scholarly tone.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section outlines the study's research approach, sampling, and data analysis.

3.1 The Research Approach

A qualitative research approach will be used to establish when students use X, for what purpose and how X influences student's social interactions. According to some scholars, qualitative method of research is majorly about interpretation (Blumer 1969; Strauss and Corbin 1988; Denzin and Collin 2003) or understanding (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias 1996). It is a "multi- method," that incorporates the gathering and utilization of different empirical data (Denzin and Lincoln 1998; Silverman 2013) and approaches (Silverman 2005; Flick 2007). The emphasis is not solely on the objective aspect of behavior but also on its subjective interpretations, encompassing individuals' personal explanations of their attitudes, drives, and actions (McIntyre 2005:127; Creswell 2009), events and situations or the words and actions of individuals in particular locations and organizations (Goodwin and Horowitz 2002:35-36) in the contexts of society and time (Morrill and Fine 1997). Therefore, following Weber ([1921-22] 1978), qualitative research is best described as "an interpretative science" (McIntyre 2005:127). Qualitative research is used in studies that aim to understand individuals' perceptions of their environment. Pyo et al. (2022) stress in "*Qualitative Research in Healthcare: Necessity and Characteristics*" that there are five major applications of the qualitative research method and these include; when an exploratory approach is needed for a topic that is not well understood, when quantitative research cannot fully explain something, when there is a need to introduce a fresh perspective on a research subject that is challenging to articulate using current perspectives, where there are instances where it's not suitable to offer the reasoning or theoretical basis for creating hypotheses through quantitative research and when involved in conducting research that requires detailed descriptive writing with figurative language.

3.2 The Sampling Technique

This study will make use of the purposive sampling technique. Creswell and Plano (2011) write in *“Designing and conducting mixed method research”* that purposive sampling deals with identifying and choosing individuals or groups with exceptional knowledge or experience about a specific phenomenon. Instead of involving the entire population, a specific group of relevant participants is chosen to represent the entire population, forming what is referred to as a sample. Furthermore, alongside expertise and experience (Bernard 2002; Spradley 1979) it's important to note that participants have to be available and open to participate, as well as being able to communicate experiences and opinions in a thoughtful and expressive way. Purposive sampling is used when the chosen participants are expected to provide relevant and valuable information (Kelly, 2010). Purposive sampling will be used because it ensures that the sample closely aligns with the research aims and objectives of the study, thereby enhancing the study's thoroughness and the reliability of the data and findings. In this study, I will interview 6 students who are highly proficient in X and use it regularly to gather the information I need. This article will present findings of a qualitative study consisting of six interviews (three females and three males) with university students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Communication at Uganda Christian University in their third year. The interviews will last between 15 minutes and 45 minutes.

3.3 Data Collection Method

This study will make use of open-ended in-depth interviews. Rutledge and Hogg (2020) write that an in-depth interview is just one of the qualitative research methods utilized to collect information on participants' subjective experiences. Rosala (2024) notes that open-ended questions are those that enable participants to provide a text answer freely. Additionally, Rutledge and Hogg (2020) stress that the goal of in-depth questions is to obtain comprehensive details that provide insight into an individual's viewpoint and the interpreted significance of a specific subject, issue, or procedure. Brounéus, and Karen (2011) note in *“In-depth Interviewing: The process, skill and ethics of interviews in peace research”* that In-depth interviewing is a valuable method for gathering detailed and insightful information for research purposes. It allows researchers to gain a thorough

understanding and perspective on specific research questions at a particular moment in time. Furthermore, through in-depth interviews, researchers receive firsthand accounts related to their research inquiries. Boyce and Neale (2006) also write in *“Conducting in-depth interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input”* that in-depth interviews prove valuable when seeking detailed insights into an individual's thoughts and behaviors or when delving deeply into new issues. Rosala (2024) also writes in *“Open ended vs Closes questions in user research”* that the use of open-ended questions promotes the exploration of a subject, allowing participants to decide what to share and the level of detail where participants are urged to provide a thoughtful answer rather than a brief one-word response or a short phrase. Researchers can gather information from interviewees beyond the structured questionnaire by asking detailed questions in a conversational manner, which helps the interviewees feel comfortable and open up about their thoughts, opinions, and experiences related to the topic being discussed. Utilizing interviews frequently contextualizes other data, such as outcome data, and provides a comprehensive understanding of program events and their underlying reasons (Boyce and Neale 2006). The researcher will use open-ended in-depth interviews because she wants to get as much information from the interviewees as possible and not regulate on how much they can share during the interviews. In this study, I will interview 6 students who are highly proficient in X and use it regularly to gather the information I need.

3.4 The Scope

This article will present findings of a qualitative study consisting of six interviews (three females and three males) with university students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Communication at Uganda Christian University in their third year. The interviews will last between 15 minutes and 45 minutes.

3.5 Data Analysis

This study will make use of the thematic approach in data analysis. According to (Boyatzis, 1998; Elliot, 2018; Thomas, 2006) thematic analysis serves as a research technique aimed at recognizing and deciphering patterns or themes within a set of data, often resulting in fresh insights and

comprehension. The process includes identifying themes by thoroughly reading and re-reading the transcribed data. The conceptual framework or theoretical model is often developed using themes to explain the relationships between the categories and the research questions (Bruan & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The researcher will use the thematic approach in data analysis because the aim is to generate patterns in behavior of the interviewees based on their shared thoughts, opinions and experiences. In this study, the themes will be categorized in three according to responses to the research questions. Therefore, the themes will include; why people use X, when people use X and the impact X has on university students.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The researcher will go through a research approval process. In addition, the clearance for data collected will be based on the approval of the research proposal by my supervisor and a letter of introduction will be given from the University. The researcher will obtain a consent form from the School of Journalism, Media, and Communication, as well as an introduction letter to be provided to her sources of information. Additionally, the sources will not be identified by their real names but will be assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

There will be time constraints, and the researcher will also have to manage other assignments, which makes the time insufficient.

Inadequate resources to expand my research to other universities in the country, so I can only conduct research at my current location.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, we address the three research questions discussed in 1.8 above. This chapter explains when university students use X, why university students use X and the impact of X on their social well-being. These findings are discussed in line with the research carried out through open ended in-depth interview questions with third year university students who are conversant with X and use it every day. While carrying out research, the informants shared their experiences with regard to their interactions on the social media platform, how they have used X, why they use X and shared both positive and negative impacts X has had on their social well-being.

4.1 When university students use X

In this section, we address the first research question on when university students use X. It is important to note that we are focusing on the factors or situations that motivate university students to use X daily, not the specific times of the day when they use X. It focuses on the triggers and contexts in which university students use X daily including when they seek information about a public figure, when they desire timely global event updates, and when they aim to share updates about their daily activities.

4.1.1 When university students want to find out information about a personality

University students referred to X when they wanted to find out profile information about personalities they look up to. X provides an avenue for university students to see the voice and writings of these personalities beyond their known accomplishments. University students are able to feel connected to the personalities they look up to. Through features like the personalities' X bio, university students are able to know information about what they do and details of their professions to as an informant explains:

"... so many times I have attended conferences or been invited as a panelist. I do not know everyone, and surprisingly, I check X first even before google for information on personalities I am interested

in getting to know. I do this just to see their profile, read their bios and know what they do, what discussions they are engaged in and what people are saying about them”

X is a platform where many influential and inspirational personalities engage in constructive conversations. This way, university students are driven to use follow individuals they look up to and to know the conversations that different individuals who inspire them are involved in.

“I use X if I am following someone who inspires me or someone who is important especially in the field of journalism and communication.” (Informant)

4.1.2 When university students want timely updates about events that are happening around the world

Through X, university students receive timely updates about events happening around the world. Since university students do not consume much of traditional media, X is their source of information. X provides a plethora of interconnected posts about trending current events or topics that many people are discussing about.

“... Because of the X algorithm, when a topic or event is trending in Uganda, it tends to show us posts of that event and of course as a person, you get interested and tap one tweet that leads you to another tweet, that leads you to another tweet and so on.” (Informant)

Additionally, university students turn to X when they need real time updates since X is a community of people who have freedom to share updates. This way they are able to have a well rounded and informed view of events transpiring globally.

... the demonstrations that were in Kenya caught my attention. I was pushed to check X just to know how many people were dying, what the world was saying about the demonstrations and what the current updates were about Kenya. I also followed the previous Kenya elections to know what was happening since there are live updates and everyone has a voice on X and we as the users are able to share updates on what is happening” (Informant)

From the above explanation of the informant, X provides updates almost immediately unlike traditional news sources that have scheduled periods for the release of news. This creates an

environment where university students on X can witness breaking news and share their thoughts, opinions and view as news events transpire.

4.1.3 When university students want to provide updates about their daily life events

X is a social media platform where university students can document their achievements, their activities throughout their time at the university and even challenges they are facing while trying to achieve their goals as an informant explains:

“I use X if I am posting information that will benefit me. If I want people to listen to my podcasts, see my career path, what I am doing and how I am growing with regard to the profession I have chosen to study, I provide those updates by posting on my X account”

This confirms research studies like *“Is There Social Capital in a Social Network Site?; Facebook Use and College Students' Life Satisfaction, Trust, and Participation. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication”* by Park, Kee & Valenzuela, (2009) that reveals the concept of self- status seeking when social media platforms like X are used by young adults to express themselves through uploading personal content on platforms to thousands of social media users.

4.2 Why university students use X

In this section, we address the second research question to establish why university students use X. This is what I found out.

4.2.1 To connect with classmates and lecturers

X facilitates stronger social well- being amongst students because it enables them connect with each other and even connect with their lecturers. X creates a sense of community since it goes beyond the classroom confines to foster connections. There is usually two-way communication through commenting and giving further views about a topic of interest. Students follow hashtags that are relevant to their topics of study and are able to share insights and engage in further discussions.

“My classmates tend to respond when I upload information or posts about what is going on within the university community”

Additionally, some X features play a role in creating stronger social well-being among university students. These include tagging, mentioning, use of hashtags, quote tweeting, commenting, liking

and reposting. When any of the above features are used while engaging in a discussion on X, the individuals involved in the conversation receive a notification and are able to keep the conversation going.

“X has this function where you can tag or mention an individual in a post and they will be notified. This way they will engage in the conversation. I naturally tag and mention my classmates because we share the same interests and we are able to carry on the conversation for as long as we want”

4.2.2 To express their views and opinions freely

Through X, university students are able to engage in discussions with people from any part of the world. They are able to find people with the same interests that they have especially when they do not find a receptive audience within their social circles at the university in line with their interests. X provides a platform for university students to break free from traditional channels of interaction with news and topics of interest since they can have timely discussions about events as they occur an informant explained:

“...I easily find people with the same interests that I have, so I can socialize with them and have discussions irrespective of where they are and learn a thing or two from them. X breaks so many barriers in communication”

This confirms what Tess (2013) writes in *“The Role of Social Media in Higher Education Classes (Real and Virtual)”* that social media platforms were not originally intended for supporting educational and other learning-related activities, but their ability to facilitate networking and sharing content has made them well-suited for such purposes.

4.2.2 To build their brands

Social media platforms like X are used by young adults to express themselves through uploading personal content on platforms to thousands of social media users. Other research studies (Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009) describe the concept as self-status seeking as explained by an informant:

“Since I want to work in a corporate environment, I want my brand to stand out so I consistently use X by uploading information about my achievements and sometimes challenges I am experiencing

in the field I have chosen to study and be part of. I one day dream of being an elite with a well-built brand just like some of the journalists I see on X”

Currently, X is considered as one of the social media platforms that some potential employers check while assessing the capability of an individual to work for a particular organization. It is for this reason that university students express themselves professionally by sharing their achievements on X, engaging in conversations with experts and public figures in their fields of interest and giving their opinions on events happening around the world and discussions held in line with their professional interests.

4.3 The impact of X on the students’ social interactions

Social media generally has effects on the social well-being of its users, some are positive and others are negative. However, Nienstedt, C. et al. (2023) discussed in “*Swiping Away Your Well-being? Examining Well-being Indicators Among Tiktok Account Holders*” that the negative effects outweigh the positive effects.

4.3.1 Positive Impacts of X on university students’ social interactions

4.3.2 A strong sense of belonging within the university community

X has the ability to create online communities based on shared interests on particular topics of students from academic interests, to extracurricular activities like sports, leadership associations, societies within the university or even just the common aspect of being a student at a particular university. X allows students’ organizations and university departments and faculties to connect with students by following students and engaging in their posts which creates a strong sense of belonging among the students as explained by an informant:

“I was very impressed and encouraged when the university’s official X account became one of my followers. Every time I uploaded content about the university, their handler would always like and repost. I felt accepted and valued by the university and I felt like my voice counted and matters to the university”

4.3.3 Builds a strong social support network

Students finding challenges in progressing in the careers they have opted to pursue or having academic challenges may find encouragement or guidance on X even from students in other universities. X has the comment section feature where other X users are able to give their opinions about a post they have viewed. University students have many times been encouraged by the comments different users upload to their posts. Some even provide solutions to the challenges they are facing. This building of social support networks for university students is a positive impact X has on the social well being of university students since it makes them feel accepted and they are able to connect with other people and forge strong connections.

“... It is not exactly me putting out my problems to the world but I one time casually posted about how my second year was challenging and overwhelming but the comment section was flooded with encouragements from alumni of the university, from other student in other universities and even some celebrities. Trust me I felt like I belonged in the X community, I felt heard and seen”
(Informant)

4.3.4 Campus event awareness

Through X, university events are promoted using different faculty and association pages present on X. This calls for vibrancy of university events. Furthermore, students who are active and influential within the university on X are able to make the best use of it to promote upcoming university events in collaboration with the university.

“...like the guild government that has made the best use of the X accounts. The guild X account will announce an event like the guild tuition run or health week, the university account will do the same, students within my class who are looking forward to the event will upload the poster as well. There is no way I am not aware of upcoming events and this is all thanks to X”

University event organizers like the university leadership leverage hashtags specific to university students and events to create a virtual hub for information on upcoming or on going events within the university. Since X is a real time platform in nature, students who are away from the university

are still aware of university events going on and are able to share their thoughts and opinions on these events.

4.4 Negative Impacts of X on university students' social interactions

4.4.1 Comparison with other X users

Human beings tend to assess their position in relation to others. The interviews showed that university students are sensitive about metrics such as the number of followers and often feel ashamed if they have been on the platform for a long time without gaining a large following.

“I joined X much later than my classmates. For about three months, I was getting low engagements, people were not responding to the posts I was putting up. I compared myself to one of our classmates who has over 4000 followers and her engagement rates are so high that she posts about them every now and then. It made me feel less worthy to be on that platform especially when I would get two to three likes and no comment. It was a difficult place to be in”

Additionally, as certain students persist in sharing their accomplishments on X, it leads others to compare their lifestyles and achievements to those of their peers, which negatively impacts their self-esteem and makes them feel less accepted by the people they connect with.

4.4.2 Addiction and Social Isolation

X's design with its constant popping notifications and curated content that cater for an individual's personal interests create a cycle of compulsive checking. This leads to some students spending an unhealthy amount of time scrolling on X to see what is trending and read through people's opinions and comments. In the long run, some university students displace real world connections. The continuous cycle then develops into an addiction and isolation of an individual to scroll through the platform for information. Some students have admitted checking and depending so much on X that they have had to delete the application from their smartphones just to refocus.

4.4.3 Miscommunication and conflict

Mondal et al. (2023) write in *“A Picture Tweets More Than a Thousand Words: The Impact of Images on Science Communication on X (formerly Twitter)”* that X's primary characteristic is its ability to share brief text messages, referred to as "tweets," with most users having a 280-character limit.

However, X Premium subscribers currently have a limit of 25,000 characters. These tweets can include images, and hashtags for organizing thematically related tweets by various users. This feature contributes to this negative impact of X on the social well-being of university students. This is because the character limit forces complex ideas to be condensed hence changing the context of a message when it is not properly put together hence miscommunication.

“X is a rather interesting platform because there's the constant arguing. One minute you're trying to learn something new, the next you're dodging insults from an anonymous account user with no profile picture. Sometimes X is not exactly the best environment for a healthy debate or building connections with people who share your interests since some people do not take in corrections properly or opinions that differ from what they know”

Furthermore, the pressure to defend oneself on X coupled up with anonymity of some users on the platform encourages the use of harsh and insensitive language and sometimes impulsive responses that lead to conflict.

4.4.4 Cyberbullying

The widespread nature of X enhances the effects of cyberbullying as even a seemingly harmless remark can reach a large audience, leading to widespread embarrassment and tarnishing the reputation of the victim within the university community. Cyberbullying takes shapes in different way on X like embarrassment. However, the most common form is body shaming as an informant explained: *“X is for bold people and I was not bold when I had just joined. I was bullied not once, not twice and not thrice. It is worse when you post a picture of yourself. Everyone seems to have something to say”*

4.4.5 Prioritizing online validation over real life connections

“Sometimes with X, it's like you're stuck trying to be this online version of yourself, but it's exhausting, and it makes it hard to just connect with people for who you really are. You have to be extra careful with how you say things and when you say them. As much as there is freedom of expression, you are going to be judged for every word you say” (Informant)

X's framework, which emphasizes likes, retweets, and follower count, establishes a system of seeking validation from others. Students often focused extensively on shaping an ideal online image and attaining approval, resulting in reduced investment in forming genuine connections with peers. This emphasis on external validation led to feelings of inadequacy when real-life interactions failed to mirror the readily available positive reinforcement online. Students were reluctant to express themselves authentically or participate in open conversations due to concerns about negative feedback or the absence of online validation. Ultimately, this inhibited the development of deeper, more significant relationships that were vital for personal and social growth during university years.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The social well-being of university students is positively influenced by X to a certain degree.

Hawn C. (2009) writes in *“Ake two aspirin and tweet me in the morning: How Twitter, Facebook, and other social media are reshaping health care.”* that students in higher education have formed communities through social networking platforms, enabling collaborative learning and real-life discussions despite being physically apart. The findings in the preceding section, affirm Hawn’s discussion. X is a major platform for developing a strong sense of community and togetherness among university students, even when they are far apart geographically. X allows university students who share similar interests to come together and establish online communities centered around academics, extracurricular activities, or their shared university experience. The platform also enhances the feeling of belonging by enabling interaction with university departments, faculties and student organizations. Furthermore, X facilitates the development of robust social support systems, where students can receive encouragement and advice from their peers, including those from different universities. This fosters a deep sense of connection and acceptance that goes beyond geographical boundaries. The results of this study also support the findings of Menkhoff et al. (2014) which suggest that X promotes the development of collaborative relationships among students and their peers. X is an essential tool for nurturing a lively and supportive online community for university students and to some extent has a positive impact on the social well-being of university students.

5.2 The social well-being of university students is more negatively affected by Twitter than positively affected.

One of the initial studies, by Kraut et al. in 1998, revealed that the overall use of the Internet has a substantial impact on social connections and involvement in local activities. The study revealed that spending more time online is associated with decreased interaction with family members and a smaller social network, potentially resulting in heightened feelings of loneliness and depression. While the internet offers undeniable benefits, this study highlights its potential downsides for social

well-being. The findings of this research suggest that excessive X use can lead to social isolation and loneliness. Students reported feeling inadequate due to follower count and struggled with maintaining genuine connections as the pressure to curate a perfect online persona intensified. Furthermore, the platform's design characteristics, with its brevity and anonymity, contribute to miscommunication, conflict, and even cyberbullying. These findings justify Nienstedt, C. et al. (2023) discussions in *“Swiping Away Your Well-being? Examining Well-being Indicators Among Tiktok Account Holders”* that social media generally has effects on the social well-being of its users, some are positive and others are negative however, the negative effects outweigh the positive effects.

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS

As recommendation, moving forward, it is crucial to raise awareness about the potential dangers and promote responsible X use that fosters positive social interactions and a healthy online experience.

REFERENCES

- Aggarwal R, Ranganathan P. Study designs: Part 2 - Descriptive studies. *Perspect Clin Res.* 2019 Jan-Mar;10(1):34-36. doi: 10.4103/picr.PICR_154_18. PMID: 30834206; PMCID: PMC6371702.
- Al Harbi, M. (2016). Effects of Twitter -assisted learning on developing literacy skills and motivation for learning in EFL settings. *Arab Journal for the Humanities*, 34(135), 268-292.
- Alhabash, S., & Ma, M. (2017). A tale of four platforms: Motivations and uses of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat among college students. *Social Media + Society*, 3(1) <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305117691544>
- Alshaye, I. A., Tasir, Z., & Jumaat, N. F. (2023). A critical analysis of the effects of Twitter on student engagement and grades. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 15(3), ep437. <https://doi.org/10.30935/cedtech/13277>
- Anderson S (2011) The Twitter toolboTwitter for educators. *Teacher Librarian* 39(1): 27-30
- Anthony, B., & Jewell, J. R. (2017). Students' perceptions of using Twitter for learning in social work courses. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 35(1), 38-48. [Return to ref 2017 in article](#)
- Astin A. (1984) Student involvement: a developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel* 25, 297-308
- Becker, L. (1979). Measurement of gratifications. *Communication Research*, 6, 54-73.
- Becker, R., & Bishop, P. (2016). "Think bigger about science": Using Twitter for learning in the middle grades. *Middle School Journal*, 47(3), 4-16.
- Bernard HR. *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 3rd Alta Mira Press; Walnut Creek, CA: 2002. [\[Google Scholar\]](#) [\[Ref list\]](#)
- Bista, Krishna. 2015. Is Twitter an effective pedagogical tool in higher education? Perspectives of education graduate students. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 15: 83-102.
- Bledsoe, T. S., Harmeyer, D., & Wu, S. F. (2014). Utilizing Twitter and #hashtags toward enhancing student learning in an online course environment. *International Journal of Distance Education Technologies*, 12(3), 75-83.

- Blomfield Neira, C. J., & Barber, B. L. (2014). Social networking site use: Linked to adolescents' social self-concept, self-esteem, and depressed mood. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 66(1), 56-64. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajpy.12034>
- Blumer H. *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1969. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Blumler, J. The role of theory in uses and gratifications studies. *Communication Research*, 6, 9-36.
- Borders, B. (2009). A brief history of social media. Retrieved December 05, 2010, <http://socialmediarockstar.com/history-of-social-media>
- Boyatzis R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.
- Boyce, C., & Neale, P. (2006). Conducting in-depth interviews: A guide for designing and conducting in-depth interviews for evaluation input.
- Boyd, D., & Ellison, N. (2008). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x>
- Braun V., Clarke V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Breslow L. A quantitative approach to the World Health Organization definition of health: physical, mental and social well-being. *International Journal of Epidemiology*. 1972;1:347-55. [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]
- Brounéus, Karen. (2011). In-depth Interviewing: The process, skill and ethics of interviews in peace research.
- Carpenter, J. (2014). Twitter's capacity to support collaborative learning. *International Journal of Social Media and Interactive Learning Environments*, 2(2), 103-118.
- Chen, S., Calderón-Larrañaga, A., Saadeh, M., Dohrn, I.-M., & Welmer, A.-K. (2021). Correlations of subjective and social wellbeing with sedentary behavior and physical activity in older adults—A

population-based study. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series A*, 76(10), 1789–1795. <https://doi.org/10.1093/gerona/qlab065>

Cheung, C., Chiu, P., & Lee, M. (2011). Online social networks: Why do students use facebook? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27, 1337-1343.

Chickering A.W. & Gamson Z.F. (1987) Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. *AAHE Bulletin* March, 3-7.

Chow, J. (2013). A new complete study: Mobile users in the UK. *Twitter Blogs*. Retrieved

Cresswell JW, Plano Clark VL. *Designing and conducting mixed method research*. 2nd Sage; Thousand Oaks, CA: 2011. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]

Creswell JW. *Research design. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. 3. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications; 2009. [[Google Scholar](#)]

Davis, Kerry. 2015. Teachers' perceptions of Twitter for professional development. *Disability and Rehabilitation* 37: 1551-58.

Denzin NK, Lincoln YS. Introduction. The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In: Denzin NK, Lincoln YS, editors. *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications; 2003. pp. 1-45. [[Google Scholar](#)]

Denzin NK, Lincoln YS. Introduction. The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In: Denzin NK, Lincoln YS, editors. *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications; 2003. pp. 1-45. [[Google Scholar](#)]

Dinesh & Odabas (2023). 8 facts about Americans and Twitter as it rebrands to X. *Pew Research Center*.

Diug, B., Kendal, E., Ilic, D., et al. (2016). Evaluating the use of Twitter as a tool to increase engagement in medical education. *Education for Health*, 29(3), 223.

Ebner M, Lienhardt C, Rohs M, et al. (2010) Microblogs in higher education - A chance to facilitate informal and process-oriented learning. *Computers & Education* 55(1): 92-100

education: Using Twitter to enhance the student learning eTwitterperience in anatomy. *Anatomical Sciences Education*, 9(6), 505-515. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ase.1610>

- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of management review*, 14(4), 532-550.
- Elliott V. (2018). Thinking about the coding process in qualitative data analysis. *Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2850-2861. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2018.3560>
- Faiswal Kasirye. The Importance of Needs in Uses and Gratification Theory. *Advance*. May 07, 2022.
- Febriyantoro, M. T., & Arisandi, D. (2019, October). The role of digital marketing in
- Fereday J., Muir-Cochrane E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Research*, 5(1), 80-92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107>
- Fischer, E., & Reuber, R. A. (2010). Social interaction via new social media: (How) can interactions on Twitter affect effectual thinking and behavior? *Journal of Business Venturing*, 26(1), 1-18
- Flick U. *Designing qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications; 2007. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Flyvbjerg B, Denzin N. K, Lincoln Y. S. Case study. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. 2011; 4th ed, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 301-316.
- Flyvbjerg B. Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*. 2006; [12](#)(2): 219-245. 10.1177/1077800405284.363.
- Frankfort-Nachmias C, Nachmias D. *Research methods in the social sciences*. 5. London: Edward Arnold; 1996. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- from <https://blog.TWITTER.com/2013/Twitter-advertising-blog-new-compete-study-mobile-users-uk>
- Gay, L. R., G. E. Mills, and P. Airasian. 2012. *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*. 10th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education
- Goble G. (2012). The history of social networking. *Digital Trends*. Retrieved from <http://www.digitaltrends.com/features/the-history-of-social-networking/#!G1Cb9>.
- Goodwin J, Horowitz R. Introduction. The methodological strengths and dilemmas of qualitative sociology. *Qualitative Sociology*. 2002;25(1):33-47. [[Google Scholar](#)]

Hawn C. Ake two aspirin and tweet me in the morning: How Twitter, Facebook, and other social media are reshaping health care. *Health Affairs*. 2009;28:361-8. [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]

Heiberger G. & Harper R. (2008) Have you Facebooked Astin lately? Using technology to increase student involvement. In *Using Emerging Technologies to Enhance Student Engagement*. New Directions for Student Services Issue #124 (eds R. Junco & D.M. Timm), pp. 19-35. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Hennessy, C. M., Kirkpatrick, E., Smith, C. F., & Border, S. (2016). Social media and anatomy

Holt, R. (2013). Twitter in numbers. *Telegraph.co.uk*. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/Twitter/9945505/Twitter-in-numbers.html>

Hull, K., & Dodd, J. E. (2017). Faculty use of Twitter in higher education teaching. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 9(1), 91-104. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-05-2015-0038>.

improving sales to SMEs in dealing with the ASEAN Economic Community

Infante, D.A., Rancer, A.S., Womack, D.F. (1997). *Building communication theory*. Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.

Jensen J. L, Rodgers R. Cumulating the intellectual gold of case study research. *Public Administration Review*. 2001; [61](#)(2): 235-246. 10.1111/0033-3352.00025

Johnson, K. A. (2011). The effect of Twitter posts on students' perceptions of instructor credibility. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 36(1), 21-38. doi: 10.1080/17439884.2010.534798

Jordan, K. (2017). ETwitteraming the UK higher education sector through the network of institutional accounts on Twitter. *First Monday*, 22(5). <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v22i5.7133>.

Junco, Reynol, C. Michael Elavsky, and Greg Heiberger. 2013. Putting Twitter to the test: Assessing outcomes for student collaboration, engagement and success. *British Journal of Educational Technology* 44: 273-87.

Junco, Reynol, Greg Heiberger, and Eric Loken. 2011. The effect of Twitter on college student engagement and grades. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning* 27: 119-32.

Kassens-Noor E (2012) Twitter as a teaching practice to enhance active and informal learning in higher education: The case of sustainable tweets. *Active Learning in Higher Education*. 13(1): 9-21.

- Katz, E, Blumler, J.G., and Gurevitch, M. (1974), "Utilization of Mass Communication by Individual" in *The Uses of Mass Communications: Current Perspective on Gratifications Research*, ed. J.G Blumler and E. Katz, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage; pp. 19-32
- Kelly S. (2010) Qualitative interviewing techniques and styles. In: Bourgeault I, Dingwall R, de Vries R. (eds) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Methods in Health Research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]
- Keyes, C. L. M. (1998). Social well-being. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 61(2), 121-140. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2787065>
- Kim J. Y., Shim J. P., Ahn K. M. (2011). Social networking service: Motivation, pleasure, and behavioral intention to use. *The Journal Computer Information Systems*, 51(4), 92-101.
- Kircaburun, K., & Griffiths, M. D. (2018). Instagram addiction and the Big Five of personality: The mediating role of self-liking. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, 7(1), 158-170.
- Kotfila, C. (2014). This message will self-destruct: The growing role of obscurity and self-destructing data in digital communication. *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 40(2), 12-16. doi:10.1002/bult.2014.1720400206
- Kraut R, Patterson M, Lundmark V, et al.. Internet paradox. A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? *The American Psychologist* 1998; 53:1017-1031 [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]
- Kruger J., Epley N., Parker J. & Ng Z.-W. (2005) Egocentrism over e-mail: can we communicate as well as we think? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 89, 925-936.
- Kuh G.D. (2009) What student affairs professionals need to know about student engagement. *Journal of College Student Development* 50, 683-706.
- Larson, James S. "The Measurement of Social Well-Being." *Soc Indic Res* 28 (1993): 285-296.
- Lattimore, G., Baskin, O., Heiman, S. & Toth, E (2007). *Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- Lenhart A. (2015). *Teens, social media & technology overview 2015*. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/09/teens-social-media-technology-2015/>

- Lin, L. Y., et al. (2016). Association Between Social Media Use And Depression Among U.s. Young Adults. *Depression and Anxiety*, 33(4), 323-331. doi:10.1002/da.22466
- Lin, M. F., Hoffman, E. S., Borengasser, C. (2013). Is social media too social for class? A case study of Twitter use. *TechTrends*, 57(2), 39-48
- Lin, Meng-Fen Grace, Ellen S. Hoffman, and Claire Borengasser. 2013. Is social media too social for class? A case study of Twitter use. *TechTrends* 57: 39.
- Liu, D., Baumeister, R. F., Yang, C. C., & Hu, B. (2019). Digital communication media use and psychological well-being: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 24(5), 259-273. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmz013>
- Malesky L. A., Peters C. (2012). Defining appropriate professional behavior for faculty and university students on social networking websites. *Higher Education*, 63(1), 135-151.
- Malik, A., Heyman-Schrum, C. & Johri, A. Use of Twitter across educational settings: a review of the literature. *Int J Educ Technol High Educ* 16, 36 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-019-0166-Twitter>
- Mao, Jin. 2014. Social media for learning: A miTwittered-methods study on high school students' technology affordances and perspectives. *Computers in Human Behavior* 33: 213-23.
- Marín, V. I., & Tur, G. (2014). Student teachers' attitude towards Twitter for educational aims. *Open PraTwitteris*, 6(3), 275-285.
- McArthur and Bostedo-Conway 2012, p291.
- McArthur, J. A., & Bostedo-Conway, K. (2012). ETwitterploring the relationship between student-instructor interaction on Twitter and student perception of teacher behaviors. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 24(3), 286-292
- McIntyre LJ. *Need to know. Social science research methods*. Boston: McGraw-Hill; 2005. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Menkhoff T, Chay YW, Bengtsson ML, Woodard CJ, Ban B. Incorporating microblogging (“tweeting”) in higher education: Lessons learnt in a knowledge management course. *Comput Hum Behav*. 2014;51:1295-302. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]

Mondal H, Atanasov AG, Eibensteiner F, Hribersek M, Brandstätter S, Matin M, et al. Science communication on X (formerly Twitter): A picture is worth a thousand characters? *Explor Digit Health Technol.* 2023;1:28-34. <https://doi.org/10.37349/edht.2023.00005>

Nienstedt, C. *et al.* (2023) 'Swiping Away Your Well-Being? Examining Well-Being Indicators Among TikTok Account Holders', *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*, 28(2), pp. 96-106. doi:10.24839/2325-7342.JN28.2.96.

Park, N., Kee, K. F., Valenzuela, S. (2009). Is There Social Capital in a Social Network Site?: Facebook Use and College Students' Life Satisfaction, Trust, and Participation. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 14 (4), 875-901

Pascarella E.T. & Terenzini P.T. (2005) *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research.* Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

pen_spark

Piekkari R, Welch C, Paavilainen E. The case study as disciplinary convention: Evidence from international business journals. *Organizational Research Methods.*

Primack, B. A., Shensa, A., Escobar-Viera, C. G., Barrett, E. L., Sidani, J. E., Colditz, J. B., & James, A. E. (2017). Use of multiple social media platforms and symptoms of depression and anxiety: A nationally-representative study among U.S. young adults. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 69, 1-9. (PDF) *Association of Social Media Use With Social Well-Being, Positive Mental Health, and Self-Rated Health: Disentangling Routine Use From Emotional Connection to Use.* Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337372679_Association_of_Social_Media_Use_With_Social_Well-Being_Positive_Mental_Health_and_Self-Rated_Health_Disentangling_Routine_Use_From_Emotional_Connection_to_Use [accessed Jun 12 2024].

Przybylski, A. K., & Weinstein, N. (2017). A large-scale test of the goldilocks hypothesis: Quantifying the relations between digital-screen use and the mental well-being of adolescents *Psychological Science*, 28(2), 204-215. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797616678438>

- Pyo, J., Lee, W., Choi, E., Jang, S., & Ock, M. (2022). Qualitative research in healthcare: Necessity and characteristics. *Journal of Public Health Medicine*, 23(1), 1-11.
- Ra, C. K., Cho, J., Stone, M. D., De La Cerda, J., Goldenson, N. I., Moroney, E., . . . Leventhal, A. M. (2018). Association of digital media use with subsequent symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder among adolescents. *JAMA Journal of the American Medical Association*, 320, 255-263
(PDF) *Association of Social Media Use With Social Well-Being, Positive Mental Health, and Self-Rated Health: Disentangling Routine Use From Emotional Connection to Use*. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337372679_Association_of_Social_Media_Use_With_Social_Well-Being_Positive_Mental_Health_and_Self-Rated_Health_Disentangling_Routine_Use_From_Emotional_Connection_to_Use [accessed Jun 12 2024].
- Radovic, A., Gmelin, T., Stein, B. D., & Miller, E. (2017). Depressed adolescents positive and negative use of social media. *Journal of Adolescence*, 55, 5-15. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2016.12.002.
- Rimskii, V. (2011). The influence of the Internet on active social involvement and the formation and development of identities. *Russian Social Science Review*, 52 (1), 79-101
(PDF) *The history of social media and its impact on business*. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303216233_The_history_of_social_media_and_its_impact_on_business [accessed Jun 12 2024].
- Rohr, L. E., Costello, J., & Squires, L. (2023). Exploring students' Twitter use in the online classroom across 4 years. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20427530231167644>
- Romer, D., Bagdasarov, Z., & More, E. (2013). Older versus newer media and the well-being of United States youth: Results from a national longitudinal panel. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 52(5), 613-619. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.11.012>
- Rosala, M. (2024, January 26). Open-ended vs. closed questions in user research retrieved from <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/open-ended-questions/#:~:text=There%20are%20two%20types%20of,limited%20set%20of%20possible%20answers.>

- Rutledge, Pamela & Hogg, Jerri Lynn. (2020). In-Depth Interviews. 1-7. 10.1002/9781119011071.iemp0019.
- Sale, Joanna E., and Kevin Brazil. 2004. A strategy to identify critical appraisal criteria for primary miTwittered-method studies. *Quality and Quantity* 38: 351-65.
- Sheldon, P. (2008). The relationship between unwillingness-to-communicate and students' Facebook use. *Journal of Media Psychology: Theories, Methods, and Applications*, 20(2), 67-75. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-1105.20.2.67>
- Silverman D. What counts as qualitative research? Some cautionary comments. *Qualitative Sociology Review*. 2013;9(2):48-55. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Silverman D. *Doing qualitative research. A practical handbook*. 2. London: SAGE Publications; 2005. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Singh, Lenandlar. 2020. A systematic review of higher education academics' use of microblogging for professional development: Case of Twitter. *Open Education Studies* 2: 66-81
- Sponcil, M., & Gitmo, P. (2013) Use of social media by college students: Relationship to communication and self-concept. *Journal of Technology Research*,4,1-13
- Spradley JP. *The ethnographic interview*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston; New York: 1979. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]
- Stake, R. E. (1995). The art of case study research. sage.
- Stec C. (2015). Social media definitions: The ultimate glossary of terms you should know. Hubspot. Retrieved from <http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/6126/The-Ultimate-Glossary-120-Social-Media-Marketing-Terms-ETwitterplained.aspTwitter>
- Strauss AL, Corbin JM. *Basics of qualitative research. Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. 2. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 1998. [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Swanson, D. (1979). The continuing evolution of the uses and gratifications approach. *Communication Research*, 6, 3-7.

- Tess, P.A. (2013) The Role of Social Media in Higher Education Classes (Real and Virtual)—A Literature Review. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29, A60-A68. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2012.12.032>
- Thomas D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098214005283748>
- Tight M. The curious case of case study: A viewpoint. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 2010; [13](#)(4): 329-339. 10.1080/13645570903187181.
- To tweet or not to tweet? A comparison of academics and students' usage of Twitter in academic contexts Charles G. Knight and Linda K. Kaye
- Tur, G., & Martin, V. (2014). "Student teachers" attitudes toward collaboration in EPortfolios built with web 2.0 Tools,' 9.
- Twitter adoption, students' perceptions, Big Five personality traits and learning outcome: Lessons learned from 3 case studies AleTwitteria Katrmpouza, Nikolaos Tselios and Maria-Christina Kasimati 2019
- Valenzuela, S., Park, N. and Kee, K.F. (2009) Is There Social Capital in a Social Network Site? Facebook Use and College Students' Life Satisfaction, Trust and Participation. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14, 875- 901. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2009.01474.x>
- Wang, Y. (2016). US state education agencies' use of Twitter : Mission accomplished? *SAGE Open*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015626492>.
- Weinstein, M. (2013, June 3). Be careful seTwitterting with Snapchat (Especially You, Anthony!), online. *The Huffington Post*, Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mark-weinstein/snapchat-privacy_b_3368994.html
- Welch, B. K., & Bonnan-White, J. (2012). Twittering to increase student engagement in the university classroom. *Knowledge Management & E-Learning: An International Journal (KM&EL)*, 4(3), 325-345
- West, B., Moore, H., & Barry, B. (2015). Beyond the tweet: Using Twitter to enhance engagement, learning, and success among first-year students. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 37(3), 160-170.

Whitehouse, K. (2013, November 14). Snapchat seTwitterting scandal could scare off investors, online. New York Post. Retrieved from <http://nypost.com/2013/11/14/snapchat-seTwitterting-scandal-could-scare-off-investors/>

Wright, R. R., Evans, A., Schaeffer, C., Mullins, R., & Cast, L. (2021). Social networking site use: Implications for health and wellness. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*, 26(2), 165-175. <https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN26.2.165>

Wright, R. R., Schaeffer, C., Mullins, R., Evans, A., & Cast, L. (2020). Comparison of student health and wellbeing profiles and social media use. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*, 25(1), 14-21. <https://doi.org/10.24839/2325-7342.JN25.1.14>

Yin R. K. Enhancing the quality of case studies in health services research. *Health Services Research*. 1999; 34(5 Pt 2): 1209-1224.