International Journal of Innovative Psychology & Social Development 14 (3):206-212, July-Sept, 2026

© SEAHI PUBLICATIONS, 2026 www.seahipublications.org ISSN: 2467-8546

DOI:10.5281/zenodo.21880662

Social Media Use And Self-Concept Among Secondary School Students In Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State

Ukwuije, Chinedu Kelechi & Omenazu, Victor Stainless

Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling
Faculty of Education
University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Email: chinedu.ukwuije@uniport.edu.ng
Email: Stainvi2000@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
This study examined social media use and the self-concept among secondary school students within Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The study adopted correlational research design with two structured questionnaires as the instrument for data collection. The population of the study comprised all S.S.2 students of the study area, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Four hundred (400) students were selected from ten (10) secondary schools out of the twenty-one (21) secondary schools to make up the sample size for the study using the multi-stage sampling technique. The research instruments were validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Psychology and one from the field of measurement and evaluation. The reliability indices were determined using Cronbach Alpha. Reliability coefficient of 0.82 and 0.79 was obtained. Simple regression and Analysis of Variance were used to analyse the data generated. The findings revealed that Facebook usage, Tik-Tok usage and Instagram usage positively with the self-concept of secondary school students. The study recommended that Facebook reels and videos should not be taken personal by students as they scarcely know the persons involved among others.
Keywords: Self-concept, social media Facebook usage, Tik-Tok usage, Instagram usage

INTRODUCTION

Self-concept reflects an individual's view or beliefs about themselves which includes their beliefs, feelings and evaluations they hold of who they are. It is a multifaceted concept consisting of self-perspective, or how you perceive your ability to do things and perform roles; self-worth or self-esteem which is the value placed on oneself, and also ideal-self (the person one wishes to become) (Kennedy, 2000). Self-concept is not innate but acquired over time due to personal experiences, achievements and failures as well as social interactions and responses by significant others (family members, friends, society). A person's cultural background, his environment and comparing himself to others is also a major determinant in defining oneself. Self-concept as an important predictor of both behavior and motivation may also be considered major influence in an individual's overall happiness and feeling of fulfillment. A strong and positive self-concept is associated with resilient, confident and growth oriented individual, while a weak or negative self-concept may be restraining to the development of one's potentialities and cause low esteem or maladaptive behaviors. Self-concept is defined by a complex view that individuals have of themselves in terms of the physical, social, emotional and academic selves (Abadali, Asatsa &

Ntaragwe, 2024). A strong or weak self-concept can influence by an individual's interactions on social media, where acceptance is often measured by high numbers of likes, comments, shares, and followers, while rejection is reflected in lower levels of these indicators.

Social media is an umbrella term for all Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow the creation and exchange of user-generated contents, comments, likes, share between contributors in a virtual community. The social media platforms like Facebook, Tok-tok, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, X (previously known as twitter) and others have become indispensable in the lives of secondary school students on daily basis. They give young people the chance to express themselves, engage with peers and get feedback about critical topics that shape a developing personality in those early teen years. Yet this 24/7 connectedness also expose students under the influence of those who will lift them up or drive down their self-image and worth. Again, it has also been observed to be a major source of distraction and in some cases leading to addiction.

Facebook is a social networking service launched in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and his colleagues at Harvard University. It allows users to create personal profiles, connect with others, share multimedia content such as photos, videos, audios/voice messages and engage in online communication through likes, shares, comments, and messages. As part of Meta Platforms Inc., Facebook functions as a digital space for social interaction, self-expression, and community building, influencing patterns of communication, identity formation, and social behavior in contemporary society. Meta Platforms, Inc. (2024). It also enables individuals to join communities, groups or pages that relates or speaks to their interest. Meanwhile, it is also a source of revenue generation via monetization.

Another social media platform popular among secondary school students is Tik-Tok. Tik-Tok is a short-form video-sharing application that allows users to create, edit, and share videos ranging from 15 seconds to 10 minutes in length. Functionally, the platform enables users to engage in creative self-expression through music, dance, comedy, education, and other genres, supported by features such as filters, effects, and soundtracks. Tik-Tok's algorithm personalizes content for each user based on interaction patterns, likes, shares, comments, and watch time, thus enhancing engagement and community participation, operated by the Chinese company ByteDance. Tik-Tok serves as both a social networking and entertainment platform influencing global trends, youth culture, and digital marketing dynamics. Tik-Tok can also be monetized and become a source of income by consistently building a reasonable audience.

Students are also conversant with Instagram social media. Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking platform that enables users to capture, edit, and share visual content with followers in real time. Functionally, it allows for interactive engagement through features such as likes, comments, direct messages, stories, reels, and live streaming. Owned by Meta Platforms Inc., Instagram serves as a digital space for self-expression, social interaction, branding, and online marketing. The platform's algorithm curates personalized content based on user engagement patterns, influencing trends in communication, identity formation, and consumer behavior across global audiences (Meta Platforms, Inc. 2024). It also serves as a global platform for business and products and adverts.

Secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State are increasingly exposed to various social media platforms as a result of urbanization and technological advancement. The use of these platforms can be highly beneficial when directed toward academic enrichment, social interaction, and entertainment. However, their misuse, excessive engagement, or addiction may lead to adverse effects on students' academic performance, social behaviour, and psychological well-being and self-concept.

Secondary School Students are adolescents, youths or young adults within the ages of 10-20 years of age. World Health Organization (2023) defines secondary school students are adolescents and young people typically between the ages of 10 and 20 years. There are youths who are formally registered in a public or government approved secondary schools within the class levels of junior secondary one (J.S.1) to senior secondary three (S.S.3)

Youth have a desire to be authentic on social media, which is associated with self-acceptance, body satisfaction and self-esteem (Rasmussen, 2022). Being able to look back through posts and past activities, young people are equipped with a better sense of self -awareness- who they are becoming. Social media

participation and teenager self-identity have spread around the world, although research that explores this relationship is in its infancy. Adolescents are using social media for social experimentation, self-expression and identity exploration, however excessive or unmitigated use may lead them to be exposed to social comparisons exacerbating inequality of their sense of self development (Abadali 2024).

Social media provide an opportunity for adolescents to be their authentic selves, which may lead them to feel more self-acceptance, body positivity and positive self-esteem (Rasmussen 2022). Being able to go back and look over the past, reflecting on personal achievements, all this is part of a process of self-awareness which makes children have a more solidified position about who they are and who they want to be. Secondary school students' self-concept and use of social media has grown internationally, with research highlighting intricate connections between digital participation and Secondary school students' sense of identity. Secondary school students' share photos of themselves as an avenue for experimenting with identities, forming friendships, and often times, imitate who they are friends with, how they spend shopping money, and what they wear which can feed the development of healthy or unhealthy self-images (Abadali 2024).

Statement of the Problem

Secondary school students are adolescence who are in a critical developmental stage marked by heightened self-awareness, identity formation, and the need for social connection and acceptance. Social media has emerged as a dominant platform through which Secondary school students interact, express themselves, and shape their identities, with platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, "X" (formerly Twitter), and Tik-Tok gaining widespread popularity among secondary school students in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. Observations indicate a decline in academic performance among secondary school students due to distractions associated with social media use. Constant exposure to idealized images, peer comparisons, online validation (likes, comments), unrealistic self-perceptions, and cyberbullying can significantly influence adolescents' self-worth, abilities, and social value. While some students may gain confidence and a sense of belonging through online interactions, others may experience low self-esteem, social anxiety, confusion or crisis regarding their identity.

Despite growing concerns from parents, educators, and mental health professionals, research in this local context remains limited. Most existing studies focus on Western or Asian societies, with minimal attention given to secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local government Area, Rivers State, who may face unique social, economic, and cultural challenges. Without a localized data, counsellors, schools, families, policy makers, religious and community leaders would lack the information needed to understand how social media positively or negatively impacts secondary school students' self-concept. So, given the rapid rise in social media usage among Nigerian secondary school students, there is a clear gap in research examining its influence on self-concept within Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the relationship between social media use and the self-concept of secondary school students in this region.

Aim and Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the influence of social media use and the self-concept among secondary school students within Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. To achieve this aim, the study will pursue the following specific objectives:

1. Find out the influence of Facebook usage on self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.
2. Find out the influence of Tik-Tok usage on self-concept of secondary school students in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.
3. Find out the influence of Instagram usage on self-concept of secondary school students in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions are postulated as a guide to the researcher in this study.

1. To what extent does Facebook usage influence the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

2. To what extent does Tik-tok usage influence the self-concept of secondary school students Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.
3. To what extent does Instagram usage influence the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis are proposed to guide the investigation:

1. There is no significant influence of Facebook usage on self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant influence of Tik-Tok usage on self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant influence of Instagram usage on self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all S.S.2 students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Four hundred (400) students were selected from ten (10) secondary schools out of the twenty-one (21) secondary schools to make up the sample size for the study using the multi-stage sampling technique with two structured questionnaires as the instrument for data collection tagged "Social Media Usage Questionnaire (SMUQ) and the Students Self-Concept Questionnaire (SSCQ). The social media usage questionnaire is patterned after the 4-point Likert scale of Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The research instruments were validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Psychology and one from the field of measurement and evaluation. The reliability indices were determined using Cronbach Alpha. Reliability coefficient of 0.82 and 0.79 was obtained. Simple regression and Analysis of Variance were used to analyse the data generated. The researcher used simple linear regression in analyzing the data.

RESULTS

Research Question One: *To what extent does Facebook influences the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State?*

Table 4.1: simple regression analysis of the extent Facebook influences self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.176	.031	.029

The analysis in table 4.1 shows that calculated R is 0.176. The R^2 value is 0.031 while the adjusted R^2 value is 0.029. This means that Facebook usage relates positively with the self-concept of secondary school students. The R^2 value indicates that Facebook usage accounts for 3.1% (0.031×100) showing the percentage of its influence on students' self-concept.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Table 4.2: Associated ANOVA analysis of extent Facebook usage relates with the self-concept of secondary school students

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Result
(Constant)	28.097	2.844		9.880	.000	
Facebook usage	.730	.204	.176	3.574	.000	Significant

In testing the hypothesis, the associated t-value in table 4.2 revealed calculated t-value of 3.57 while the Sig value is 0.00. Hence, since the sig value ($p=0.00<0.05$) is less than the alpha value of 0.05, the null

hypothesis is rejected meaning that there is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: *To what extent does TikTok usage influences the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State?*

Table 4.3: simple regression analysis of extent of TikTok influence on self-concept of secondary school students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.310	.096	.094

The analysis in table 4.3 shows that calculated R is 0.31. The R^2 value is 0.096 while the adjusted R^2 value is 0.094. This means that TikTok usage influences positively with the self-concept of secondary school students. The R^2 value indicates that TikTok usage accounts for 9.6% (0.096×100) showing the percentage of its influence on students' self-concept.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between TikTok usage and self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Table 4.4: t-test associated with simple regression analysis of extent TikTok usage influences the self-concept of secondary school students

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Result
(Constant)	15.133	3.571		4.238	.000	
TikTok usage	1.622	.249	.310	6.501	.000	Significant

In testing the hypothesis, the associated t-value in table 4.4 revealed calculated t-value of 6.50 while the Sig value is 0.000. Hence, since the sig value ($p=0.00<0.05$) is less than the alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected meaning that there is a significant influence of TikTok usage on the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: *To what extent does Instagram usage influences the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State?*

Table 4.5: simple regression analysis of extent Instagram usage influences on the self-concept of secondary school students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.183	.034	.031

The analysis in table 4.5 shows that calculated R is 0.183. The R^2 value is 0.034 while the adjusted R^2 value is 0.031. This means that Instagram usage relates positively with the self-concept of secondary school students. The R^2 value indicates that Instagram usage accounts for 3.4% (0.034×100) showing the percentage of its influence on students' self-concept.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of Instagram usage on self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Table 4.6: t-test associated with simple regression analysis of extent Instagram usage influences on self-concept of secondary school students

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Result
(Constant)	49.895	3.257		15.321	.000	
Instagram use	-.922	.248	-.183	-3.715	.000	Significant

In testing the hypothesis, the associated t-value in table 4.6 revealed calculated t-value of 3.17 while the Sig value is 0.000. Hence, since the sig value ($p=0.00<0.05$) is less than the alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected meaning that there is a significant influence of Instagram usage on the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

Summary of Findings

1. There is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.
2. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between Tik-Tok usage and the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.
3. There is a significant relationship between Facebook usage and the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Influence of Facebook Usage on Self-Concept

Research question one revealed that Facebook usage relates positively with the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Similarly, hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant influence Facebook usage on the self- concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The findings from this study revealed that Facebook usage relates positively with the self- concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. This means that the more students use Facebook, the more their self-concept will be affected. This is because in this current dispensation of technological advancement, people tend to value their relevance by their social media appearance and when they are not active on the social media space, they feel left out and see themselves as irrelevant, thus affecting their self-concept. This finding is expected by the researcher because a lot of secondary school students are being provided with phones by their parents and as a result, they engage actively on the social media space (Facebook). When they are not able to relate with the happenings on Facebook with their peers, they feel they are irrelevant and as such develop a negative self-concept of themselves. These findings agree with the study conducted by Okafor (2020) whose findings revealed that Facebook usage significantly influenced adolescents' self-concept: positive online interactions enhanced social and emotional self-concept, while excessive or negative usage was associated with lower self-esteem and negative self-perception.

Influence of Tik-Tok Usage on Self-Concept

Research question two revealed that Tik-Tok usage relates positively with the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Similarly, hypothesis two revealed that Tik-Tok usage significantly relates positively with the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The findings from this study revealed that Tik-Tok usage relates positively with the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. This means that the more students use Tik-Tok, the more their self-concept is affected. This is because Tik-Tok is a social platform known for posting of videos and short reels which may be false. A consistent view of these videos makes them believe those things posted are the main matters pertaining life, and when they are not able to meet up with such promoted way of life, they feel they are of no value. This finding is expected by the researcher because most of the short and trending short video clips posted on Tik-Tok are majorly for trends and monetisation and not really the reality. As a result, adolescents begin to look down on themselves simply because they saw just a side of the coin. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Nasidi (2024) whose result revealed that Tik-Tok usage had a significant positive effect on self-esteem, while social comparison was a significant predictor of self-esteem, with gender moderating the relationship such that females exhibited stronger effects.

Influence of Instagram Usage on Self-Esteem

Research question three revealed that Instagram usage influence positively on the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. Similarly, hypothesis three revealed that there is a significant influence of Instagram usage on the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The findings from this study revealed that Instagram usage relates positively with the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. This means that students' use of Instagram has an impact on their self-concept. This is because

Instagram is a platform where photos and videos are shared for the purpose of expression and entertainment and as such when students are not able to express themselves on this platform, they may likely feel worthless, and this affects their self-concept. Also, when they see the pictures and videos of models and influencers, they become elated and would want to copy such standards of living. This finding is expected by the researcher because the photos and videos shared mostly on Instagram are photos and videos reflecting the best moments of individuals which most times are used as comparison point by students, thus affecting their self-concept. These findings agree with the study conducted by Oladele et al. (2024) who stated that active engagement, such as posting content and interacting with peers, was positively associated with self-esteem and self-worth, whereas passive usage demonstrated weaker associations.

CONCLUSION

This study establishes that social media usage significantly influences the self-concept of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. All platforms examined; Facebook, Tik-Tok and Instagram showed significant influence on how students perceive themselves. This confirms that social media is a major environment in which adolescents form and express their identities. The findings also show that the impact of social media can be positive or negative depending on how students use these platforms. While unhealthy or excessive use can weaken self-concept, responsible and moderated engagement can support confidence, social connection, and self-expression. Therefore, the direction of influence depends largely on the quality and purpose of students' online activities. Since social media remains an important factor in adolescent development, Schools, parents, and community stakeholders must guide students toward healthier digital habits so that social media becomes a tool that strengthens, rather than diminishes, their self-concept.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings above, the following recommendations were made:

1. Facebook reels, videos, photos and comments should not be taken personally by students as they scarcely know the persons involved.
2. Tik-Tok reels and videos should not be taken personally by students as most of the videos are posted for the sake of content and monetisation.
3. Instagram reels, photos and videos of celebrities should be seen by students as a way to build themselves up in the path of their self-development rather than as a stand point of comparison.

REFERENCES

Abadali, K. R. (2024). The co-evolution of Tik-Tok and platformized culture. *International Journal of Communication, 16*, 2762–2780.

Abadali, K. R., Asatsa, S., & Ntaragwe, M. (2024). Self-concept and social media use among adolescents in Kenya.

Kennedy, L. (2000). The benefits of Facebook "friends": Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 12*(4), 1143–1168.

Meta Platforms, Inc. (2024). Meta Platforms, Inc. (2024). 2024 annual report (Form 10-K). U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. https://www.sec.gov/Archives/ edgar/data/1326801/000132680125000017/meta-20241231.htm

Rasmussen, G. (2022). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons, 54*(3), 241–251.

Okafor G. E. (2020) Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons, 53*(1), 59–68.

Nasidi, D. (2024) *The principles of psychology* (Vol. 1). Henry Holt.

Oladele, J. Kaye, D. B. V., Chen, X., & Zeng, J (2024) Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive–developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist, 34*(10), 906–911.

World Health Organization (2023). World health statistics 2023: Monitoring health for the SDGs. https://www.who.int/publications/b/69040