
EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS IN MIXED DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the effects of social media on academic achievement of mixed day secondary school students in Kajiado County, Kenya. The study used a cross-sectional survey research design to study the effects of social media on students' academic achievement. The specific target population included all mixed public day secondary schools in Kajiado County. The study sample size comprised of 200 girls and 200 boys from 10 mixed public secondary schools, principals and class teachers of the selected schools in the county. The sample for the study was selected using non-probability and probability sampling procedures. Questionnaires were used to collect data from form four girls and boys. The research concentrated on girls and boys in form four because there has been an outcry on their wrong use of social media. The selection of the schools for study was done through stratified sampling while the girls and boys were selected through systematic sampling. Questionnaires were used to collect data. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25 and the results presented using frequency, and summarized using pie-charts, tables and bar graphs. The findings of the study revealed that students have phones, use their phones for various purposes, spent more time using their phones for other purposes other than studying, think phones do not affect their academic achievement. However, parents and teachers felt that use of social media has a negative effect on academic achievement among students in mixed secondary schools in Kajiado.



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Keywords: Academic achievement, Academic performance, Social media, Students' achievement

INTRODUCTION

Social media, through its various social networking sites, have become common international trends which have spread across almost every corner of the world. The Use of Social media sites have increased and evolved into an online platform where people create content, share it, bookmark it and network at a tremendous rate (Dankasa 2010). Because of its ease of use and speed, social media is fast changing the public discourse in society and setting trends and agenda in topics that range from environmental, social, economic, and educational activities, including; instructions, learning, performance and achievement.

Social media are the interactive communication platforms that the contemporary society utilizes, to access information at wider, varied and faster rate, than ever before (Badmos, 2014). Social media is also a means for information sharing, socialization on line instruction and education in general among other things. The social media with its new technological components is increasingly pervasive in the modern world and plays a vital role in the lives of many individuals in many sectors of the society.

The use of mobile networks, as well as the internet has created platforms where persons can easily interact without the limitation of geographical distance, space and boundaries (Dankasa, 2010). Apart from sourcing information from the internet platforms, social media also enables the creation of new information and its dissemination or sharing. According to Shanna-Abu (2013), Facebook users topped all social media applications with over 955 million users in 2013 in Jordan, followed by Twitter with 500 million users. According to this author, the age distribution of Facebook users is concentrated on the younger categories where 300 million users are 18-24 years old, and 120 million users are between 13-17 years old. At the same time, there was nearly equal distribution of users between males and females.

Technology has exposed human beings to a better way of doing things through the use of Social networking sites which include: Twitter, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), Whatsapp, messenger, 2go messenger, Skype, Google talk, Google Messenger, iPhone and Androids. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet friends (Asemah & Edegoh, 2012). The use of social media platforms such as Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook have escalated in recent years particularly in Kenya which is perceived as an Information Communication Technology (ICT) hub in East Africa (Macharia, 2014). A study by Irankunda, Musau and Waithima (2018) revealed that social media is broadly utilized throughout Kenya by all ages to share and access information, but with the youth as major stake holders in its utilization. It is also vehemently argued that, the use of social media, is more prevalent among young persons, and more popular with students (Kaplan & Heinlein; 2010; Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

Similarly, Wyche and Olson (2018), argued that high school; students, are generally the major subscribers of the social media platforms. These authors revealed that by September, 2017, the number of Kenyans utilizing social media increased with 12 million persons out of whom 9 million were students, WhatsApp had 7.1 million with 5 million students' subscribers, Facebook had almost the same subscribers as WhatsApp, YouTube had approximately 8 million with 6 million, as students, and Instagram had 4 million out of whom 3 million were students.

The increasing adherence to the social media has affected many activities, including educational achievement-both in negative as well as positive ways. According to Adebayo (2013), constant exposure of high school students to Facebook has adverse effects on their academic achievement. The author argues that students often take time with information sharing with one another other than academic sharing. Mwadime (2015), argues that social networking sites have changed the way people communicate and share many things, including academic information in Kenya. He argues that those students who adhere strictly to academic sites do perform fairly well in their academic achievement, while those who do not adhere to academic sites, perform miserably in their academics.

Gross (2004), argues that the exponential growth of Internet use, globally has given rise to a number of challenges, both negative and positive. For instance, one of these challenges is that different kinds of information have become available to every student who has access to the internet. Some of these pieces of information rather than academic information, are preferred by the students at the expense of academic information, thus resulting into negative academic achievement. Ankabi and Ankabi (2004), argues that, negative academic results, more often than not, are due to students' exposure to "unsafe internet contents".

Despite the challenges associated with social media, it is noted that, it is the future means of learning, and is here to stay, taking into account its rapid expansion (Cruz, 2012; Hunter 2013). Cruz (2012) emphasizes that, "since the world is in constant conversation, students not active in it will be left behind". It is therefore imperative that all organizations, including institutions of learning to get involved.

Bennett, Maton and Kervin (2008) are of the opinion that, educators who encourage students to use social media can help them to enhance their academic achievement. Rambe (2002) warns the essentialist view that those new technological innovations such as the social media, disrupts higher education delivery and students' achievement. He argues that this theory is unproven. This part of the treatise has dealt with the interplay of social media and academic achievement globally, regional, and from local perspectives, and has established that, indeed there is a mismatch of social media and academic achievement.

According to Alwagait and Alim (2015), the role of social media on academic performance in Saudi Arabia students, revealed that Twitter was the most popular social network followed by Facebook. The average number of hours spent by students on social media was over twenty hours

a day. They acknowledged that excessive use of social media negatively impacted students' performance. Hasnain, *et al* (2015) carried out a research to study the relationship between the use of social media and students' academic performance in Pakistan. The results suggested that social media has an inverse relationship with academic performance. The author argues from the other side of the coin that, social media platform used in a positive manner can help students in gaining knowledge that can be used to enhance their academic achievement.

According to the study by Hartnell-Young and Heym (2008). He demonstrated how mobile phones improve learning in secondary schools, stating that the use of mobile phones for educational reasons is advantageous to learners, particularly school-aged kids. Although mobile phones are not always utilized at school, according to the report, some of the uses include studying, asking lesson' questions, and communicating with other students

Rithika and Selvaraj (2013), in a study, carried out in Indonesia, revealed that there was a significant impact of social media usage on students' academic achievement. A study by Oye Mahamat and Rahim (2012) also reveals that students unconsciously get addicted to the use of social media networks and get obsessed with them. They went further to state that students spend few minutes with their books and spend hours surfing and updating profiles as well as viewing photos (Mingle & Adams, 2015). The finding was also supported by Yeboah and Ewur (2014), in Ghana, who declared that social media can be distractive to academics. Junco *et al* (2010), carried out a study in the United States, and discovered that Social Networking is related to academic impairment at the bivariate level. In a study carried out in Malaysia by Oye, Mahamat & Rahim (2012), echoes the same predicament. They also, state, that students spend few minutes with their books and spend hours surfing and updating profiles as well as viewing photos.

Similarly, in a new survey by Common Sense Media (2020), an organization that promotes healthy technology and media for children, researchers discovered that teens spend an average of seven hours and 22 minutes a day on their phones, with tweens (ages 8 to 12) following closely behind with four hours and 44 minutes daily. According to the report, time spent on homework does not count toward this total amount of screen time. Mingle and Adams (2015), declared that despite the benefits that come with the participation of students on social media networks, it could impact negatively on their academic performances if not used properly.

According to Emeka and Nyeche (2016), internet usage is a beneficial tool to students as it enhances their skills and capability, which will assist them in studies and professional life. According to Wang (2011), the effects of social platforms rest on the degree of their usage. Jeong (2005) observed that internet addiction is significantly and negatively related to students' academic achievement, as well as emotional attributes. Adebayo (2013) argues that frequent visit to facebook has negative effects on students' achievement, while Mwadime (2015) argues differently, from the opposite side. It is clear from the fore-going discourse, that students' usage of the social media has direct bearing on both their positive and negative achievements as far as education is concerned. We look at this from the context of the effects of social media on students' academic achievements.

According to Ndege et al. (2015), secondary school students in Kenya are much more vulnerable to the negative effects of social networks in a manner consistently and concurrently similar to that found elsewhere in the world. The authors call for an urgent intervention in monitoring and censoring social media contents in regards to students.

Chebet (2017) carried out a study to investigate the effects of social media and academic performance among students, the results revealed that almost half of the students used the media successfully for good academic performance while almost half used the same for bad academic performance. The study addressed social media at the university level, but useful for the study in terms of its impact of academic achievement. This study is in line with Kiplagat and Mongina (2017) that asserts inconsistency in using social media for academic purposes. National perspectives of the social media, as it affects students' achievement is almost consistent with the literature reviewed from global, and regional perspectives.

It is clear from the reviewed literature that young persons, especially students, in general are the most subscribers of social media. At the same time, available research indicates that social media impacts are both negative and positive results, as far as individual users are concerned, for example negative and positive academic achievements. However, available research reports, have not strongly investigated the extent to which mixed day school students achievements have been affected by social media use. In Kajiado County, where the study was carried out, it is one of the 47 counties, in Kenya, bordering Nairobi, and extending to Tanzania. It has a population of over 1 million people with several public and private schools. The information about the effects of social media and academic achievement in Kajiado is very scanty, but several studies, carried out elsewhere in counties in Kenya, can be replicated to enhance the current study. The study used these studies for the fact that, Kenya is one, and what happens in one county may almost be similar. There has also been frequent complains on how social media use has affected the academic achievement of students, especially mixed public day secondary schools in Kajiado County, these reports have therefore, left out a gap, and this was the problem undertaken by the study. Therefore, this study has two main objectives: to determine the use of phones among mixed day secondary school students in Kajiado County, Kenya; and to examine the effect of use of phones on academic achievement of mixed day secondary school students in Kajiado County.

METHODOLOGY

The study used cross-sectional survey research design to study the effects of social media on students' academic achievement. The study was conducted in Kajiado County where majority of its population are pastoralists and the location has many mixed day schools. The specific target population included all mixed public day secondary schools in Kajiado County.

The researcher used probability and non-probability sampling techniques to select a sample of respondents for the study. Ten Mixed public day secondary schools were selected using stratified

random sampling. Ten (10) form four class teachers were purposively sampled. Form four classes were sampled using simple random sampling in schools with many form four streams. Purposive sampling was used to select form four class in one stream school and systematic random sampling was used to select (40) form four students in their schools. The target had key information on the effects of social media on academic achievements and its implication on education. The research concentrated on girls and boys in form four because there has been an outcry on their wrong use of social media. The total sample size was (420) respondents.

Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 and the results presented using pie-charts, frequency tables and bar graphs.

RESULTS

Out of the four hundred questionnaires that were distributed, three hundred and thirteen of them were completely filled. On the other hand, fifteen interview guides out of a total of twenty guides were answered. This forms a response rate of about 76.6%.

3.1 Background of the Study

The background information of the respondents that were considered in the current study included gender, age, school location and their residence.

Gender

The study sought to determine the gender of the students. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the respondents by gender.

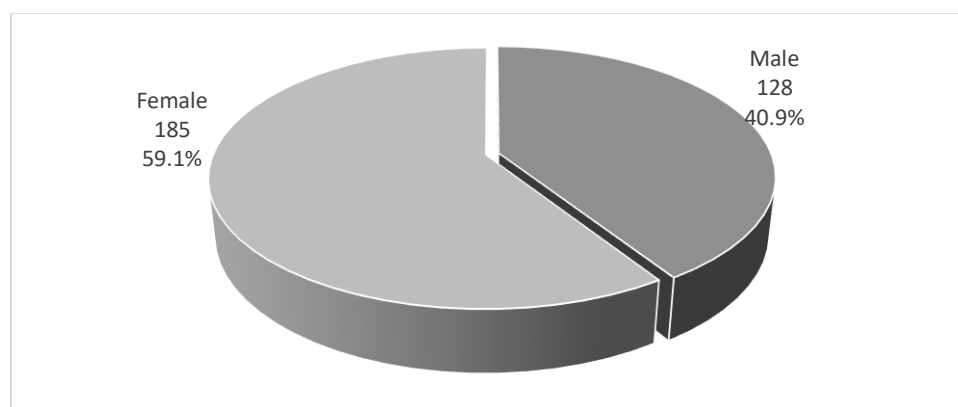


Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Majority (59.1%) of the respondents who participated in the study were female. The remaining 40.9% of the respondents were male.

Age Bracket

The respondents were asked to indicate their age bracket. This was categorized into the following: 13-15 years, 16- 18 years and 19 – 21 years. Figure 2 shows the distribution of student's age bracket.

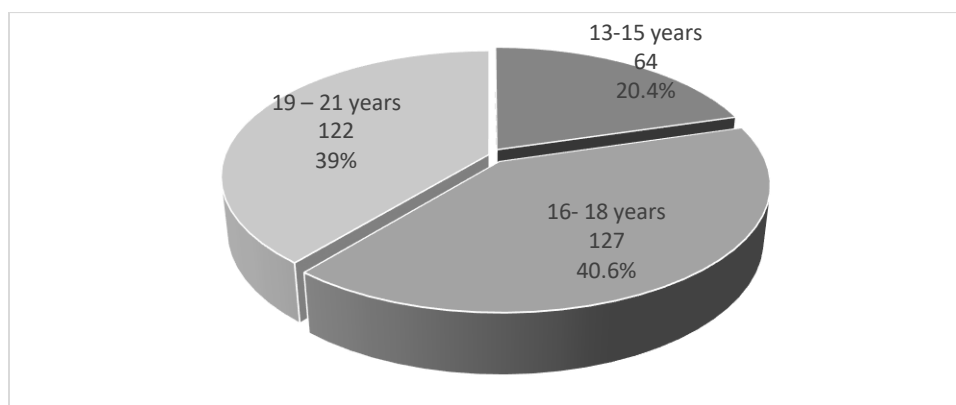


Figure 2: Distribution of student's age bracket

When asked to indicate their age bracket, 39% of the respondent were aged between 19 -21 years. This was followed by a small percentage (20.4%) of the respondents who were aged between 13-5 years and the rest 40.6% of them were aged between 16 and 18 years.

Location of school

In order to inform the education background, the school location was taken into account in the study. The categories included outskirts of town, town, rural shopping centers, and rural areas schools. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the respondents by location of school.

Figure 3

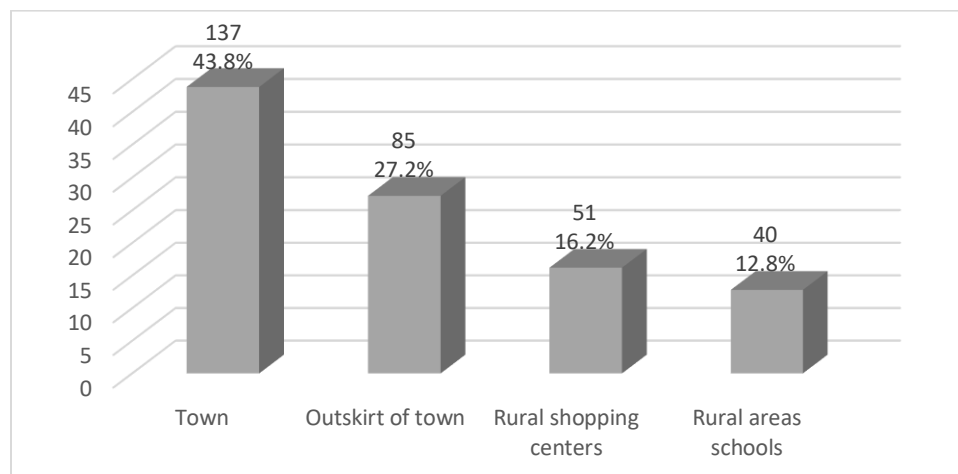


Figure 3: Distribution of the respondents by location of school

Considerable portion (43.8%) of the respondents were in town schools, another 27.2% of the respondents were in outskirts of town. A small percentage (16.2%) of the respondents were in schools around rural shopping centres while 12.8% of them were in rural areas schools.

Area of Residence

The respondents were asked to specify their area of residence. Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondent's places of residence.

Table 1

Distribution of the respondent's places of residence

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bulbul	62	19.8
bondeni	33	10.5
ooloolua	24	7.7
kiserian	25	8.0
Ngong	114	36.4
Karen	21	6.7
Magadi	16	5.1
Kajiado	18	5.8

When asked to indicate their places of residence, 19.8% of the respondents were resident of Bulbul, a small percentage (7.7%) of them were residents of Ooloolua. Another 8.0% of them were residents of Kiserians. Slightly above a third (36.4%) of them were residents of Ngong. Only 6.7% of them were residents of Karen while 5.1% resided at Magadi. The remaining 5.8% were residents of Kajiado.

What encourages you to use Social Media

The respondents were asked to specify what encouraged them to use social media. Their response are distributed as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Distribution of the respondent's places of residence

	Frequency	Percentage
to study	87	27.8
entertainment	83	26.5
Chatting	40	12.8
Wifi	36	11.5
data offers	29	9.3
N/A	38	12.1
Total	313	100.0

Slightly above a quarter (27.8%) of the respondents specified that “study” encourages them to use social media. Another 26.5% of them indicated that “entertainment” led them to use social media. With regards to the question on use of social media, a small percentage (12.8%) of them identified “chatting” as their answer. Only 11.5% indicated “Wi-Fi” as their answer while 9.3% used social media due to “data offers. The remaining 12.1% did not specify any answer.

With whom do you stay with?

A study sought to find out whom the students lived with in their homes. The study provided the following options: father, mother, guardian, both parents and siblings. Figure 4 depicts who the students live with at home

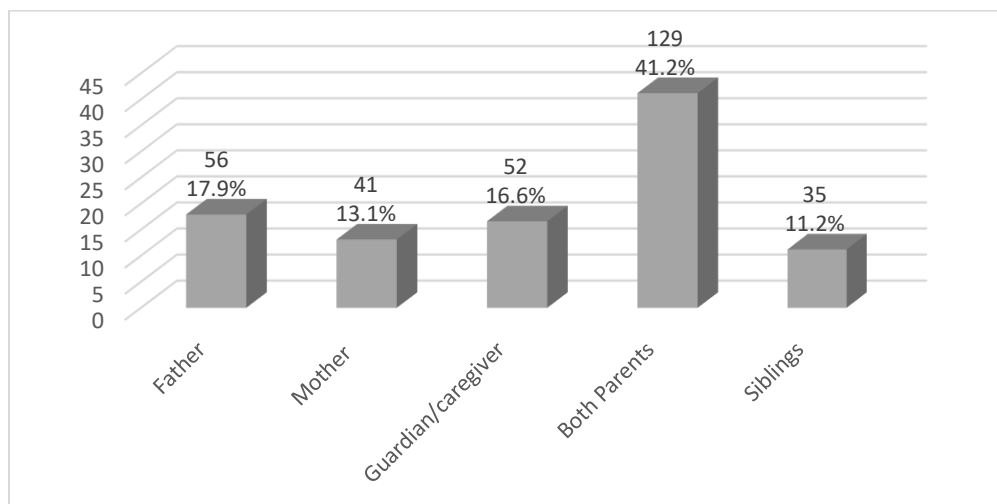


Figure 4: who the students live with at home

A small percentage (17.9%) of the respondents stayed with their father while 13.1% of them with their mother. Whereas 41.2% of the respondents stayed with both parents, only 11.2% of them stayed with their siblings.

3.2 Does your parent encourage you to balance between the use of social media and your studies?

The study aimed to find out whether the parents encouraged the students to balance social media and their studies. The Figure 5 shows the responses given by the respondents.

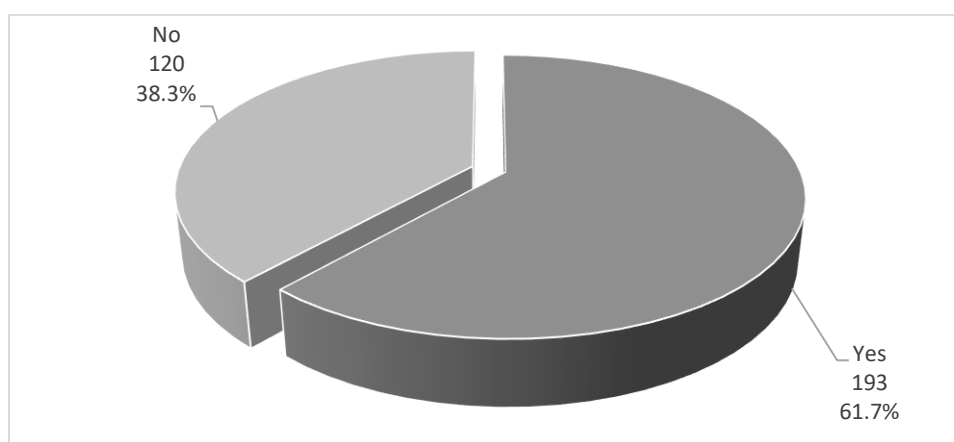


Figure 5: Does your parent encourage you to balance between the use of social media and your studies

Majority (61.7%) of them indicated that their parents encouraged them to balance social media and studies. Slightly more than a third (38.3%) of the respondents were not encouraged by their parent to balance social media use and studies.

3.3 The Use of Phones among Mixed Day Secondary School Students in Kajiado County, Kenya

3.3.1 Do you have your own mobile phone?

In order to determine the various reasons for owning a phone, the respondents were asked to indicate their reasons. The study provided the following reasons for owning a phone: chatting, entertainment, study and any other. Figure 6 shows the distribution of the responses

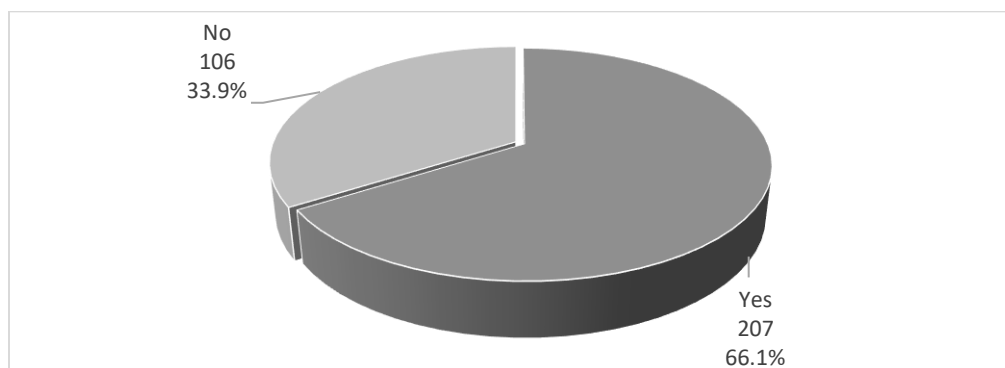


Figure 6: Do you have your own mobile phone?

A majority (66.1%) of the respondents own a mobile phone. Slightly more than a third (33.9%) of them do not own a mobile phone.

3.3.2 How do you use your phone during free time at home?

The study aimed at investigating how the respondents used their phones during their free time at home. Table 3 shows the various ways in which the respondents used their phones during free time while at home.

Table 3

How do you use your phone during free time at home

	Yes		No		N/A	
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
To chat	163	52.1	105	33.5	45	14.4
To play games	158	50.5	110	35.1	45	14.4
To watch videos	120	38.3	148	47.3	45	14.4
To assist in studying school work	140	44.7	128	40.9	45	14.4
To call and receive calls	148	47.1	102	32.6	63	20.1
Any other	68	21.7	181	57.8	64	20.4

When asked to indicate how the respondents used their phone during their free time at home. Slightly more than a half (52.1%) of the respondents used their phones for chatting, 33.5% used their phone for other reasons. The remaining 14.4% were undecided.

Regarding the statement on whether students used their phones “to play games,” slightly more than a half (50.5%) of the respondents indicated that they used their phones while slightly above a third (35.1%) of them indicated that they did not use the phone. The remaining 14.4% were undecided.

With regards to whether they use their phones “to watch videos,” 38.3% indicated that they used their phones. Another 47.3% indicated “no” while small percentages (14.4%) of them were undecided.

Considerable percentage (44.7%) of the respondents indicated that they used their phones to assist them in their studies. Another 40.9% of them indicated that they did not use their phone where as a small percentage (14.4%) were undecided.

With reference to whether they used their phones “to call and receive calls,” 47.1% of them indicated “yes” while nearly a third (32.6%) of the respondents indicated that they did not use their phones. Rest of the respondents (20.1%) were undecided.

When asked whether they use their phones for “other activities,” a small percentage (21.7%) of the respondents indicated that they used their phones. A majority (57.8%) indicated “no”. The remaining 20.4% of the respondents were undecided.

3.3.3 At what time do you use your mobile phone to chat with friends at home?

The study sought to find out the time the respondents use their phones to chat with their friends at home. The Table 4 shows the time in which different respondents use their phone to chat with friends at home.

Table 4

Time during which respondents use their phone to chat with friends at home

	YES		NO		N/A	
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
All the time	89	28.4	179	57.2	45	14.4
After studies	107	34.2	161	51.4	45	14.4
Weekends only	121	38.7	147	46.9	45	14.4
Overnight	68	21.7	190	60.7	55	17.6

A majority (57.2%) of the respondents do not use their phones at home to chat with friends “all the time” while 28.4% of them indicated that they use their phones to chat with friends at home. The remaining 14.4% were undecided.

When asked whether they used their phones to chat with their friends “after studies”, slightly more than a third (34.2%) indicated “Yes”. Another 51.4% indicated that they did not use their phones while only a small percentage (14.4%) was undecided.

When asked to indicate whether they used their phones to chat with friends at home during “weekends only”, 38.7% of the respondents indicated that they used their phones. Considerable percentage (46.9%) of them indicated that they did not use their phones. The remaining 17.6% were undecided.

With reference to whether they used their phones to chat with friends “overnight”, a small percentage (21.7%) of the respondents indicated that they used their phones while a majority (60.7%) of them did not use their phone during that time. Only 7.8% of the respondents were undecided. From the interviews conducted, some of the teachers and principals concluded that students in secondary schools use their phones after school to chat with friends listen to music and watch videos. On the other hand, some of the students use their phones in online learning and research study.

3.3.4 How often do you use your phone for school work?

The study sought to find out how often the respondents used their phone for school work. Figure 7 shows how often the respondents use their phone for school work.

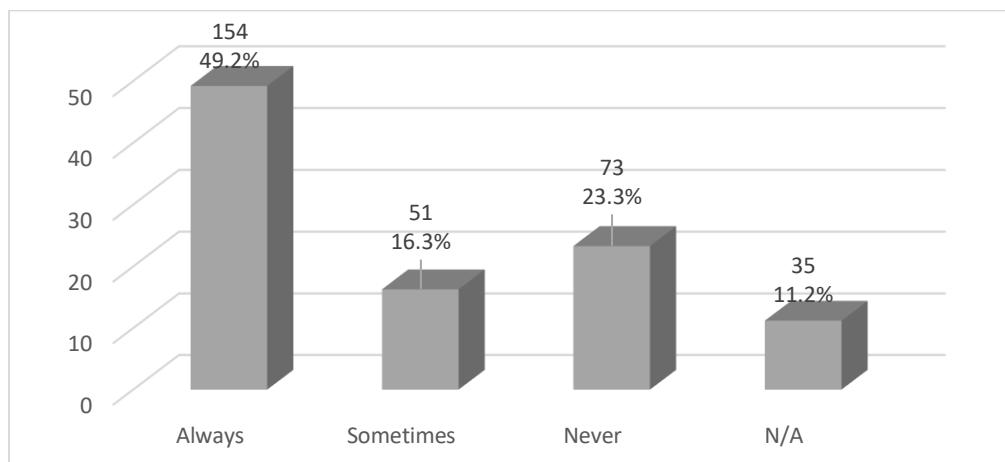


Figure 7: Shows how often the respondents use their phone for school work

With regards to how the respondents used their phones for school work, almost a half (49.2%) of the respondents indicated that they always used their phones, a small percentage (16.3%) of them indicated that they used their phones sometimes while 23.3% indicated that they never used their phones. Only 11.2% of the respondents were undecided

3.4 The effect of Use of Phones on Academic Achievement of Mixed Day Secondary School Students

3.4.1 Does the use of phones affect your school work?

The study sorts to find out whether the use of phones affected the students school work. Figure 8 shows the effect of use of phones on students' schoolwork.

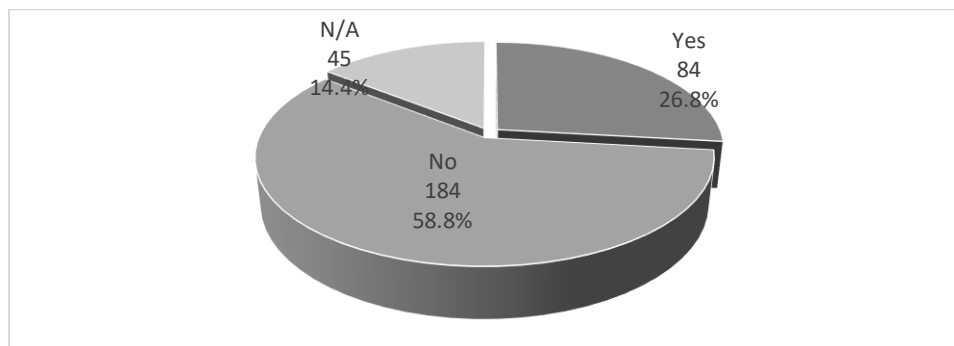


Figure 8: Use of phones affect your school work

A majority (58.8) of the respondents' school work was not affected when they used their phone. Slightly more than a quarter (26.8%) of them were affected in their school work when they used their phones. impact of social media usage on students' academic achievement.

3.4.2 Does the use of phones waste school time?

The respondents were asked to indicate whether the use of phones wasted their school time. Figure 9 shows the distribution of their responses.

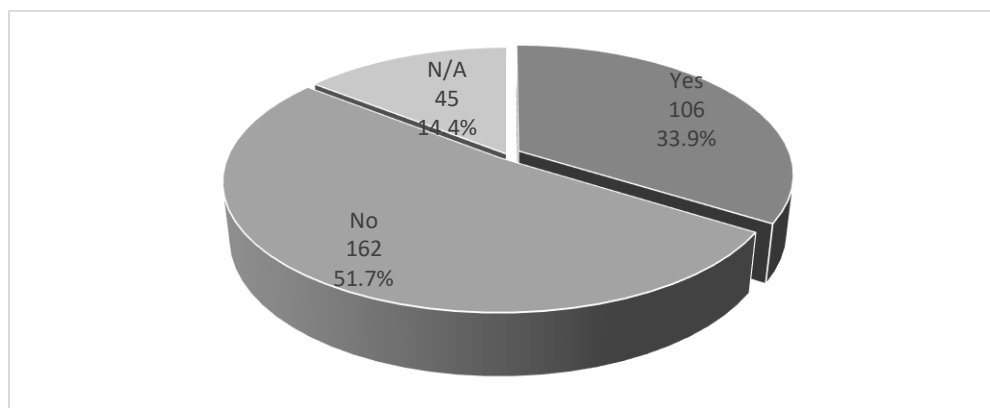


Figure 9: use of phones waste school time

Slightly above a third (33.9%) of the respondents' use of phones wasted their school time. Slightly more than a half (51.7%) of them disagreed with the statement. They indicated that although mobile phones are not always utilized at school, according to the report, some of the uses include studying, asking lesson' questions, and communicating with other students. Mobile phones may be useful at school, and some of the gadgets may be managed by teachers throughout the school to make them more beneficial, Small percentage of 14.4% of respondents were undecided.

The study conducted interviews on principals and teachers to shed more light on how the use of phones affected the students' school work. One of the key informants highlighted that the use of phone affected the students' school work. Shedding more light, one of the key informants reported that, "majority of the students have a divided mind attention." Another key informant added that "student's discipline has gone down."

Based on the interviews conducted on principals and teachers, the key informants reported that the students do not use phones in school. Therefore, phones do not waste the student's school time. The study revealed that there are mixed reactions on the effect of mobile phone on students' school work. In the recent years, phone is one of the most accessible sources of information. Having a phone on their person at all times allows students to check things out in a more enjoyable way than going to the library all the time. Some professors are starting to allow the Mobile Student to conduct research during a lecture or utilize Twitter to create a backchannel of communication and

improve student awareness and involvement. Students in most of the schools only use their phones in the school holiday for the boarding and at the evenings for day schools' students.

3.4.3 Are there any impacts of the use of social media to your studies?

The study intended to identify the negative impacts of the use of social media on student's studies.

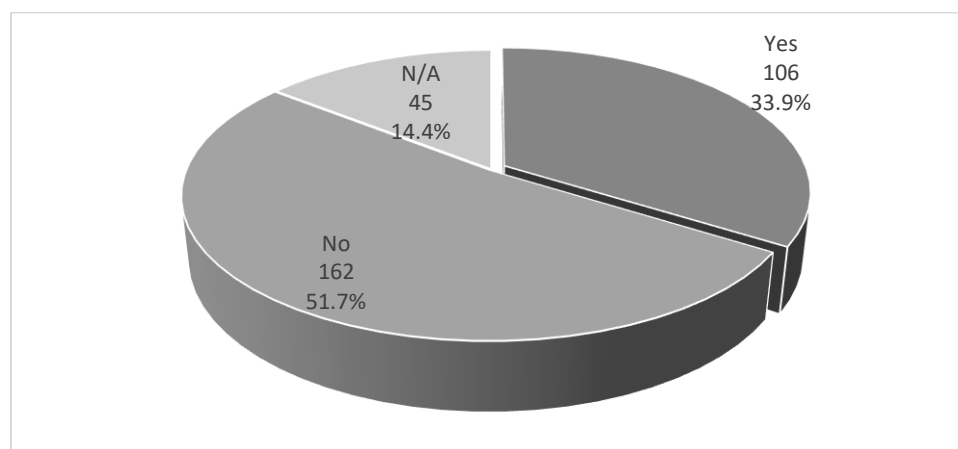


Figure 10: impacts of the use of social media to studies

Slightly above a third (33.9%) of the respondents agreed that there is a negative impact of social media to their studies while 51.7% of them disagreed with the statement. A small percentage (14.4%) were undecided.

DISCUSSION

The first objective of the study was to determine the use of phones among mixed day secondary school students in Kajiado County, Kenya. Based on the study findings, a majority (66.1%) of the respondents owned a mobile phone while another 33.9% of them did not own a mobile phone. Slightly more than a half (52.1%) of the respondents use their phones for chatting, while 50.1% of them for playing games. Considerable percentage (38.3%) of them use phones to watch videos while 44.7% of them for studying. 47.1% of them used their phones to care and receive calls and another 21.7% of them used their phones for other purposes. Concerning when the respondents chat with friends, a majority (57.2%) of them do not use their phones to chat all the time. Slightly more than a half (51.4%) of them did chat using their phones after studies. Another 46.9% of the respondents used did not use their phones during weekends only. A majority (60.7%) of them did not chat with friends overnight. These findings concur with a study by Mezei, Benyi and Muller (2007) who found that majority of students used their phones to make calls and send messages. Their study conducted on use of mobile phones in English education in Japan. The study found out that every single person owned a mobile phone. Ninety-nine percent used their mobile phones

to send e-mail, exchanging about 200 messages per week. Sixty-six percent used e-mail to communicate with classmates about classes, while 44 percent used it to study.

With regards to how often students used their phones for studies, almost a half (49.2%) of them indicated “always” while another 23.3% indicated that they never use them for studies. These findings concur with the findings of Ott, Haglind and Lindström, (2014), who found that students use their devices for school-related duties, a small percentage (16.3%) of them indicated that they used their phones sometimes while 23.3% indicated that they never used their phones.

The second aim of the study was to examine the effect of use of phones on academic achievement of mixed day secondary school students in Kajiado County. A majority (58.8%) of the respondents indicated that their school work was not affected when they used their phone. Teachers and principals’ differed with the students according to the interviews that were conducted. The key informants reported that use of phones affected the students’ school work. Slightly more than a half (51.7%) of them indicated that using their phones did not waste their school time. Based on the interviews that were conducted, the key informants however highlighted that the use of phones affected the student’s academic achievement. Slightly above a third (33.9%) indicated that social media negatively affected the students’ performance. These findings concur with a study by Oye, Mahamat and Rahim (2012), who found that students unconsciously get addicted to the use of social media networks and get obsessed with them. Hartnell-Young and Heym (2008), whose findings demonstrated how mobile phones improved learning in secondary schools. They indicated that although mobile phones are not always utilized at school, according to the report, some of the uses include studying, asking lesson’ questions, and communicating with other students. Heavy video game play, for example, has been associated with poorer GPAs (Jackson, von Eye, Fitzgerald, Witt, & Zhao, 2011). Chen and Peng (2008) established that low levels of internet use have also been linked to better academic performance.

CONCLUSIONS

The study made the following conclusions based on the study objectives:

Students in mixed day secondary schools spent more time using their phones for other purposes other than studying. Thus, a great amount of time for studying is lost when students use their phones for other purposes.

There are mixed reactions between students, teachers and principals regarding the use of phones on academic achievement. Whereas student’s view that phones do not affect their academic achievement, parents and teachers are for contrary opinion.

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