

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE YOUTH IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: MYTH OR REALITY

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Abstract

Although the early promises of social media usage focuses on strengthening and promoting positive social behaviour among the users by given voice to the voiceless and turning the world into utopic connected village, nevertheless, in recent years, social media is also linked with anti-social behaviours online particularly among the teeming youth. This study examined the effect of social media on anti-social behaviour among the Nigerian University students with special reference to Universities located in Kano State. Survey method using cross sectional design was used and data was collected quantitatively by administering questionnaires to a total of 330 undergraduate students. Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used in testing the hypotheses. The findings shows that knowledge acquisition has a significant negative relationship with anti-social behaviour. Also, sharing information has a significant negative relationship with anti-social behaviour. However, result shows that interpersonal behaviour has no significant negative relationship with anti-social behaviour among students in public universities in Kano- Nigeria. The study conclude that the more university students engaged in knowledge acquisition and information sharing on social media the less likely they engaged in anti-social behavior like harassment, cyber bullying, blackmailing, and involvement into fraudulent activities like financial scam or yahoo-yahoo, impersonation, simulation, among others.

Keywords: Knowledge acquisition, sharing of information, interpersonal relationship, anti-social Behaviour.

1.0 Introduction

Social media is basically meant to reshape the minds and reasoning of the users that attached so much meaning and importance to it, which is strategically designed to accomplish through sharing of authentic information and news; uploading hilarious paintings, photos and videos; promotion of goods and services; and upholding the interpersonal relationships between friends, family members, couples, partners etc. Onovo and Okechukwu (2024) asserted that the media is tagged social media because of its attribute that enables the interactive communication among users on the web, it is also an interactive platform for communication between people of different categories. Social media which is mainly for conveying information has been essential

among students including University students. The growing trend in World Wide Web (WWW) has increased knowledge acquisition, sharing and transfer of information has become easier than before. People from all walks of life can now easily share information, pictures and posts, which are more or less motivational on the social media, and advertise job vacancies. With the advancement in technology, all these can be done conveniently using smart phones, tablets, or personal computers. Furthermore, with the advent and emergence of social media globally, many University students has up their games in terms of utilizing the media wisely for more acquisition of knowledge meanwhile, many devote most of their time on things that adds no value to their academics such as constant chatting and uploading of different pictures (Umoh, 2023). Social media are media with web-based tools and services that via collaboration and information sharing promote community development (Aldas, Camandona, Concepcion, Sales, &Vinson, 2024). In its broader context, social media includes; web based technologies like YouTube (social video sharing service), text messaging, blovcgs, microblogs such as Twitter, social networking services (e.g. Facebook, tiktok, WhatsApp).

Despite the fact that universities like Bayero University Kano (BUK), North west university, Kano, Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology, Wudil and other Nigerian universities and institution of learning made relatively significant efforts to improve the determinants of social media viz: sharing of authentic information to the university students, teaching students through means of social media for knowledge acquisition, supporting university students to strengthen their interpersonal relationship through social media networking among others, but still the social behavior of some students has been skewing into negative position known as anti-social behaviors proxied by cyber bullying, social media insults and harassment, fraudulent activities and financial dishonesty, civil/social media violent activities that sometimes lead to battery and assault, drug abuses, social media or corporate prostitution, to name but a few. These anti-social behaviors or social vices being committed by public universities students due to their inclination to negative segment of social media or social networking, are not impeccable to the guiding principles, visions and mission of public universities (Good character and learning). Some public figures, social media analysts, academic scholars and researchers in the field attributed the anti-social behaviours or social vices belittling the students morality and ethics to many challenges bedeviling the real justification of establishing social media networks, thus spreading and or sharing of fakes information that appears contrary to the ethical and moral behavior of the public universities students, sharing of semi-pornographic photos and videos by the users of social media that are either studying in the universities or living closed to (proximity disease), removing the applications meant to educate the university students known as knowledge based sites, by social media users, promotion of some social media rooms/houses for interpersonal relationship in a way and manner.

Although several studies have been conducted on the effect of social media on social behavior and/or anti-social behavior among the youth in Nigeria, (Uduak, Uwem, Ifeanyi & Philomena, 2024; Wogasogi, James & Iordaah, 2023; Hillary, Patience & Florence, 2021; Lateef, 2020;), revealed positive effect. Nevertheless, other scholar (Dike, Ibeh, and Ernest-Samuel, 2024; Ojo

(2022); Ismail 2021; Michele & Kimberly 2020) displayed negative effect and argued that further research in this area is needed to unravel whether the same factors or determinants of social media have significant positive effect on social behavior and/or anti-social behavior. This suggested that more studies are required to truly ascertain the real direction and magnitude of the relationships. Additionally, studies on the relationship between these three dimensions of social media (knowledge acquisition, sharing of information and interpersonal relationship) and anti social behaviour are either few or totally missing in current literature. To address this gap, this study assess the effect of social media on anti-social behavior among the youth in Nigerian university. It has been observed that the logical and ethical use of social media or social media networking like Tiktok Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, among others, in the Nigerian university system will serve as a good signal to reshaping the ethical ideology of Nigerian youth especially those studying in Nigerian Universities towards achieving positive social behavior, by learning and displaying good characters and honesty, and imparting good attitudes to their peers through social media socialization, especially those that are not opportune to study in Nigerian universities.

Based on the foregoing, the major objective of this paper is to assess the effect of Social Media on Anti-Social Behaviour among the Youth in Nigerian University with special reference to Bayero University Kano, Northwest University and Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology, Wudil. The study therefore proposed and tested three hypotheses to examine whether social media have significant negative effect on anti-social media among the Youth in Nigerian Universities. Specifically, the study examines whether sharing of information through social media; knowledge acquisition through social media; promotion of interpersonal relationship through social media can negatively affect anti-social behaviour among the youth in Nigerian University. The rest of this paper is organized as follows: section two provide the literature review and theoretical framework while, section three shows the Methodology employed for this study. Accordingly, section four presents the result and analysis; and finally section five provides detail discussions, conclusion and implications.

2.0 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This section presented the review of important variables of the study coupled with the theoretical explanations of the research framework/model.

2.1 Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-social Behavior has been conceptualized by various scholars under different perspectives. For instance, scholars like Pezzoli, McCrory, Viding, (2025) conceptualized it as a set of actions that violate social norms and disregard the well-being and rights of others, often leading to significant interpersonal and societal disruptions. This suggests that antisocial behaviors not only violate norms but also create harm in social environments. Examples of this behaviors include aggressive behavior, such as online harassment, or using social media platforms to manipulate others for personal gain. It could also manifest as individuals spreading hate speech, disregarding the feelings and rights of targeted groups. Antisocial behavior is a description for all behaviors, attitudes, and personality traits that people engage in that appear to be dysfunctional, in that they often have negative interpersonal and societal outcomes. Antisocial behavior, often associated

with Antisocial Personality Disorder (ASPD), includes traits such as a lack of empathy, manipulation, and a disregard for the rights and feelings of others, typically resulting in impulsive and risky behaviors (Health.com, 2023), this assertion emphasizes a clinical perspective, associating antisocial behavior with psychological traits such as manipulateness and a profound disregard for others' rights. Examples in the social media context include using platforms to exploit vulnerable individuals, spread harmful content to gain followers, or manipulate others emotionally for personal or financial gain. There is no agreed definition of anti-social behavior, and subjectivity makes any definition difficult. Assumptions are made that there are 'community' definitions of order, which are socially and legally enforced. In reality, understandings vary greatly within and between communities. Anti-social behaviors range from those that are, at most, uncivil or inconsiderate to those that are dangerous and criminal (Jacobson, Millie, & Hough, as cited in Walsh, 2019). Anti-social behavior means the extent to which youths or undergraduate students demonstrate certain unethical and immoral behaviors in the Nigerian universities, thus: harassment, cyber bullying, blackmailing, and involvement into fraudulent activities, known as financial scam or Yahoo-yahoo, impersonation, simulation, among others.

2.2 Social Media

Social media is a technology that shares the ideas and information through the virtual networks and communities were busy with social media with computers, tablet or smartphone via web based software or applications. Social media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks the office of communications and marketing managers the main Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, linkdin and YouTube accounts. Social media is most used form of media with many features and characteristics. It has many facilities on same channel like as communicating texting, audio and video sharing, fast publishing linking all over the world direct connecting it is also cheapest fast access to the world so it is very important for all age of peoples it use is increasing day by day with high rate in all over the world (Chou & Lin, 2023; Wirtz & Lim, 2022; Zhang & Sung 2021). Social media has been identified as a form of electronic communication in social networking sites through which users across the world create online communities to share information, ideas, business products, personal messages and other content at ease. Some of the social media platforms and sites include: Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, Internet Relay Chat (IRC) or blogs, and email (Gazi, Rahaman & Rabbi, 2024).

Based on the conceptual literature of social media, three variables of Social Media have been selected for this paper, thus: Knowledge acquisition, information sharing, and interpersonal relationship. To actualize this, the study observed that the selected factors or determinants of social media are more appropriate.

Theoretically, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), proposed by Albert Bandura in 1986, is considered a powerful framework for understanding human behavior, especially in complex environments like social media. This theory suggests that human behavior is shaped by a continuous interplay between personal factors, behaviors, and environmental influences. He emphasized that people are not passive recipients of their surroundings, but active participants in

shaping their experiences and responses. Essentially, SCT posits that individuals acquire and exhibit behaviors by observing others, imitating their actions, and modeling what they see in their environment, particularly in social settings like social media platforms. In the context of social media, SCT is highly relevant because it helps explain how youth learn and adopt behaviors by interacting with digital content, peers, and influencers. Social media provides an interactive space where young people can observe a wide range of behaviors, from positive actions like charitable activities to negative behaviors like cyberbullying or the display of risky behaviors. Through the process of observational learning, individuals can pick up these behaviors and replicate them in their own lives. For example, a teenager might observe peers posting about harmful substances or risky behaviors, which could encourage similar actions. SCT also emphasizes the role of self-regulation and self-efficacy in behavior. Self-regulation refers to an individual's ability to monitor and control their actions based on personal goals and social standards. In the context of social media, this could mean a youth deciding whether to post something based on how they perceive the potential reactions of others. Meanwhile, self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations. A person's belief in their social media persona or online influence can impact the type of content they share or the behavior they display. Therefore, SCT provides a comprehensive understanding of how youth are influenced by both their online environments and their personal beliefs and attitudes, making it an invaluable tool for examining the impact of social media on anti-social behavior and other aspects of youth behavior.

The adoption of Social Cognitive Theory is appropriate because it comprehensively captures the complex nature of social media use and the resulting behaviors, particularly anti-social behavior. The theory explains how youths acquire knowledge, share information, and form interpersonal relationships through their online interactions. These processes can lead to both positive and negative behaviors.

2.3 Hypotheses Development

2.3.1 Knowledge Acquisition and Anti-social Behavior

Knowledge acquisition can be defined as accepting knowledge from the external environment and transforming it so that it can be used by an organization (Fauzi, Mohamad & Abdul Wahab, 2024). Knowledge acquisition through social media is a new approach for the societies nowadays. Majority of the society have access to social media, therefore some of the societies must have the thirst for knowledge. So they will try to acquire new knowledge through mediums that they have been familiar with such as Blogs, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, and Wikipedia. Most of the students in the higher education nowadays took the advantage of the social media to distribute and acquire knowledge among them. However, to acquire knowledge through social media there are a lot of problems and challenges faced in order to obtain the right and useful knowledge (Sivakumar, Jayasingh & Shaik, 2023). Knowledge acquisition at an individual level is composed of two crucial elements. The first element is change in the cognitive structure or the mental model. Since knowledge is justified, belief in what is the truth, acquiring knowledge means that individuals change their cognitive structure by justifying their personal belief that the acquired knowledge is true (Suti & Sari, 2023).

In an empirical study of student in nigerian high institution of learning, Oni and Osu, (2023) found that knowledge sharing via social media shows negative relationship with antisocial tendencies. This implied that purposeful use of social media for knowledge acquisition reduces/minimizes antisocial behavior among students. Consequently, knowledge acquisition online fosters prosocial norms that buffer against antisocial behavior (Lysenstøen, Bøe, Hjetland & Skogen, 2021)

From the theoretical perspective, social cognitive theory was used to explain the possible link between knowledge acquisition and anti-social behaviors. Therefore, since social media serves as a vast space for acquiring knowledge, the theory suggests that youths can learn about various subjects both positive or negative by observing others' posts, videos, and shared experiences. In the case of anti-social behavior, youths might learn harmful behaviors like cyberbullying by observing their peers (Kuss & Griffiths, 2021). Thus, if the knowledge shared via social media is more of negative subjects then youth or students will automatically learn negative behaviors thereby exhibiting more antisocial behaviors. Based on the theoretical and empirical supports the first hypothesis was developed.

H1: Knowledge acquisition has significant negative effect on antisocial behaviour of undergraduate students in public universities in Kano State.

2.3.2 Information Sharing and Anti-social Behavior

Masele (2021) considered information as anything a person finds informing, through which people perceive to have a sense of control and power. Information is thus considered as power, with which, one can control his/her own destiny, career, and money. It is knowledge accumulated from information that gives one the power of decision making. Through information one can confidently devise strategies, make decisions, and implement action. Thus, it keeps one ahead, making him/her knowledgeable, brings respect, it is valuable and brings control. To that extent, information is considered as increasingly being perceived as a valuable asset in today's modern society, de facto that in some occurrences information is by far the most valuable asset of a business and its activities. Evidences indicate that information provides the capability to deliver services, make better decisions, improve performance and achieve competitive advantage. It is therefore important that an information user - individual who actively exercises his/her right to access different information sources (Muliadi *et al.*, 2024; Sun, Shan, Chen & Hu, 2024), irrespective of the contextual differences, have access to required information. Information is essential for the functioning of every social system, especially for our modern society. According to Chatterjee, Rana and Dwivedi (2020), just like food, shelter, and cloths, information is indisputably one of the necessities of life. Shahbazi, Mirbabaie and Stieglitz (2023) asserts that information is needed in all spheres of life to facilitate decision making and engendering progress. When we get informed about something, we get knowledge that protects us from making mistakes. Additionally, information is considered as an input to our minds that we work with when thinking. It interacts with the inner mind, altering it based on the outer world for behavioural change.

From the empirical perspective, a study from Oladimeji and Bello (2022) revealed that while social media platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram were commonly used for academic collaboration and sharing educational materials, excessive use of these platforms led to distractions, time mismanagement, and reduced academic focus. Accordingly the study of Álvarez-García et al. (2019) revealed that information sharing among peer group reduces anti-social behavior. While, Ikediashi and Akande (2015) argued that lack of information sharing (due to poor communication, secrecy, or weak parental guidance) was associated with higher antisocial behavior

Theoretically, the possible link between information sharing and anti-social behavior can be explain by SCT. For instance, social media encourages the sharing of information, whether it is personal experiences or opinions and SCT emphasizes the reciprocal influence between individuals and their environment. Therefore, when a youth shares harmful content, they not only impact their peers but also contribute to a social environment where negative behaviors are normalized (Aghaee & Amini, 2021). Consequently, knowingly or unknowingly others will copy leading to more youth practicing negative behaviors thinking that it is a new normal behaviors. Upon these the second hypothesis was developed:

H2: *Information sharing has a significant negative effect on antisocial behaviour of undergraduate students in public universities in Kano State.*

2.3.3 Interpersonal Relationship and Anti-social Behavior

Interpersonal relationships refer to reciprocal social and emotional interactions between two or more individuals in an environment. It is defined as a close association between individuals who share common interests and goals (Nagar & Yadava, 2024). Social Media sites have become veritable platforms where people can create global relationship from the comfort of their homes or offices. Social Media forums allow users to build a personal profile, invite friends and colleagues, interact, entertain and educate individuals through the exchange of public profiles, photos, audio and video files, digital information and artifacts, emails, instant messages, and contact information through virtual worlds. Both mutual and distant relationships could be created through social media (Hatamleh *et al*, 2023). The impact of social media on social, personal and interpersonal relationships in the world cannot be under played. Social media fundamentally exists in order to enhance interpersonal relationships (Yu, 2023). Communicating with people through social media platforms allow people to contact with anyone, anywhere in the world no matter the distance from each other and regardless of time or zone. The medium of creating interpersonal friendships through social media is easier, cheaper and faster. Several social media relationships have metamorphosed into physical and real world events. Many persons have been made successful in life through the assistance of social media friends. Some have married someone who they contact through social media. Others have received medical assistance and other forms of support from the contacts made through social media. The online interaction provides a means in which one could learn the ability to relate with others, tolerate differing viewpoints, expressing thoughts and feelings in a healthy way, and practice critical thinking skill (Wang & Li, 2024; Kidman, 2024). Akoja and Odozi (2020) explored the impact of social media on communication and social engagement among students at the University of Lagos and found that while social media enhanced communication and global connectivity, it also led to a decline in face-to-face interactions, contributing to weakened interpersonal skills

and social disconnection. Eze and Okwu (2022) revealed that while social media facilitated relationships, it often contributed to superficial connections and emotional detachment, particularly among students who lacked face-to-face communication skills and these can lead to negative behaviors. Also, study from Agbasi and Bebenimibo (2023) shows the role of Facebook in shaping interpersonal relationships among university students in South-East Nigeria. Their findings indicated that Facebook played a significant role in facilitating both romantic and non-romantic relationships among students, though it was noted that misunderstandings and social media fatigue were common consequences.

Social Cognitive Theory can help to explain the reason for social media usage in influencing interpersonal relationships leading to anti-social behaviors. In this regard, scholars argued that some negative behaviors, like insults and online harassment, can shape how youths interact in real life, affecting their social lives and even contributing to feelings of isolation and low self-esteem (Bakker & Delespaul, 2022). Therefore we can see that SCT suggests that negative interpersonal dynamics in the online world can translate into anti-social behavior in offline settings. Therefore, based on the aforementioned empirical support and theoretical postulations our third hypothesis was developed as follows:

H3: *Interpersonal relationships has a significant negative effect on antisocial behaviour of undergraduate students in public universities in Kano State.*

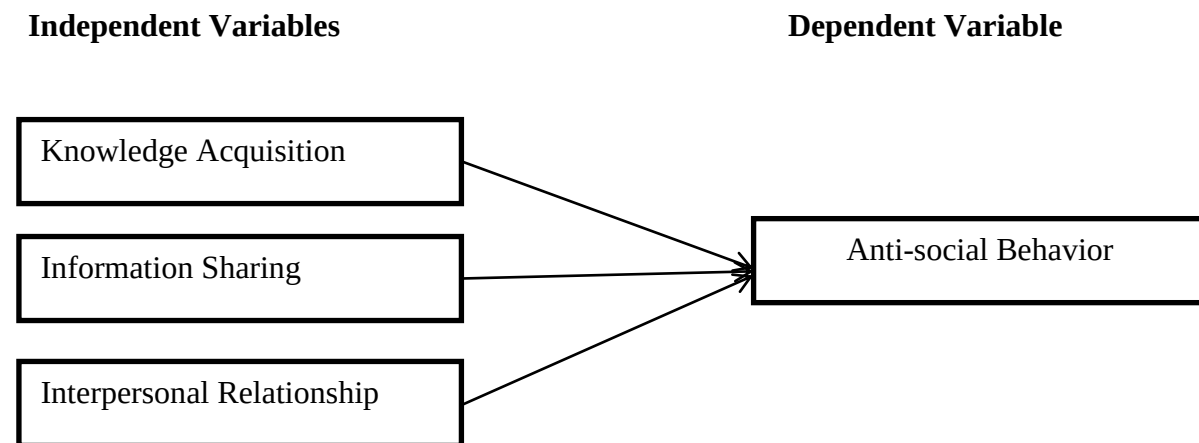


Figure 1: Research Framework

Source: Researcher's Framework (2025)

The above figure shows how the independent variables have links with the dependent variable, this diagram has been designed based on the several empirical literatures' assumptions and arguments on social media and anti-social behavior.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationship between social media dimensions and anti-social behavior among undergraduate students

in Nigerian public universities. The cross-sectional design is appropriate for capturing behavioral perceptions at a single point in time and is widely adopted in social media and behavioral science research due to its efficiency, scalability, and suitability for structural equation modeling. The design also supports the predictive orientation of this study by enabling empirical testing of hypothesized relationships among latent constructs.

3.2 Study Area and Population

The study was conducted across three public universities in Kano State, Nigeria: Bayero University Kano (BUK), Northwest University Kano, and Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology, Wudil. These institutions were selected because they represent major higher education centers with diverse student demographics and high digital media penetration. The target population consisted of all registered undergraduate students in the selected universities during the 2024/2025 academic session. Undergraduate students were considered appropriate for this investigation because they represent the most active users of social media platforms and are particularly susceptible to online behavioral influences.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A total sample size of 330 respondents was utilized for this study. The sample size satisfies the minimum requirements for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which recommends adequate cases relative to model complexity to ensure statistical power and parameter stability.

A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted. First, the universities were purposively selected based on relevance and accessibility. Second, faculties and departments were randomly selected within each institution. Finally, respondents were chosen using simple random sampling, ensuring proportional representation and minimizing selection bias.

3.4 Instrument Development and Measurement

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from established measurement scales adapted from prior empirical studies in social media and behavioral research. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section consist of demographic information. This section captured respondents' background characteristics including age, gender, institution, level of study, and frequency of social media usage. While the second section ask questions on the variables (anti-social behaviour, knowledge acquisition, information sharing and interpersonal relationship).

3.4.1 Measurement of Study Constructs

The four main constructs were operationalized and measured using reliable items adapted from previous studies. For knowledge acquisition the construct was measured by 4 items adapted from Gupta and Bashir, (2018) assessing the extent to which students use social media platforms for learning, academic engagement, and information processing. Information sharing was measured using 5 indicators adapted from Gupta and Bashir, (2018) reflecting online content dissemination, academic collaboration, and social information exchange. Interpersonal relationship was measured by 5 items adapted from Gupta and Bashir, (2018) capturing digital

communication, peer interaction, and relationship maintenance through social media platforms. Anti-social behaviour was measured using 14 indicators relating to cyberbullying, online harassment, fraudulent tendencies, impersonation, and unethical digital practices. These items were adapted from Burt and Donnellan, (2009). All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*), which is widely accepted for capturing latent psychological constructs and behavioral perceptions.

Content validity was ensured through expert evaluation by academics specializing in social science research and digital media studies. The instrument was reviewed for conceptual clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives. Necessary modifications were incorporated prior to full-scale data collection.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through physical questionnaire distribution across the selected universities. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the academic purpose of the study prior to participation. Completed questionnaires were screened for missing values, inconsistencies, and response quality before being included in the final dataset. Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS version 3.0 software. PLS-SEM was selected because of its suitability for predictive research models, ability to handle non-normal data distributions, robustness with moderate sample sizes, and effectiveness in estimating complex structural relationships. Only indicators meeting recommended statistical thresholds were retained for structural analysis. A one-tailed significance testing approach was adopted due to the directional nature of the study hypotheses, with a critical t-value threshold of 1.645 at the 5% significance level.

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the research process. Respondents were assured of anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any stage without consequence. No personal identifiers were collected, and all data were used exclusively for academic research purposes. The research model specifies knowledge acquisition, information sharing, and interpersonal relationship as exogenous variables predicting anti-social behaviour as the endogenous variable. This specification is theoretically grounded in Social Cognitive Theory and empirically supported by prior literature, enabling robust testing of the proposed relationships within the Nigerian university context.

4.0 Analysis and Results

In analyzing data for this study, we used Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) because the PLS-SEM is now considered the most appropriate method for estimating structural equation models particularly when analyzing models that are complex (Ringle, Sarstedt, & Straub, 2012).

4.1 Model Estimation

SmartPLS version 3.0 (Ringle, Wende, & Will, 2005), was used in the model estimation were we compute our path model coupled with parameter estimation (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). In reporting and evaluation of results, our study followed Chin, (2010) and Hair Jr, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2014) guidelines by first assessing the measurement model prior to evaluation of the structural model.

4.1.1 Measurement Model Assessment

Considering that all the four constructs under study are reflective constructs, the study first started by examining the construct reliability (i.e construct measure' indicators reliability and internal consistency). Secondly, the looked validity (both discriminant and convergent validity) was also assessed. In this regards, only items that recorded higher outer loadings were retained. While, those with lower loading were deleted as recommended by Hair Jr *et al.* (2014). based on this criteria, our measurement model as shown in Table 1 is considered to have attained a satisfactory level with regards to items or indicators reliability. Again, the measurement model had exhibited strong composite reliability with all the constructs having values above the minimum threshold of .707. This, suggested that all the four constructs recorded strong internal consistency reliability as presented in Table 1. Moreover, on the average variance extracted (AVE), the measurement model indicated that all the four variables recorded an AVE values above the minimum threshold of .50, therefore providing adequate support for convergent validity.

Table 1: *Item loadings, Reliabilities and Average Variance Extracted*

Variables	Items	Loadings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Anti-Social Behaviour	ANTI13	0.835	0.851	0.741
	ANTI14	0.886		
Sharing Information	INFOR2	0.807	0.802	0.669
	INFOR3	0.829		
Inter Personal Behaviour	INTER3	0.086	0.742	0.612
	INTER5	0.514		
Knowledge Acquisition	KNW1	0.871	0.844	0.730
	KNW2	0.837		

Accordingly, two methods was employed in ascertaining the discriminant validity. Firstly, indicators' cross loading was observed and it was found that no single indicator recorded loading higher than any of the opposing construct. Secondly, Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion was employed and each constructs' AVE and their correlations was observed. The results indicated that all the constructs' AVE were higher than its correlations with all of the other constructs (see Table 2). Consequently, all the four constructs exhibit discriminant validity. Accordingly, the assessment of our measurement model for this study revealed that all the major

constructs measures are reliable and valid. Thus, providing ground for evaluating the structural model.

Table 2: *Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among variables*

Constructs	Anti-Social Behaviour	Inter Personal Behaviour	Knowledge Acquisition	Sharing Information
Anti Social Behaviour	0.861			
Inter Personal Behaviour	0.118	0.782		
Knowledge Acquisition	0.231	0.192	0.854	
Sharing Information	-0.088	0.163	0.072	0.818

Note: SD= Standard Deviation and the bolded values are squared root of AVE

4.1.2 Structural Model

In assessing the significance of the path coefficient of the structural models this study applied bootstrapping procedure using 330 cases and 5000 bootstrap samples as recommended by scholars (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011; Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012).

Table 3: *Structural Model Assessment*

Relationships	Beta	Std. Error	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
Knowledge Acquisition -> Anti-Social Behaviour	-0.222	0.235	3.488	0.001	Supported
Sharing Information -> Anti-Social Behaviour	-0.120	-0.128	1.764	0.078	Supported
Inter Personal Behaviour -> Anti-Social Behaviour	0.095	0.091	0.981	0.327	Not supported

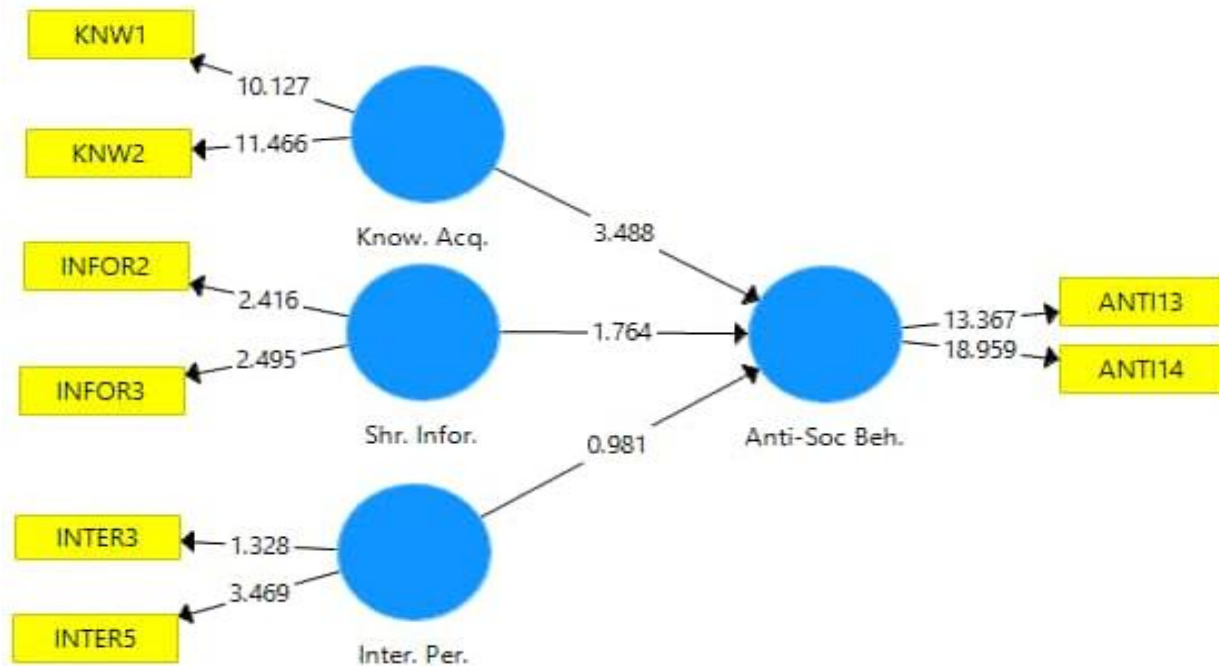


Figure 3: *Structural Model*

Table 2 and Figure 3 above presented the results of the structural model aimed at testing the three hypotheses. Considering that our hypotheses were all stated in a directional form as argued by scholars (Kimm, 1957; Zar, 1999) that the power of one tailed test is considered greater than that of two tailed test. In this study we opted for one tailed test. In this regards, a *t-value* of ± 1.645 and above suggested that the relationship is significant. Nevertheless, using one tailed in this study does not suggest elimination of two tailed test as we recognised that there are situations where two tailed test is more appropriate (Cho & Abe, 2013).

Hypothesis 1 in this study predicted that knowledge Acquisition would be negatively related to anti-social behaviour. Results from both Table 3 and Figure 3 revealed that knowledge Acquisition has a significant negative relationship with anti-social behaviour ($\beta = -0.222, p < .01$). As such, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Relatedly, Hypothesis 2 in this study also predicted that Sharing Information would be negatively related to anti-social behaviour. Accordingly, result shows that Sharing Information has a significant negative relationship with anti-social behaviour ($\beta = -0.120, p < .01$). Consequently, Hypothesis 2 was also supported. Moreover, Hypothesis 3 of this study predicted that interpersonal behaviour would be negatively related to anti-social behaviour. However, result shows that interpersonal behaviour has no significant negative relationship with Anti-Social Behaviour ($\beta = 0.095, p < .01$). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was not empirically supported.

Subsequently, after ascertaining the significance of the path coefficient of our model, we also assessed the levels of the coefficient of determination popularly called R-square or R^2 , followed by assessing predictive relevance Q^2 and then the effect size F^2 of our model. With regard to R^2 ,

our research model as shown in Table 3 explained .073 which is about 7.3% of the total variance in anti social behavior. This clearly implied that all the three dimensions of social media including knowledge acquisition, information sharing, and interpersonal relationship put together explained 7.3% variance in anti social behavior. We also run a blindfolding procedure as suggested by Chin (1998) and Henseler *et al.* (2009) to ascertain our model's predictive relevance (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). Our model also recorded a predictive relevance Q^2 , suggesting that the model had predictive relevance since the Q^2 value obtained is greater than zero (Chin, 1998).

In testing the effects size, which indicate relative effect of a particular independent variable on the dependent variable, we used Cohen (1988) formula:

$$\text{Effect size: } F^2 = \frac{R^2 \text{Included} - R^2 \text{Excluded}}{1 - R^2 \text{Excluded}}$$

Table 4: *Effect Size (f^2)*

Constructs	F-Squared	Effect Size
Knowledge Acquisition	.051	Small
Information Sharing	.020	Small
Interpersonal Relationship	.009	Small

Cohen (1988) classified the values of effect size into three 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 to represent small, medium and large effect size respectively. Based on Cohen (1988) formula our findings in Table 4 revealed that all our exogenous variables has small effect size.

5.0 Discussion

This study empirically examined the role of three dimensions of social media including knowledge acquisition, information sharing, and interpersonal relationship in reducing anti social behavior among university students in Kano state- Nigeria. Firstly, inline with the hypothesis1, result of the study revealed that knowledge acquisition via social media exhibited significant negative effect on anti-social behavior. This suggested that the more university students engaged in knowledge acquisition on social media the less likely they engaged in anti-social behavior like harassment, cyber bullying, blackmailing, and involvement into fraudulent activities, known as financial scam or yahoo-yahoo, impersonation, simulation, among others. Therefore, when student shared valuable knowledge in social media they are more likely to have an increases in competence, self esteem, avoidance of frustration, and enhanced their social cognitive and self regulations which in turn reduces frustrations, aggression and antisocial tendencies. This finding is consistent with Oni and Osu, (2023) which revealed that knowledge sharing via social media have negative relationship with antisocial tendencies. This also implied that purposeful use of social media for knowledge acquisition reduces/minimizes antisocial behavior among students.

Moreover, hypothesis 2 posited that information sharing would be negatively related with anti-social behavior and as expected the result of the study revealed that information sharing via social media exhibited significant negative effect on anti-social behavior. This also implied that students that actively engage in acquiring knowledge that are useful and shared or disseminate it via social media are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviors. This result also corroborate with the findings of Álvarez-García et al. (2019) which revealed that information sharing among peer group reduces anti-social behavior. This further suggested that lack of information sharing (due to poor communication, secrecy, or weak parental guidance) will lead to higher antisocial behavior among university students (Ikediashi & Akande, 2015). On the other hand sharing false information or hurtful information may lead to more anti-social behaviors.

Lastly, hypothesis 3 posited that interpersonal relations would be negatively related with anti-social behavior. However, unexpectedly the result of the study revealed that no association between interpersonal relations and anti-social behavior. The possible reasons for this may be based on the argument that social media despite been able to connect people, yet it also reduces the quality of interactions between people. Because, instead of allowing people to engage in deep, face-to-face conversations, now users rely on quick likes, comments, and posts, which often leads to superficial relationships. Some argued that constant exposure to online platforms usually foster a sense of isolation, where users may feel disconnected from real-world interactions. This limit interpersonal relationships among users due to low self-esteem (Bakker & Delespaul, 2022).

5.1 Practical and Theoretical Implications

Based on the findings, this study has both theoretical and practical implications for policy makers. First, this study has provided a theoretical implication by providing additional empirical evidence within the domain of social cognitive theory which posit that human behavior is shaped by a continuous interplay between personal factors, behaviors, and environmental influences. In the context of social media, as shown by this findings SCT explain how youth learn and adopt behaviors by interacting with digital content, peers, and influencers. The theory explains how youths acquire knowledge, share information, and form interpersonal relationships through their online interactions. These processes can lead to both positive and negative behaviors.

This study also provides several practical implications for government, university management and administrators on how to prevent students' anti social behaviours on social media settings. Firstly, the findings revealed that the more university students engaged in knowledge acquisition on social media the less likely they engaged in anti-social behavior like harassment, cyber bullying, blackmailing, and involvement into fraudulent activities, known as financial scam or yahoo-yahoo, impersonation, simulation, among others. Therefore, university management can implement some strategies that can prevent antisocial behaviours by reducing or regulating students screen time (limiting time spent on social media out side knowledge acquisition) and encouraging student engagement into real-world social interactions can minimised the negative effect of excessive online engagements. Additional regular training and education, enlightenment and information sharing on the impact of social media on behaviors coupled with the importance

of health online interactions will gradually help student make informed decisions that will increase their competence, self esteem and enhance their social cognitive and self regulations which in turn reduces frustrations, aggression and antisocial tendencies.

Secondly, as the findings revealed that university students that actively engage in information sharing via social media are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviors, therefore, university management can promote sharing of information among student by providing adequate rewards to outstanding student who engaged in acquiring and disseminating positive information. Doing this will make them to be regarded as role models worthy of being imitated.

5.2 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although the present study provides important findings for theory and practice, nevertheless, the study has some limitations that need to be noted. The study also offered some suggestions for further research. First, despite establishing significant relationship between knowledge acquisition and anti-social behavior and also information sharing and anti-social behavior, the result of the study revealed that no direct association between interpersonal relations and anti-social behavior. Future research may consider integrating a mediating variable so as to find the real reasons for the non direct relationship. Secondly, the present study adopted a cross-sectional design and causal inferences could not be made to the population. Accordingly, in future studies longitudinal design should be used to detect changes over time. Again, anti-social behavior was measured using self report during data collection. Considering the limitations of self report measures, regarding common method bias and social desirability bias, future studies may wish to consider other strategies in assessing anti-social behavior. For instance, peers reporting or supervisors ratings of students' anti-social behavior may be helpful in minimizing under-reporting or over-reporting of anti-social behavior.

5.3 Conclusion

Despite the aforementioned limitations, this study was able to provide supports on the effect of social media on anti-social behaviours particularly among the teeming youth in Nigerian public universities. Findings of study underscored the importance of social media in reducing anti-social behaviour among youth in the Nigerian Universities. Specifically, the findings suggested that university students that actively engage in information sharing via social media are less likely to engage in anti-social behaviors. The findings also revealed that the more university students engaged in knowledge acquisition on social media the less likely they engaged in anti-social behavior like harassment, cyber bullying, blackmailing, and involvement into fraudulent activities, known as financial scam or yahoo-yahoo, impersonation, simulation, among others.

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