Abstract
This study focused on the associative effect of increased social networking among students of Nigerian higher institutions with specific interest on the relationship between the use of social networks and TVET students’ study pattern. The study was a descriptive survey research and was guided by three specific objectives. The population was comprised of 2,487 with 500 sampled respondents. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire and was face validated. The reliability of the questionnaire items were established using Cronbach alpha method and a co-efficient of 0.78 was obtained. Data were analyzed using frequency, simple percentage, standard deviation, mean and Spearman correlation. Data were presented on tables, charts and graphs. The study found a competitive pattern between social networking and study period. The respondents share their study period with social networking, resulting to systematic reduction of average students’ (daily) study duration which likely in-turn will affect academic performance. Among the social networking students, the female gender is the highest cohort with high social networking period. The study further revealed that non-academic activities ranked highest among the activities students engage in while on social networking sites. The study thus recommends the sensitization of students on the effective utilization of social networks for more academic oriented activities. The study calls on educational technologist and programmers to focus on developing social networking sites (SNS) that is academic based but not devoid of social tools as well to improve the use of social networks for academic purposes.

Keywords: Technology, Social Networks, ICT, Internet, Students Performance, Study Pattern.

Introduction
In the world today, different technologies spring up every day to enhance human life. Technology has become a paramount component of the day to day activities affecting almost every part of civilization. It is undeniably the mainstay in recent modernization and the trending phenomenon of the jet age. The introduction of technology, in the academic system enhances sourcing, sending and retrieving information across borders through the use of Information Communication Technology (ICTs). ICT is described as the integration of various electronic tools that deliver and exchange information into a system to enhance the quality of life without being constrained or restrained by location, time or distance (Rupert, 2012). These information are exchanged with the help of Internet services, as Internet is a computer-based global information and networked system that makes it possible for people all over the world to communicate with one another instantly at little cost. Internet increases people’s contact with friends and relatives who live nearby or far away (Barry, 2001). Internet services provide opportunity for social networking among users. Social network (SN) is an online application with community of individuals (“friends”) who exchange messages or information and cooperate on joint activities (Britannica, 2010). It is an Internet based application whose usage begins with the creation of a unique account or profile that links people or organizations to share knowledge with others within the site over physical boundaries (Barry, 2001). Operating a social network
service involves the creation and maintenance of a unique personal account or profile that is linked with other members thus enabling a user to specifically connect and communicate with other users that are linked to the specific network/site (Britannica, 2010; ComputerWeekly, 2015). A basic social networking application/site therefore allows friends to comment on one another's profiles, send public/private messages and traverse the extended web of friends visible in each member's profile. Examples of social networks include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Blackberry Messenger, YouTube, Live!, Skype, Google+, Yahoo! Messenger, Whatsapp, 2go, and many others (Salvation & Adzharuddin, 2014; Ikehi, Paradang & Zimoghen, 2014; ComputerWeekly, 2015; Davidson, 2015; Mander, 2015). Social networking sites (SNSs) are often thought of as places to catch up on personal information and current activities of publicties. Since their inception with the launching of “SixDegrees.com” as the first social network in 1997, social networking sites have attracted millions of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices (Danah & Nicole, 2007; DiMicco, Millen, Geyer, Dugan, Brownholtz & Muller, 2008; Solis, 2008). Social Networking is an emerging trend in the society and especially among students in the academic system. Emerging trend describes the deviation from usual practices in any concept. Emerging trend is a topic area for which one can trace the growth of interest and utility over time (Kontostathis, Galitsky, Pottenger, Roy & Phelps, 2003; Li, 2015). Emerging trend focuses on observed changes, innovative approach or novelty in usual activities of an event. Emerging trends are mainly driven by technological advancements resulting to modified approach to regular activities (Ayudhya, Boonla-or & Piromya, 2007). Emerging trend therefore means an apparent change in behaviour that develops among a population. Emerging trend in the tenets of this study refers to the apparent and consistent use of social networks by people, organizations and academic individuals including students of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). TVET is a comprehensive term referring to all deliberate interventions instituted or created to make learners more productive (or simply adequately productive) in designated areas of economic activities and occupations (Karen, Jason, & Annette, 2008). TVET refers to those aspects of general educational processes that involve the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life particularly as it pertains to the world of work (TVETpedia, 2013). TVET learning experiences are enshrined in Educational courses like Agriculture, Business, Computer, Fine Art, Home Economics, Industrial, Music, among others. TVET learning and research process is not devoid of ICTs especially Internet based services such as social networks as they foster the spread of information as well as collaboration of trends in TVET. Many young adults including TVET students between the ages of 18 and 50 operate social network through internet. Internet users of 50 years of age are particularly likely to use a social networking site of any kind while young adults of 18-29 years use many social networking sites (Ahn, 2011; Maeve & Joanna, 2013). A study by Ikehi, Paradang and Zimoghen (2014) found out that the highest users of social networks within the academic system are youths between the ages of 18-22 who are mostly undergraduates. A survey by the Pew Internet Project revealed that about 35% of adult and 65% of teens have profiles on social network (Maeve & Joanna, 2013). A study by Ahn (2011) found out that youths spend a considerable portion of their daily life interacting through social network. Subsequently, questions and controversies emerge about the effects SNSs have on students’ study pattern. Study refers to devotion of time and attention to gain knowledge in academic subject especially by means of a book while pattern means regular and repeated design or format (Merriam, 2015). Study pattern therefore refers to the regular and repeated devotion of time and
attention to gain knowledge and skill in academic courses, such as TVET courses. It could also mean the efforts put in by reading relevant materials in order to acquire knowledge or skill for enhancing one’s general knowledge or specifically one’s academic performance or achievement. Study pattern is observable characteristics of a person in reading relevant materials such as books, and following a regular and repeated format with the aim of enhancing the performance or achievement in a subject. Study pattern indicates the preferred time or periods a student (of TVET) devotes for going through lecture notes, textbooks and other academically specified information sources as contained in the studied curriculum. The preferred range of time (within the 24hours; between 12:00AM to 11:59PM) that is habitually dedicated to reading and the average amount of time which (TVET) students spend grasping what is read, comprehensively makes up study pattern. In universities in Nigeria and particularly in the area of the study notable changes in study patterns and social connections are already evident among young people, who are the heaviest users of SNSs. Therefore use of social networks poses such challenges as security threat to personal information, distractions while using the social network due to high rate of advert placement and other enticing suggested links being presented and other enticing displays which makes students to spend valuable academic time and attention on SNSs (Ikehi, Paradang & Zimoghen, 2014; Meredith et al 2010; Hamat, 2012; ComputerWeekly, 2015). According to Ahn (2011) in a finding by Karpinski (2009) college or university students who frequently use Facebook (a SNS) have lower Grade Point Average (GPA) than those who are not users of the site. Karpinski (2009) offers several hypotheses for these findings among which is that perhaps social network users spend too much time online and less time studying. Thus, it seems reasonable that SNSs influences student’s study pattern which bears an immediate or proponed effect on performance (Salvation & Adzharuddin, 2014). However, detail of these communication patterns is lacking in most literature and is a critical area for studies (Ahn, 2011). It is necessary to find out the average time students of both gender spend on studying and time spent on social networks for redirecting them for better performance. Therefore the major purpose of this study was to determine the emerging trends in social networking and its effect on study pattern of TVET students in Universities in Southern Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to find out the: 1) Average daily time spent on social networking and studying by TVET students of both gender in Universities in Southeastern Nigeria. 2) Correlate the average periods spent on studying and social networking. 3) Major activities of students while on social network. Methodology The study adopted descriptive survey research design and was carried out in five (5) public universities in the South-Eastern part of Nigeria who have TVET course and where the use of electronic gadgets are made possible by providing internet services at low cost. The five universities (strata) are Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki (EBSU), Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu (ESUT), Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU), Nnamdi Azukiwe University, Awka (UNIZIK), and University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN). The population for the study was 2,487 made up of students from the five universities and who own any Internet based electronic gadget (purposive selection). The sample of the study was 500. A purposive stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select 20% of the population based on the suggestion by Boll and Gall in Uzoagulu (2011) that for a population above 2000, minimum of 10% of such population may be used. The study used 20% to reduce sampling error as suggested by Uzoagulu (2011) that closer sample size to the population size reduces the occurrence of sampling error. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed from the literature reviewed for the study. The instrument
elicited information on personal characteristics of the respondent such as gender, average daily social networking and daily study patterns and major activities while on social networks. The instrument was face-validated by three experts from the Department of Educational Foundation, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using the Cronbach alpha method which yielded a co-efficient of 0.78. The researchers with the help of three research assistants administered 500 copies of the questionnaire and all were successfully retrieved (on the spot) for data analysis. The instrument had a four response options of Very Likely (VL), moderately Likely (L), Less Likely (LL), Not Likely (NL) and Not-at-All (NA) with a mean range of 3.50-4.00, 2.50-3.49, 1.50-2.49, 0.50-1.49 and below 0.49 respectively. 

The respondents were asked to indicate their most preferred time within the 24 hours for studying (reading) and social networking as well as the frequent activities they engage in while on the social networking sites. Statistical tools such as frequency (F), simple percentage (%), mean (x), standard deviation (SD) and Spearman Rank-Order Correlation (rs) were utilized for data analysis in the study. Data were presented on tables, charts and graphs. The study assumes that reading and social networking are the two basic activities of the respondents as they are the only focus of this study but gives consideration to other paramount activities such as lecture time, sleeping and other activities, thus the need for the response option “NA” with a mean range of 0.00-0.49 to indicate that the respondents were neither studying nor social networking at the given time period (Hr). See Appendix for the distribution of the respondents. Findings Gender and Average Daily Study and Social Networking Duration Social networking has become a daily event among parents, workers, students and other category of groupings in this decade. An Internet user is expected to own and on daily bases, login into a social network while using the Internet services. The students are not exceptions to this, as social networking has become a trending event in the modern society which they belong to. However, unlike other categories of social networking groups, the students are more than any other activity expected to spend greater amount of their time studying or spending it on other academically related activities. Findings of this study reveal a changing trend and the degree of deviation is gender related. The females appear to social network more than the males, with a mean difference of 0.46 hour on average daily while the males spend about 0.93 hour more, studying. However, on average response, the students spend more time social networking than studying, spending about 0.80 hour more social networking than studying. Comparing durations spent on both social networking and on studying for each gender, a mean difference reveals that the male and female students spend 0.16 and 1.45 hours more, respectively, social networking than studying. Table 1 and Figure 1 reveal more.