Impression Management and Identity Manipulation In A Social Network Website: A Study of the Niger Delta University Students

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Abstract: Social network sites are a popular online venue for interaction and expression. This study was designed to identify the ways in which University Students in Nigeria, using Niger Delta as a case study present themselves online in the social network environment. To examine the types of self-presentation displayed, this study drew from current online research, self-presentation theory (Goffman, 1959; Jones, 1990). The extent of impression management and identity manipulation was ascertained by identifying and measuring indicators such as self-esteem, personality, false personality, false identity etc. It was observed from the findings that the phenomena of impression management and identity manipulation are highly prevalent among university students. Factors such as desire for having high self-esteem, sense of attractiveness and drive to get the attention of the opposite sex were behind the high prevalence of the phenomena. It was also discovered that the use of social media has an implication for improved social relationship among university students. Furthermore, non-significant results suggest a possible relationship between the user's sex and the types of nonverbal behaviors demonstrated in the photograph, similar to Goffman's (1979) work on gender displays in commercial advertising photography.

Keywords: Impression, Management, Identity, Manipulation, University, Student.

I. BACKGROUND OF STUDY
People’s social image is an important part of their feelings. Humans are social beings and cannot exist in isolation. Our social image is critical to how we think and feel about ourselves. Leary and Baumeister (2000), suggests that relationships with others are integral part of one’s life and that people use feedback from others and current social standing as cues to access their own value.

It is a glaring fact that how we are perceived by others affect our self worth. Leary and Kowalsk, (1990) opined that, the motivation for self presentation comes from peoples’ concern with how they are perceived by others and the desire to make a positive impression.

Presenting an acceptable self-image entails two processes. These include the twin concepts of impression management and identify manipulation.

According to Sinha (2009), impression management is an active self-presentation of a person aiming to enhance his/her image in the eyes of others. The term “impression management” was coined by Ervin Goffman in 1959 and from then on, sociologists and theorists have been adding insight and importance to the concept. According to Newman (2009), impression management is an act of presenting a favourable public image of oneself so the others will form positive judgment. Ferrante (2008) expands on this concept in her book, “sociology, a global perspective”, she suggests that “even if people are aware that they are manipulating reality, impression management can be a constructive feature of social interaction”. Sinha (2009) stressed, “In impression management, the person being perceived manages the perception of the perceiver hoping to have a positive impact. For Schlenker and Forsyth (1980), impression management is an individual attempt either consciously or unconsciously to control the images they project in social situations.

Identity manipulation on the other hand is the act of modifying, changing, adjusting an aspect of one’s body (appearance) with the intention of creating an acceptable self image. It include altering one’s personality, preferences, race, sex, intellect, height, weight, eye or hair colour, appearance, skin colour, creating fake online accounts, disabilities, and other features of their body or environment, identity manipulation could turn somebody into a completely different person entirely. Through identity manipulation someone can make them believe he is somebody he was not before.

A buck of this phenomenon takes places in the web. The web is not a new world, but an electronic reflection of the world we currently inhabit. The struggle has always been presenting the ideal self versus the real self. Based
on facts presented, Miller and Arnold (2003) suggest that online identity needs to be treated as phenomenon which needs explanation in terms of the dialectical relationship that exist between online profiles and the wider social context.

Hence, this research project is target at finding an explanation on impression management and identity manipulation on social media by university students.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Impression management and identity manipulation are tools employed by individuals in different spheres of life to create a good image about themselves. The desire to present a good self-value has driven many to employ or develop technique that will present them acceptable to other.

Most people know that a portion of people on the internet are not people at all or are not the people they purport to be. It is believed that at least 5 – 6% of profiles on social network sites such as twitter, google+, face book are fake, 97% of these imposter are believed to be female and apparently attractive university students. Consider 5 – 6% of face book imposter, that is out of about 1000,000,000 facebook users, 80,000,000 of whose profiles are fictional; that is the population of Germany or Egypt, a quarter of the United States, yet people are yet to imagine the impact it has on other facebook users and on other social context.

In recent times few idle Nigeria youths have created fake facebook profiles with the intention of defrauding unsuspecting persons in what later became known as the yahoo-yahoo business.

From the foregone; it is imperative to examine what is the extend of impression management and identity manipulation among Nigeria university students on social media sites, to what extend do these university students use social media sites and what is the impact of their use on social relationship. This research work seeks to provide a solution to this puzzle.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the phenomenon of impression management and identity manipulation on social media by Nigeria university students.

Using Niger delta University as a case study, it seeks to examine the motivation behind the use of impression management and identity manipulation techniques, and as well as understanding the extent of prevalence of impression management and identity manipulation among university students on social media. This study will also highlight the extent of use of the social media sites by students and measure the impact of the social media on their users.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study shall include:
1. To measure the frequency of the use of social media sites by students of Niger Delta university.
2. To highlight the most used social media sites by students.
3. To evaluate the impact of the use of social media sites on social relationship.
4. To understand the motives of students in the use of impression management tools on social media sites.
5. To understand the extend of prevalence of impression management and identity manipulation.

V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis shall be tested:

\( H_1 \) - There is a significant correlation between the motive for enhancing self-esteem and identity manipulation on social media.

\( H_0 \) - There is no significant correlation between the motive for enhancing self-esteem and identity manipulation on social media.

\( H_1 \) - There is a significant relationship between high frequency of social media use and tendency for impression management on social media and improved social relationship.

\( H_0 \) - There is no significant relationship between high frequency of social media use and tendency for impression management on social media and improved social relationship.

VI. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questionings of the study shall include the following:
(i) What are the most common use of the social media among Nigeria university students?
(ii) What are the factors that influenced students into the use of the social media?

VII. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, we reviewed literatures that are relevant to this study. Various research have been undertaken to explain the prevalence of these phenomena and as well as their effect on behaviour of individuals. Some of such studies are reviewed below.

VIII. SELF AND IDENTITY
Self is belief to emerge out of the mind, the mind as arising and developing out of social interaction, and patterned social interaction as forming the basis of social structure (Mead, 1938). An early view of the concept of self was concerned with self-esteem. Rosenberg (1979) suggested that there was more to the concept of self than self esteem. Total of our thoughts, feelings, and imaginations as to who we are. Frank and Morolla (1976) and Stryker (1980) elaborated that the self concept was made up of the cognitive components (collection of identities as well as affective components or self-feelings including self esteem and worth. Furthermore, the self can also be described as meanings we hold for ourselves when we look at ourselves. It is based on our observations of ourselves, our inferences about who we are, based on how other act toward us, our wishes and desires, and our evaluations of ourselves. For Burke (1980), this also include self – image in situations that moment to moment interaction.

For sociologist and social psychologists, the self-concept emerges our of the reflected appraisal process (Gecas & Burkes 1995). Shrauger and Schoenemon (1979) found that rather than our self-concepts resembling the way others actually see us, our self-concepts are filtered through our perceptions and resemble how we think others see us.

Identity on the other hand is the relationship between oneself and its status. The self is organised into multiple parts (identities), each of which is tied to an aspect of social structure or social role. One has an identity for each of the different positions or role relationships the person holds in society. Burke (1980) suggested the concept of counter identity. This posits that when one claims an identity in an interaction with other, there is an alternative identity claimed by another to which it is related. The husband identity is enacted as it relates to the wife identity; the teacher identity is played out in relation to the student identity.

Research indicates that making roles and accumulating role identities fosters greater psychological well being (Thoit, 2001).

In a nutshell, self is acquired through a psychological process (mind) of interacting with ones environment and members of significant other, while identity is the function of social role or social potion and status.

**IX. SELF EVALUATION**

This is an aspect of the self concept to have received a significant attention recently. The evaluative part of the self-concept is known as self-esteem (Roseberry, 1979). Gecas and Schwalbe, (1983) have identifies two dimensions of self-esteem. They are:
- Efficacy based self-esteem
- Worth based self-esteem

The efficacy – based self-esteem is derived from the feeling of one’s self as competent and capable.

In contrast, worth based self-esteem is derived from the feeling that one is accepted and valued. Gecas and Burke (1995) point out, the significant interest in self-esteem is largely due to assuming that high self-esteem is associated with bad outcomes such as deviance, academic failure etc.

**X. LOOKING GLASS SELF**

Closely related to the self concept is the looking glass self. It is a social psychological concept created by Charles Horton Cooley in 1902 (McIntyre 2006). It states that a person’s self grows out of society’s interpersonal interactions and the perceptions of others.

According to Yeung, et al (2003), there is three main components of the looking glass self:
1. We imagine how we must appear to others.
2. We imagine and react to what we feel their judgment of that appearance must be.
3. We develop ourself through the judgements of others.

**XI. REGIONALIZATION**

This concept was made popular by Ervin Goffman studies (1922-1982). For Ervin Goffman, the concept of impression management was dramaturtized. This implies the world as a stage. It is an analogy with the theatre, with its front and back stage regions. The front regions are social occasions or encounters in which individuals act out formal roles, they are essentially on stage performances. For example, two prominent politicians’ in the same party may put on an elaborate show of unity and friendship before the television cameras, even though each privately detests the other. A wife and husband may take care to conceal their quarrels from their children, preserving a front of harmony, only to fight bitterly once the children are not around.

On the contrary, the back region can be likened to the off camera activities of the film-making, people are behind the scene, relax and give vent to feelings and styles of behaviour they check when on stage. According to Goffman (1959), the activities associated with the back region include open sexual re-marks, elaborate griping, rough informal dressing, sloppy sitting and standing posture, use of substandard speech etc. Goffman argued that people discuss and releasers their performance or behaviour before actually exhibiting it.
XII. SOCIAL INTERACTION IN CYBER SPACE

One of the distinguishing features of the modern societies is that we interact with people we may never see or meet. We sometimes buy goods, make bank deposits and have indirect contact with those who are millions of miles away.

Online communication on social media sites using chat rooms have become facts of life to those in developed and developing countries. Katz et al (2001), argued that indirect communication through social media sites on the internet contains a wealth of problems not found in face-to-face social interaction. As Katz et al puts it: “to type is not to be human, to be in cyber space is not to be real; all is pretence and alienation, a poor substitute for the real thing”.

Proponents of this view had argued that computer mediated communication technology is too Limited to prevent users hiding behind false identities. This also allows Trickery, Lechery, manipulation, emotional swindles and so on, Locke and Pascoe (2000) put it thus:

The problem lies in the nature of human communication. We think of it as a product of the mind, but it is done by bodies: face move, voices in tone, bodies sway; hands gestures, but on the internet, the mind is present but the body is gone. Recipients get few clues to the personality and mood of the person, can only guess why messages are sent, what they mean, what responses to make. Trust is virtually out the window. It is a risky business.

On the contrary, opposites of the above view have stated that the cyberspace has a way of building goods or bad reputation, thereby reducing the risks of online communication. They further argued that internet communication help to conceal certain features of the individual such as age, gender, social position and ensuring that attention focuses strictly on the content of the message.

A survey of internet users carried out between 1995 and 2000 show that internet users tends to communicate with others through other media, especially by the telephone more than non-users do, meet face-to-face with friends more than non-users and interact with other more in general (Katz et al 2001).

XIII. IMPLICATIONS FOR IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

According to Newman (2009), Impression Management is an act of presenting a favourable public image of oneself so that others will form positive judgments. Impression management is universal process that involves a number of influential factors. These factors are social, cultural and spiritual.

1. Social Implications: Nobody hands values, norms, roles and statuses to us fully formed, nor do we accept them mechanically. We mold them to suit us as we interact with others (Brym and Lie, 2006). By moulding values, norms, roles and statuses people can modify themselves and alter how others perceive them.

One of the social implications of impression manipulation is management that it plays a prominent role in the socialization process (Newman, 2009: 173). In an elaborate term, the use of impression management provides people with the necessary skills to create a custom and often falsified perception. This deceptively altered perception allows a person to construct a new, but not necessarily improved version of him or herself. This approach will help a person to define relationships and also help to alter his/her position in the socialization process through impression management. From the forgone illustration, it can be seen that impression management do not only have positive effect but also negative effect or consequences. These negatives include deception and falsification of self.

According to Newman, (2009), “Impression management can lead to the creation of damaged identities which must be repaired in order to sustain social interaction”. The social position and prestige held by a person can be broken down by poor impression management. According to Andersen and Taylor (2008)’ people are constantly involved in a “con game” aimed at coning others to perceive them as they want.

2. Cultural Implications: “people are sensitive to how they are seen by others and use many forms of impression management to compel others to react to them in the ways they wish” (Giddens, 2005:142). This statement can be expressed through cultural differences. For example American’s tend to find tan skin, light or blonde hair attractive, while on the contrary, Indonesian culture prefers pale skin and darker hair colour.

Another illustration of how people try to control others perception about them is expressed through the clothing they wear. For example, A person occupying a leadership position tends to wear a nice suit, carries a briefcase, and acts in an official and sometimes professional manner to attract respect. The way a person dresses and how he/she carries him or herself is important in impression management. This illustration can also be adapted for a cultural scenario. For example, most Americans are not overly concerned with conservative clothing. Most Americans are content with tee shirts, shorts, and showing skin. On the opposite, “Indonesians are both modest and conservative and they go to great lengths to keep themselves covered”. “Women’s legs customary remain hidden under ankle length clothing”. (Cole 1997: 77 & Forshee, 2006:156).

XIV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
This work adopted the Ervin Goffman theory of impression management and the identity theory.

**IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT THEORY**

Goffman seeks to understand why people may alter appearance to make a positive impression on other people. Essentially Goffman provides insight as to why people put on a front when projecting themselves to a particular audience, and why they will conform to social expectation.

Ervin, Goffman (1955) in the article on “face work” explained the process of impression manage in social relationship. He claimed that when people meet or see others for the first time, it immediately prompts an emotional reaction. Based on this emotional reaction, the individual modifies his appearance to appear more socially acceptable to their intended audience. Goffman further explains that when a person has an encounter with another person, he/she is placed in a social relationship. It is on the part of individuals to maintain their face or appearance to gain support from others within a group.

**IDENTITY THEORY**

There are different variations of this theory. There is the aspect by burke and his associates (Burke & Caste, 1997, 1999; burke & Reitzes, 1981, 1991; Burke & Stets, 1999; Riley & burke 1995; Stets and Burke 1996, 2000; Tsushima & Burke, 1999) emphasize on the internal dynamics within the self that influences behaviour.

*Postulations of this idea include the following:*

1) High self-esteem has been found as an outcome of the identity verification process.
2) High self-esteem that is generated from the identity verification process can act as a buffer or resource when the verification process fails.
3) The desire for self-esteem may be what motivates people to create and maintain situations or relationships that verify one’s identity.

Another aspect is the views presented by Stryker (1980) which is termed as the structural interaction perspective.

*The postulations of this view include:*

1) That behaviour is dependent upon a named or classified world and that these names carry meaning in the form shared responses and behavioural expectations that grow out of social interaction.
2) That among the named classes is symbols that are used to designate positions in the social structure.
3) That, persons who act in the context of social structure name one another in the sense of recognizing one another as occupants of positions and come to have expectations for those others.
4) That persons acting in the context of social structure also name themselves and create internalized meanings and expectations with regard to their own behaviour.
5) That these expectations and meanings form the guiding basis for social behaviour and along with the probing interchanges among actors shape and reshape the content of interaction as well as the categories, names and meanings that are used.

This research work used Ervin Goffman theory of impression management and identity theory as framework to understanding the concept of impression management and identity manipulation among university students on social media sites.

**XV. RESEARCH METHODS**

**POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

The population of the study is drawn from the Eight (8) hostels in the main campus (Gory land). The hostels are believed to have a population of 1056 students of both sexes. About 750 students are estimated to be active users, of the social media, of this figure, 400 students are drawn from the male hostels while 350 students from the female hostels.

The population of the study constitute 750 students of both sexes, drawn from various departments of the institution that are very active in at least one social media site.

**SAMPLE SIZE**

It is impracticable to collect data from all the members of a population; hence there is a need for a representative sample of the population under study.

The sample size of the study was 125 students systematically selected and who are active in the use of the social media.

**SAMPLING TECHNIQUES**

This study adopted the purposive random sampling techniques under the non-probability sampling. Purposive random sampling can be described as a technique whereby the researcher selects a sample simply because it satisfies his specific needs. The use of this technique helped the researcher to simply hand pick samples as they are typical to what he wants.

An hundred and twenty-five (125) social media active students were purposively selected from across the various females and male hostels in the university.

**SAMPLING PROCEDURE**
The university is made up of three major campuses; the main campus, college of health sciences (CHS), and the new site. The male hostels include hostel D, hostel H, CHS boys’ hostel and lulu-briggs, while the female hostels include hostels A, B, C, E, F, G and CHS girls’ hostel. 65 respondents were judgementally selected from 30 rooms from the four male hostels with at least two respondents from each room. Four (4) female hostels were randomly selected from a pool of seven (7) hostels and with 30 rooms purposively selected and questionnaires administered at least two (2) respondents from each room.

**SOURCES OF DATA**

The data of this study was obtained from primary and secondary data sources. The primary data was collected using the questionnaire which was distributed to selected respondents in the study area and also with the use of focus group discussion. The secondary data were gathered through the use of text book, Journals, browsed and internet materials including other useful materials relevant to this study.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

This research work adopted the mixed method. This was made up of the survey design, correlational study and focus group discussion.

The survey design is a type of descriptive research that generally collects data from a defined population to describe the phenomenon understudy using the questionnaire.

The purpose of correlational design is to determine whether a relationship exists or to what extent a relationship exists between two or more variables. For instance, the variables that interplay in the process of impression management and identity manipulation and their correlation.

Focus group discussion was required to completely understand the phenomena understudy.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

This study adopted the statistical and non-statistical model in data analysis. The statistical model include test of significance of correlation using spearman rank (rho), percentages, use of pie chart, bar charts, histograms, graphs for diagrammatic presentation and explanation. For test of hypothesis, the significant level was set at 0.05. The non-statistical model includes discussing the responses of respondents during focus group discussion.

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTRUMENT**

The key instrument of this study was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was made up of twenty-one (21) items. It is divided into three sections. Section “A” contained background and demographic information about the respondents, section “B” contained questions on the phenomena of impression management and identity manipulation, while section contained questions that are aimed at measuring the impact of the aforementioned phenomena on social relationship.

The questionnaires are divided two parts of 60 and 65. A number of 65 questionnaires were administered to social media active students of the male hostels. Another 60 copies of the questionnaire was administered in female hostels. The administration of the instrument was done by recruiting male and female field staff that assisted in reaching the respondents and subsequently retrieved the questionnaires within 48 hours.

**SETTING OF THE STUDY**

This study or research work was conducted in Niger Delta University. The university has features typical of higher institution in Nigeria.

Niger Delta University s Located in Wilberforce Island about 32km from the state capital Yenagoa and is made up three campuses, the Glory land campus (Main campus), the College of Health Sciences campus and the Temporary campus of the Faculty of Law. A new campus, which is the extension of Gloryland campus, has just been developed. The university has ten (10) faculties and student population strength of about 12,000. The above described features and characteristics make it suitable for the research work.

**MEASUREMENT OF KEY VARIABLES**

Several variables were identified and measured. Below are such variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impression management</td>
<td>This was measured by understanding the tendency for acceptable personality, and self esteem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity manipulation</td>
<td>This was measured by identifying the frequencies of creations of false identities and false personalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend of use of social media</td>
<td>This was identified by the duration, period and frequency of the use of social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>The motivation was measured by identifying the motives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social relationship</td>
<td>This was identified using the respondents increased level of social interaction, intimacy and face-to-face interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>Desire of respondents to have good self-image</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**XVI. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**
INTRODUCTION
This section is aimed at testing the hypotheses and analysing the research questions of the study. The analysis of the data will be based on the responses obtained from the sample of the population of interest.

122 questionnaires were retrieved out 125 that was sent to the field.

4.1 RETRIEVED PERCENTAGE
\[
\frac{122}{125} \times 100 = 97.6\%
\]
97.6% of questionnaire was retrieved from the field.

Table 1: Respondents Distribution of Demographic Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalid</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Academic performance (CGPA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 – 2.00</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10 – 3.00</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.01 – 2.50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.51 – 4.50 above</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Level of student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 - 20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 25</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – above</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Med. Sc.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management science</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural tec.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. 62 (50.8%) of respondents are male, 54 (44.3%) are female, most of whom have CGPA of between 2.10 – 3.00 (32.0%). 54 (44.3%) of the respondents were in the first year of study with only 17(13%) in their final year. 44(36.1%) falls with the age bracket of 17 – 20. While 50 (40.0%) are between 21-25 years old. Also represented are faculties of the university with Engineering attracting the highest number of 24(19.7%).

4.2 ANALYSIS FOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The analysis of the following tables and figures provided answers for the research questions.

Table 2: Respondent’s distribution of common reasons for the use of the social media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job related purpose</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In contact with family members</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay posed on friends lives</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform others about our activities</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start and keep dating relationships</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other purposes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above is a table showing most common ways (purposes) of use of social media among university students.

From the above table, the desire to stay in contact with family members and friends attract the highest reason with 65 (53.3%) and 70(57.4%) respectively.

Graphical distribution on present trend of reasons of use of social media among university students. Oct, 2014
Fig. 1: The graph above is showing the purpose or the various reasons for which students use the social media.

Above is a graphical presentation of a table 2. The highest points in the graph are family 65(53.3) and friends 70(57.4), while only 13(10.7%) use the social media for starting and keeping dating relationship.

Table 3: Respondent’s distribution of what influenced them into using of the social media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal volition</th>
<th>Peer pressure</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows the factors that influenced students into using the social media

The above table shows that, 58 (47.5%) use the social media on their personal volition while 39 (32.0%), were influenced by peer group.

Respondent’s distribution on the use of the various social media sites among students

Fig. 2: Above is a chart showing the level of use of the various social media site

The chart shows the extent of the use of the social media among university students. Facebook (87%) have the highest followers, next is whatsapp, 2Go and Twitter.

Table 4: Respondents distribution on the extend of social media use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of use of SMS</th>
<th>Duration of the per day</th>
<th>Frequency of visit of SMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Month</td>
<td>6 Months</td>
<td>1 - 3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
54(44.3%) have spent between 1 – 3 years, 35 (28.7%) have spent at least 4 years. 46(37.7%) spent between 35 minutes to 1 hour on the social media daily, 22 (18%) spent between 2-3 hours on social media daily. 56(45.9%) visits social media at least twice a day 19(15.9%) visits at least 6 times per day.

Table 5: Respondents measure of impression management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%Always</th>
<th>%Sometimes</th>
<th>%Always</th>
<th>%Sometimes</th>
<th>%Always</th>
<th>%Sometimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking-glass</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average percent</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impression mgnt</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows the extend of impression management, 54(44.3%) are always concern about how their post affect their personality, 49 (40.2%) do sometimes. 53(43.4%) are always concern about their self esteem, while 48(39.3%) are not concern always.

**Fig. 3:** Above is a bar chart showing the extend of impression management on social media by Nigeria university students.

The above bar-chart shows the diagrammatical representation of data in table 5. The desire to be always perceive in a good light among friends attracted 66 (54.1%) while 44 (36.1%) admitted to doing it sometimes.

### 4.3 ANALYSIS ON IDENTITY MANIPULATION

Below is a measure of identity manipulation among university students on social media.

False personality = \( \frac{21}{122} \times 360 = 62.0^\circ \)

False Identity/Name = \( \frac{29}{122} \times 360 = 86^\circ \)

Non-false identify/personality = 360 – 86 + 62 = 212^\circ

**Respondents distribution of identify manipulation indicators**

**Fig. 4:** Above is a pie chart showing the extend of identity manipulations of impression management and identity manipulation among university student.

The analysis from the pie chart indicates that 21(62.0%) have created a personality which in different from their real personality. 29(86%) have used a false name on social media while 148 (212%) have not involved in either.
4.4 ANALYSIS ON MOTIVATING FACTORS

Total motivation outcome = 120
Opposite sex = \( \frac{16}{20} \times 360 = 48\% \)
Self-esteem = \( \frac{65}{120} \times 360 = 195\% \)
Sense of attractiveness = \( \frac{34}{120} \times 360 = 102\% \)
Others = \( \frac{6}{120} \times 360 = 15\% \)

**Respondent’s distribution of motivating factors**

![Motivating Factors Chart]

Fig. 5: Above is a Pie Chart showing motivating factors for impression management and identity manipulation

From the pie chart above 16(48\%\) are motivated by the need to attract the opposite. 65 (195\%\) are motivated by self-esteem, while 5 (15\%\) admitted to be motivated by other factors.

**Table 6: Respondent’s distribution on the impact of social media on social relationship.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculties</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%yes</th>
<th>%No</th>
<th>Ave. No</th>
<th>% ave.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above is a data table on the impact of the social media on social relationship among university students. The table above shows the impact of social media use on social relationship. 104(85.2\%) believed the use of social media have increase their level off interaction while 100 (82.0\%) believe it was brought about intimacy with friends and family members.

**XVII. HYPOTHESIS TESTING**

**Hypothesis 1**

H\(_1\) - There is a significant correlation between the motive for enhancing self-esteem and identity manipulation on social media

H\(_0\) - There is no significant correlation between the motive for enhancing self-esteem and identity manipulation on social media.

Using Spearman Ordered Rank of correlation (Rho)

Let motive for enhancing self-esteem be the independent variable and it represented by "\(x\)" while identify manipulation be the dependent variable and is represented by "\(y\)".

That is,

\[ x = \text{self} – \text{esteem} \]
\[ y = \text{identity manipulation} \]
\[ \text{level of significant} = 0.05 \]

**Table 7: Below is data drawn from 10 (ten) facilities of Niger Delta University on the above outlined variables.**

| Faculties | \(y\) | \(x\) | \(\bar{y}\) | \(\bar{x}\) | \(\bar{y} – \bar{x}\) | \(\bar{y} – \bar{x})^2\) |
The Spearman (Rho) value obtained above is close to 1 (one), therefore, it implies that there is a correlation between the motive for enhancing self-esteem and impression management, this implies a positive relationship.

In order to know the strength or significant level of the relationship, the spearman (Rho) is converted to the “T” score. The “T” score will help to determine the strength of correlation between the variables.

\[
T \text{– Score} = \text{Rho} \sqrt{\frac{n-2}{1-\text{Rho}^2}} \\
\approx 0.888 \sqrt{\frac{10-2}{1-(0.888)^2}} \\
= 0.888 \sqrt{\frac{8}{1-0.789}} \\
= 0.888 \sqrt{\frac{8}{0.211}} \\
= 0.888 \times 3.97 \\
= T \text{– score} = 33.7
\]

Degree of freedom for T – score is n – 2, when n = 10, 10 – 2 = 8

**Decision rule**

8df at 0.05 significance level = 2.306.

Our calculated value, which is 33.7, is greater than the critical table value (2.306) at 0.05. We therefore, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative; and state.

There is a significant correlation between the motive for enhancing self-esteem and identity manipulation on social media.

**Hypothesis II**

H\(_1\) - There is a significant relationship between high frequency of social media use and tendency for impression management on social media and improved social relationship.

H\(_0\) - There is no significant relationship between high frequency of social media use and tendency for impression management on social media and improved social relationship.

The researcher adopted Kendall’s tan to determine the relationship among the variables. Kendall’s tan, sometimes refer to Kendall’s coefficient of concordance is a natural extension of Spearman while Spearman is limited to testing for two variables, Kendall can measure association between three or more variables.

If the test statistic, Kendall (w) is approximately 1, then all the respondents have been unanimous (this implies agreement, relationship and association). On the contrary, if Kendall (w) is 0, there is no overall trend of agreement among respondents, and responses may be regarded as essentially random.

### Table 8: Below is a table showing the data for the various faculties collated based on the three (3) variables of frequency, impression management and improved relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculties</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Impression management</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To calculate the sum of the squares:

$$SSR = ERT^2 - \frac{\sum (RT)^2}{N} \sum R^2$$

$$SSR = 3489.5 - \frac{166}{10} 27556$$

$$SSR = 3489.5 - 2755.6$$

$$SSR = 733.9$$

Substitute the SSR in the Kendall’s formula

$$W = \frac{12 SSR}{\frac{\sum (RT)^2}{N} \sum R^2}$$

$$W = \frac{12 SSR}{3489.5 - 2755.6}$$

$$W = \frac{90(100-1)}{8910}$$

$$W = 0.988 \approx 1$$

$$W = \text{approximately} = 1$$

This reflects an almost perfect agreement among the respondents that there is a relationship between high frequency of social media use, impression management and improved social relationships.

To test the significant level df (degree of freedom) = (n - 1) W

$$3 (10 − 1) 0.988$$

$$30 - 3 \times 0.988$$

$$27 \times 0.988 = 26.68$$

Therefore df = 26.68

Find 9 df ( n − 1)

Chi-square table = 16.92.

**Decision rule**

The calculated value is greater than the critical table value. Therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude; “there is a significant relationship between high frequency of social media use impression management on social media and improved social relationships.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Several findings were made during the course of the study. Some of the findings are discussed as follows:

**XVIII. SOCIAL MEDIA USE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Most Nigeria University use the social media for at least for two or more purposes. The social media is believed to be used for various purposes. These purposes determine the ways various individuals use the social media. A finding from the study indicates that Nigeria university students use the social media in varieties of ways. 17.2% use the social media for job related purposes, 53.2% use the social media in order to remain in contact with family members, 15.6% admitted using the social media to inform others about various activities they are involved with. This incude their day-to-day routine and events of interest. 44.3% used the social media for the purpose of leisure and 10.7% aimed at starting and keeping dating
relationships through the social media. The need for students to stay posted on friends' lives attracted 57.4% which appears to be the highest purpose for the use of the social media among University students.

### XIX. TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

There are various types of social media. These range from Facebook, 2Go, WhatsApp, Twitter, Palm chat, BBM, Instagram, Skype, hangouts, Badoo to others. 85.5% use Facebook, 2Go attract 45.1%, WhatsApp is second highest with 70.5%, 32.8% and 35.2% are on Twitter and BBM respectively. 13.9% uses Badoo, Instagram and Skype have 17.2% and 14.8% respective, with palm chat and hangouts sharing an average of 4.6% and 9.8% of student uses neither of the above stated, but others social media sites not covered by the research. The most used social media site is the Facebook. The reason for the high use of the Facebook among university students cannot be ascertain, but it is believed that the Facebook have a wider scope of coverage and is faster to reach out to the general public than the other social media sites. It could also be the high publicity placed on the use of the face book compared to other social media sites.

Some factors have been identified to have influenced students into using of the social media. 47.5% of students attributed their use of the social media to personal volition, 32% were influenced by peer groups, 4.9% and 20.5% were influenced by parents and organisations respectively. While 4.1% was influenced by other unidentified factors.

### XX. EXTEND OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE

The extend of social media use was ascertained by measuring the period of use, duration of use per day and frequency of visit to the social media per day. It was discovered from the finding that 3.3% have spent at least 1 month on the social media. 6 month and 1 year have an average of 9.8%, while 44.3% have been using the social media for at least between 2-3 years. 28.7% have spent between 4-8 years using the social media and 6.6% have been using it for at least 8 years.

Most students are believed to spend a reasonable time on the social media. Based on the findings, the duration of use per day indicates that 32.8% of students spent between 0 - 30 minutes on the social media, 37.7% spent between 35 mins and 1 hour, 18.9% spent a duration of 2.3 hours and 1.6% and 9% are accorded to 4 hrs and 5 hours and above respectively.

On the frequency of the use of social media, the finding indicates that 30.3% of students visit the social media once per day, 45.9% visits 2 – 3 times a day, 8.2% visits 4 – 5 times a day and 15.6% of students visits the social media 6 times and above in a day.

### XXI. IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT AND IDENTITY MANIPULATION

According to Sinha (2009), impression management is an active self-presentation of a person aiming to enhance his/her image in the eyes of others. The extent of impression management was measured by observing some indicators such as students concern for personality, projecting of a good self-image or self-esteem through the social media and to make sure they are not perceive in negative light by screen information that are posted. 44.3% always, take cognisance of their personality while 40.2% sometimes do. 43.4% accept always making attempt at projecting their self-esteem through the social media with 39.3% admitting sometimes showing concern for self-esteem. 54.1 are categorized as always implementing the looking-glass self concept with 36.1% admitting not always involved. However, it can be stated based on findings that an average total of 43.3% of student admitting to engaging frequently or at sometimes involved in impression management on social media. As earlier stated, identity manipulation is the act of modifying, changing, adjusting an aspect of one’s body (appearance) with the intention of creating an acceptable self-image. It include altering one’s personality, race, sex, height, weight, eye or hair colour, creating fake online account, age etc. In this study, false personality and false identity were use as indicators for identity manipulation. 62°C was apportioned to students who have claimed to have an identity which is different from the identity portrayed on social media. 86°C was apportioned to student who have created a false identity on social media by using a false name or identity which is different from their real name, while 212°C was given to those who claimed neither. When converted into percentages, 40.2% admitted to identity manipulation, while 59.8% stated the contrary. Based on the findings made on impression management and identity manipulation, it is pertinent to state that there is a total average percentage of 41.6% (derived from 43.0% impression management and 40.2% identity manipulation) of students are actively involved in impression management and identity manipulation on social media.

### XXII. MOTIVATING FACTORS

The high rate of impression management and identity manipulation on social media by university students can be attributed to a number of factors. 48°C was apportioned to student desire to have the attention of the opposite sex, while 195°C was apportioned to desire to have a high self-esteem which appears to be the highest.
motivating factor. Sense of attractiveness, have 102°C with 15°C having neither of the stated motivating factors but represents other factors which are not within the scope of this study.

**XXIII. SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP AND THE SOCIAL MEDIA**

Findings from this study indicates that, the use of the social media have a significant effect on the level of social relationship witness by the respondents. 85.2% of respondents believed that the use of the social media have led to increase level of interaction while 14.8% believe it does not have any significant effect on their level of social interaction. 82.0% admitted that the use of the social media has helped them to have kept intimate relationship with friends and family members. 18% think it has not help in enhancing intimacy. 79.5% of respondents believe that the use of the social media have help them to express their feelings to someone they would not have done in a face-to-face interaction. This implies that the use of social media have reduced the barrier of social interaction. 20.5% believe it has not helped them in face-to-face interaction.

**XXIV. FINDINGS FROM HYPOTHESIS**

In this study, two hypotheses which were tested using Spearman ranked order of correlation with two variables. An independent variable of the motive for enhancing self-esteem and a dependent variable of identity manipulation. The second hypothesis was tested using the Kendall’s tau or Kendall’s measure of concordance has three variables such the frequency of social media use, impression management and increased or improved social relationship.

**Hypothesis I**

Findings in the study indicate that there is a correlation between the motive of student to enhance self-esteem and identity manipulation on the social media. The strength or level of significance was determine by converting the spearman value (Rho = 0.888) to T-score. The calculated value (33.7) is greater than the critical table value (2-30) which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative. This implies that there is a significant correlation between the two variables. By extension, motive for enhancing self-esteem can be seen as one of the cause of identity manipulation on social media by university students.

**Hypothesis II**

Findings from this hypothesis indicates that there is a significant agreement in the responses of respondents on the frequency of social media use impression management and improved social relationship which is reflected in the Kendall’s value of 0.988 and the subsequent significance level which was determine at 9 degree of freedom (9df) in a chi-square table (x^2) with alpha level at 0.05. The process led to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) which implies that there is a significant relationship between high frequency of social media use, impression management and improved social relationship among university students. Furthermore, it can be stated that high frequency use of the social media has implication for impression management among university students and by extension also affect the level of social relationship of the students.

**XXV. FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)**

A focus group discussion was organised by the researcher to further understand the nature of prevalence off the phenomena. The outcome or findings are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Firstly, the student admitted that their real personality is different form what is been portray on social media. They argued that, the social is used to create a distinctive personality which they believe will help to build a good self-image or enhance their self-esteem.

On identity manipulation, they believe that, it is normal thing for most users of the social media. They argued that, it is more common with male students to create a false identity on social media than female students. However, three reasons were advanced as to why students engage in identity manipulation on social media

1) Hidden identity – They believe that in order to have access to certain sites, it is important that they hide their identity. And in some situations, one may desire not to be seen by close friends, family members and others.

2) To attract the opposite sex – During the discussion, the male and females respondents agreed that identity manipulation is one of the foremost way of getting the attention of the opposite sex. The female respondents argued that the guys use it most. This involves creating fake profile with information that tends to attract the opposite sex.

3) Cybercrime – This is the third reason given. This is the major reason why people alter their identity. They argued that most people alter their identity with the intention to engage in cyber crime (yahoo-Yahoo).

Though, they admitted that the use of social media have greatly improve the level of social relationship and enhance intimacy, but pointed out that, the social media have its share of negative influence on its users.

**XXVI. NEGATIVE EFFECT OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA**

The following were advanced as the negative effect of the social media on it users:
1. It has implication for the socialization process. Social media has a prominent role in the development of the individual hence if not guided will lead to development of faulty personality.

2. Distraction – Excessive use of the social media lead to distraction of students from academic work.

3. Pornography – The use of the social media is the breeding group for pornography among university students.

4. Affect grammatical construction – A perpetual use of the social media will lead to distorted grammatical construction.

XXVII. SUGGESTED AREA FOR FURTHER STUDY

Because of the limited scope of this study, which was as result of time constrain and limited resources, however, researchers may tend to study areas which were not cover by the scope of this study; I feel obliged to suggest such areas that may be of interest.

Firstly, it is believed that the extend of use of the social media affects students academic performance. A researcher may wish to ascertain it or examine the extent to which it affects students’ academic performance.

Secondly, the use of the social media has security implications for the school environment and the society at large. The researcher may want to measure the level of involvement of university student in cyber crime.

Thirdly, gender and the social media is an area that will unravel the involvement of male or female student in social media and the implication for social interaction with the opposite sex.

Finally, the social has a great role to play in the academic development of students in developing countries. A study on the role of social media on lecturer student relationship in higher institution will not be a bad idea.

XXVIII. SUMMARY

The social media which has become an integral point of the daily routine of campus life is discovered to be used for various purpose by students. These range from job related contact with friends and family members and some with the intention of starting and keeping dating relationship. Various social media sites were used by students with the facebook appearing to be most used social media site among university students. Others include facebook, 2GO, Twitter, Palm chart, BBM, instagram, Skype, hangouts and Badoo. Some factors were discovered to have influenced students into using of the social media. These include peer group, parents, social or religious organisation. However, most of the student admitted using the social media base on their personal volition. The extend of social media use among university students was ascertained by quantifying the period of use, duration of use per day and frequency of visit of the social media per day. The findings were tabulated and subsequently interpreted in previous pages. The extend of impression management and identity manipulation was ascertained by identifying and measuring indicators such as self-esteem, personality, false personality, false identity etc. It was observed from the findings that the phenomena of impression management and identity manipulation are highly prevalent among university students. Factors such as desire for having high self-esteem, sense of attractiveness and drive to get the attention of the opposite sex were behind the high prevalence of the phenomena. It was also discovered that the use of social media has an implication for improved social relationship among university students. Findings from the hypothesis test indicates there was significant correlation between variables tested such variables included the motive for self-esteem, identity manipulation, high frequency of social media use, impression management and improved social relationship. Finally, the finding from the focus group discussion further highlights the motive of university students in practicing the phenomena of impression management and identity manipulation.

XXIX. CONCLUSION

Conclusively, the phenomena of identity manipulation and impression management are prevalent among university students. The prevalence of these phenomena are traced to a number of factors. Firstly, the social media has become a new reality of the day-to-day routine of young people and its impact on how people want to be seen or perceived by other people can no longer be ignored. Secondly, the desire by university students to built a pseudo personality and create a self-concept has led them to alter status or profile, information, screen information in efforts to make sure friends do not perceive them in a negative light, embellish pictures and creating of false identity using a false name. It is worthy to state that, a further understanding the phenomena will require an understanding of the inter-play between some variables. The test for hypothesis I and II showed that there is correlation between motive for self-esteem and identity manipulation on one hand and correlation between high frequency of social media use, impression management and improved social relationship on the other hand, therefore, the presence of such variables will create high tendency for the prevalence of the phenomena.

XXX. RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations were outlined based on the findings of this study.
1) The university administration should take advantage of the prevalent use of the social media by students to build a relationship between students, lecturers and the school by creating an official social media page.

2) Policies should be made by Government to check the level of identity manipulation on social media as it will help to reduce cybercrime.

3) The university authorities should carry out an orientation program on the positives and negatives of social media use on the academic, social and psychological welfare of university students.

REFERENCE

Thisday Newspaper. “Sunday 01 June, 2014” cybercrime