THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

An Investigation of the Use of social media among Students with Visual Impairments in Zambian Secondary Schools: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools for The Blind in Zambia

By

Wailora Martha Goma

A Dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Masters' Degree in Library and Information Science

The University of Zambia
2023.

COPY RIGHT DECLARATION

DECLARATION

I, **Wailora Martha Goma** hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for any other awards at the University of Zambia or any other University.

Name of Candidate:	**Signature**	**Date**
Wailora Martha Goma	…………………...	…………………………

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation of **Wailora Martha Goma** has been approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Masters' Degree in Library and Information Science by the University of Zambia.

Name of Examiner:	**Signature**	**Date**
…………………...	…………………...	…………………………
…………………...	…………………...	…………………………
…………………...	…………………...	…………………………

ABSTRACT

This study examined the use of social media among students with visual impairments in three selected secondary schools located in three provinces of Zambia. The specific objectives of the study were: 1) to explore the extent to which students with visual impairment used social medial; 2) to determine the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment; 3) to establish reasons why students with visual impairment engage in using social media; and 4) to establish the impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment and 5) to identify the challenges that students with visual impairment face when using social media. This was a case study of three selected schools in Zambia namely: Ndola Lions School, Magweru Secondary School and Munali Secondary school. The questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 78 Visually Impaired (VI) pupils conveniently selected from the three schools. Data was analysed using SPSS version 25. The study findings revealed that students were engaged in social media and they used it several times a day. The study found that the commonly used social media platforms in their order of frequency included WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The study also established that VI students engage in social media for various reasons ranging from accessing and sharing information, socialising with friends and family and facilitating schoolwork. It was clear from the study findings that social media use has had a positive impact on the social life of students with visual impairment. The study also identified several challenges that visually impaired (VI) pupils face when using social media. This study recommends that there was need for stakeholders in the education sector to find innovative ways to promote the use of social media among visually impaired (VI) students in institutions of learning for promoting educational purposes.

Keywords: Impact, Socia media, Use, VI pupils, Social media platforms.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family for the support they gave me. The pressure I felt during and after data collection was made light by their presence. I am grateful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the almighty God for allowing me to complete this study.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisor Professor. Akakandelwa Akakandelwa for his sustained and diligent supervision offered throughout the process of the study

I would also like to thank my husband Faidies Chola Kasabila and my daughter Victorious Claire Kasabila and my sister Khetase Kwangu Goma for their support

I also wish to thank the University of Zambia for funding my studies and offering me free time to do my studies.

I would also wish to thank all those who offered help directly and indirectly at the time of my research.

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ICT:	Information Communication Technology
SNS:	Social Networking Sites
SPSS:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UGT:	Uses and Gratifications Theory
USA:	United States of America
VI:	Visually Impaired
ZICTA:	Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This study aims at exploring the experiences of students with visual impairment in the use of social media and its impact on their social life in selected secondary schools in Zambia. This chapter introduces the topic under study. This chapter is structured with the following subheadings: the background, the statement of the problem, objectives, and research questions, the significance of the study, limitation of the study, theoretical framework, and the operational definition of key concepts.

1.1 Background of the Study

Scholars who have written on social media agree that, since its inception, social media has changed the way people live their lives (Kietzmann and Hermkens, 2011). From the way they get their news to the way, they interact with their loved ones. Kietzmann and Hermkens (2011) observed that networks formed through social media change the way groups of people interact and communicate. Social media is everywhere and is unavoidable, powerful, and it is here to stay. Merriam-Webster (2019) defined social media as forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content (such as videos and photos, among others). For many people, social media refers to apps on their smartphones or tablets. This misconception stems from the fact that most social media users access their tools via apps available on their smartphones or tablets.

There are several different types of social media. Some of the most popular social media platforms include Facebook (and its associated Facebook Messenger), YouTube, WeChat, Instagram, QQ, QZone, Weibo, Twitter, Tumblr, Telegram, Baidu Tieba, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, LINE, Snapchat, Pinterest, Viber, VK, Reddit, and more (Eid and Al-Jabri, 2016**).** Social media is one of the most popular Internet activities among young people especially students in institutions of higher learning like universities and colleges, as demonstrated by various scholars (Smith and Caruso, 2010). There is evidence that the number of people using social media has increased over the years. According to the Global Digital Report (2021), the number of social media users now stands at almost 4.2 billion by the start of 2021, which is equivalent to 53.2% of the total world population (7.9 billion) (Kemp, 2021).

In Zambia, the use of social media especially among students of higher learning institutions is fast increasing. The 2018 survey conducted by the Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority (ZICTA) estimated that 78.4 percent of all the users of the Internet had at least one social media account, representing an improvement of 15.4 percent when compared to 63.0 percent reported in 2015. According to the findings by ZICTA (2018), Facebook was the most prominent social media platform used by Internet users in Zambia, accounting for 91.4 percent of all the Internet users that were subscribed to a social media platform. WhatsApp was the second most popular social media platform, constituting 74.5 percent of all the Internet users that were subscribed to a social media platform (ZICTA, 2018).

The value of social media has been widely recognized. Social media is a central arena for participation in social life, politics, education, business, and working life (Fuglerud et al., 2012). Sharma and Shukla (2016, cited in the works of Akakandelwa and Walubita (2017) inform us that social media users create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and can network with others who share a common interest, dreams, and goals. According to Kietzmann and Hermkens (2011), social media introduces substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities, and individuals. This is because social media enables people to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content quickly, efficiently and in real-time.

Benefits and factors contributing to the growth of usage of social media

Several benefits come from using social media platforms that have been used to share information among internet users both within and outside the learning institutions. They allow people to engage in conversations with one another and are regarded as the future of communication (Okonkwo et al., 2015). Social media present people with a countless array of Internet platforms that increase and enhance the sharing of information. They make the transfer of text, photos, audio, video, and electronic information in general easy (Okonkwo et al., 2015).

Engaging in various types of social media has become an essential activity for most people and research has shown that such activity is beneficial as it enhances communication, social connection, and even improves technical skills (Zamri et al., 2018). According to Zamri et al. (2018), more than a billion individuals around the world are connected and networked together to create, collaborate, and contribute their knowledge and wisdom. Teenagers and young people, especially students also engage in social media whether to use it as a platform to seek new information or connect with their friends.

Studies that have examined the use of social media among university students agree that social media use enhances the social interactions of students (Akakandelwa and Walubita, 2017). This is because social media facilitates communication among students when they express themselves by posting status updates, links, photos, videos, and opinions. This is supported by Smock et al. (2011) who observed that social media allows students to follow others' online presence by keeping track of regular updates about their family, friends, classmates, and acquaintances. According to Ellison et al. (2007), social media offers an opportunity for people to connect with others through weak ties and to maintain strong personal relationships. The same may be true for blind people/or people with Visual Impairment (VI), but research suggests that their offline social networks seem to be structured and to function differently from those of sighted people (Voykinska et al., 2016). Previous reports have shown that visually impaired (VI) people have a significant presence on social media (Fuglerud et al., 2012; Voykinska, et al., 2016). People with visual impairment (VI) usually access social media using screen readers and screen magnifiers on mobile and desktop platforms (Shaomei and Adamic, 2014). A study conducted by Voykinska et al. (2016) in the USA revealed that blind people engage with visual content on social media in various ways. It was reported by Voykinska et al. (2016) that advanced technologies offer blind people tools to identify and understand visual content on social media. These include image recognition, tactile graphics, and crowd-powered systems (Voykinska, et al., 2016). Furthermore, interaction with visual objects on social media is supported through tools that help blind people take better photos (Chen, et al., 2013), and by improving the experience of photo sharing with audio augmentations (Harada, et al., 2013). Voykinska et al. (2016) observed that visually impaired (VI) people in their study take photos, post them, tag people in them, comment on them, and like others' photos on social media. According to Voykinska et al. (2016), although participants could not see the photos, their social networks included a large portion of sighted friends, and they want to take photos that look good, want to look good in the photos taken of them and want to interact with others through the visual content prevalent on social media. Photos serve important social purposes for all social media users.

Several benefits come from using social media platforms to visually impaired (VI) people. Scientific research has shown that social media platforms play a pivotal role in the life of visually impaired (VI) people (Vashistha, et al., 2015). According to Vashistha, et al (2015), social media has a large impact on visually impaired (VI) peoples' lives and a high influence on learning and learning processes. For people with visual impairment (VI), social media allows them to create online social networks. These online social networks can potentially provide tremendous support to them. Kef et al (2000) argue that support received from social networks can buffer stress and improve coping in all stages of life of visually Impaired (VI) people. Social media has been used to share information among internet users both within and outside the learning institutions. It allows visually impaired (VI) people to engage in conversations with one another (Okonkwo et al., 2015). Social media presents visually impaired (VI) people with a countless array of Internet platforms that increase and enhance the sharing of information. Social media make the transfer of text, photos, audio, video, and electronic information in general easy for visual impairment (VI) people (Okonkwo et al., 2015).

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is often designed in a way that makes it difficult to use for people with visual impairment (VI). This also applies to the design of social media. Previous research shows that ICT in general and social media, in particular, presents many accessibility challenges for visually impaired (VI) people (Fuglerud et al., 2012). Furthermore, research continues to reveal that despite attempts to make the Web more accessible to users, barriers to access certain content persist (Lasecki et al., 2013). People with visual impairment (VI) often find it difficult to use social media due to its design. Consequently, these people lose out on the benefits that come with using social media. For students with visual impairment (VI), non-use of social media may cut them off from the digital world of information and thereby missing out on various social and economic opportunities. There are various challenges that visually impaired (VI) people face when using social media. Many of these challenges relate to the design of social media, as well as accessibility issues. Other challenges include but are not limited to security challenges and cyberbullying among others. Therefore, understanding the experience of people with visual impairment (VI) in the use of social media is important to address such barriers.

Several researchers have studied the use of social media platforms by people with disabilities in the developed world (Asuncion et al., 2012; Fuglerud et al, 2012). A few researchers have also investigated the use and non-use of social media platforms by visually impaired (VI) people in the developing world (Vashistha et al., 2015). However, the use of social media by visually students in the developing world has received no attention currently. In Zambia, nothing has been published with an explicit focus on the experiences of students with visual impairment in the use of social media in secondary schools. This underscores the need for further research in this area to mitigate these challenges. Therefore, the significance of this study was to investigate the experiences of students with visual impairment in Zambia in using social media and its impact on their social life.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social media plays a fundamental role in the life of visually impaired people, especially students with visual impairment. Many studies have been conducted on the use of social media platforms by visually impaired people in the developed world (Asuncion et al., 2012; Fuglerud et al, 2012; Wu & Adamic, 2014; Voykinska et al., 2016), and some parts of the developing world (Vashistha et al., 2015; Chukwuere & Chukwuere, 2017).

However, in Zambia, studies on the use of social media by people with visual impairment, particularly students with visual impairment are scanty and merely unavailable currently. While research has been conducted on social media use (Akakandelwa & Walubita, 2017; Mwalimu et al., 2018; Mambwe, 2019), the focus on students with visual impairment in secondary education is scarce. To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, nothing has been published with an explicit focus on the experiences of students with visual impairment in the use of social media in secondary schools in Zambia. It is feared that without the actual knowledge of the experiences of students with visual impairment in using social media, it will remain unclear as to how visually impaired students use social media. Consequently, some questions around the everyday motivations, experiences and practices of visually impaired students in using social media will remain unanswered. However, understanding the experiences of people with visual impairment, particularly students, in their use of social media is important to improve the coverage and use of social media by these groups of people in Zambia. Therefore, this underscores the need for research in this area. It is from this backdrop that this study will attempt to explore the experiences of visually impaired students in the use of social media and its impact on their social life in Zambian secondary schools.

1.3 Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of Zambian Secondary School students with visual impairment in the use of social media and its impact on their social life.

1.4 Research objectives

1.4.1 General objective

The main objective of this study was to investigate the use of social media among pupils with visual impairments in three selected secondary schools located in three provinces of Zambia.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

1) To explore the extent to which students with visual impairment use social media.
2) To determine the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment.
3) To establish reasons why students with visual impairment engage in using social media.
4) To establish the impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment.
5) To identify the challenges that students with visual impairment face when using social media.

1.5 Research questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1) To what extent do students with visual impairment use social media?
2) What types of social media platforms are mostly used by students with visual impairment?
3) What are the reasons for students with visual impairment to engage in using social media?
4) How does social media impact the social life of students with visual impairment?
5) What challenges do students with visual impairment face when using social media?

1.6 Significance of the study

In Zambia, very little research has been done on the experiences of students with VI in the use of social media resulting in limited information and data on the subject. Therefore, the findings of this study may give an insight into how students with VI use social media and its impact on their social life. The findings may aid policy and decision-makers to come up with interventions aimed at improving the welfare of students. with VI with regards to the use of ICTs, particularly social media. Stakeholders in the education sector (Ministry of General Education (MoGE), school managers, and teachers) may use the findings of this study to decide how best they can integrate social media in the teaching-learning process of students with VI.

Furthermore, undertaking this study is essential to organizations and individuals working towards improving the lives of students with VI. The findings may be used by these organizations and individuals in coming up with targeted interventions on how best to help people with visual impairment as they use ICT including social media. Finally, it is hoped that this research may stimulate further research in this area and other related areas to better understand the experiences of people with VI in using social media and its perceived impact on their lives.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study arose from the use of non-probability sampling, as this affects the generalization of results. However, to reduce the limitations, the researchers engaged the supervisor and other experts in this field during the development of data collection instruments to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Additionally, extensive literature related to this study was reviewed during the development of the data collection instruments. The researcher strongly believes that despite the observed limitations, the findings of the study are reliable and useful.

1.7 Theoretical framework

This section discusses the major theory guiding this study. The study adopted the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) developed by Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch (1974). This theory will be used to explain visually impaired students' use of social media.

1.7.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

The study will be guided by the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) developed by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) to explain visually impaired tudents' use of social media. UGT assumes that people actively seek out specific media content and platforms for particular purposes and goals.

UGT grew out of needs and motivation theory (Outini, 2020). Wimmer and Dominick (1994) cited in the works of Outini (2020) argued that needs and motivation theory originated in the 1940s when researchers became interested in studying why people immersed themselves in mass media such as popular music and newspapers. However, this theory has elicited a tide of criticism from other mass communications researchers. Critics argue that the theory suffers from four serious conceptual problems: "first, a vague conceptual framework; second, a lack of precision in major concepts; third, a confused explanatory apparatus; and forth, a failure to understand audiences' perceptions of media content" (Weiyan, 2015, p.72). During the 1970s, in response to these criticisms, UGT emerged as a distinct theoretical framework pioneered by researchers interested in understanding users as active agents with subjective motivations who make conscious choices about which media platforms to use (Outini, 2020).

Specifically, UGT aims to identify the social factors that motivate people to engage in a variety of media-related behaviours (Katz, et al., 1974 cited in Outini, 2020). As Katz et al. (1974) concluded:

> " Its approach concerns the social and psychological origins of needs, which generate expectations of the mass media and other sources, which lead to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in need gratifications and other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones" (p.20).

UGT assumes that people are goal-oriented and seek out gratifications and that this drive leads them to active media use (McGuire 1974, cited in the works of Outini, 2020). According to Katz et al (1974), UGT asserts that people are active users of media and select how they will use it. They believed that UGT is grounded in the idea that users have certain reasons and motivations for selecting media and intentionally choose a certain message source that best fits their personal needs (Katz, et al., 1974). He further highlighted needs such as; cognitive need- the need to acquire information and knowledge or improve understanding, affective need- the need to have emotional experience, integrative need- the need to strengthen confidence, status or credibility and social integrative needs- the need to strengthen relationships with friends and family. The theory suggests that users have numerous media options to choose from and suggests that the reasons and motivations for selecting a specific media vary from user to user (Katz, et al., 1974). McQuail (1984) proposed the idea of "user taste" when examining the selection of media, which suggested that users choose the media based on personal preferences and motivations and that media are simply a means to achieve an end goal.

Since its inception, UGT has been widely used by mass communication researchers to provide explanations as to why users find social media to be so enticing (Karimi, et al., 2014). Researchers have focused on how individuals are using social media, what motivates them to start using social media and why they continue to use them? Karimi, et al. (2014) argues that it is necessary to consider users' motives. Mass communication researchers have suggested several possible motives for the use of social media. Previous research suggests that the gratifications sought from social media could be anything from a place for information distribution to a venue for feedback to a platform to promote organizations or even an opportunity to participate in a community of connected individuals (Stassen, 2010, cited from Karimi, et al., 2014).

The study adopted the UGT to explain visually impaired students' use of social media because it provides a prominent explanation of the motivation factors that drive people to use social media and be active media users. By applying UGT, this study seeks to provide a better and more comprehensive understanding of why visually impaired students use social media. Ultimately, UGT will inform this study not just by revealing how students with visual impairment use social media networks, especially social media, but also by helping to identify and catalog their reasons for doing so. Essentially, some of these reasons for using social media would be to overcome their social isolation, form communities, and obtain social and professional support.

1.8 Operational definition of key concepts

Experience: The content of direct observation or participation in an event.

Student: In this study, a student is a learner who is enrolled in an educational institution. In this study, a student will be any learner enrolled in one of the selected institutions of learning for visually impaired people in Zambia.

Social media: Socia media is the term often used to refer to new forms of media that involve interactive participation (Manning, 2014). In this study, social media refers to forms of electronic communications (such as websites for social networking and micro-blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos, photos among others).

Visual Impairment (VI): Visual impairment, also known as vision loss, is a decreased ability to see to a degree that causes problems not fixable by usual means, such as glasses (WHO, 2015). For this study, the researcher will consider VI students who are partially blind, as well as those who are completely blind.

1.9 Summary

This chapter introduces the topic under study. Scholars who have written on social media agree that social media has changed the way people live their lives. There are several types of social media platforms, among the several social media platforms the most popular used are WhatsApp and face book among others. Social media has several benefits which include sharing of information and communicating with friends to mention but a few. Social media plays a fundamental role in the lives of visually impaired students. Social media is the only media channel which has helped visually impaired students to feel they are part of society they communicate freely just like their sighted peers. There are challenges visually impaired students faced which relate to the design of social media as well as accessibility issues and cyberbullying among them. However, the study gave an insight in to how visually impaired students use social media, the findings will aid policy and decision makers decide how best they can integrate social media in the teaching and learning processes

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This section of the study presents the literature related to the experience of students with visual impairments in the use of social media. This part of the study was mainly based on a review of empirical studies to identify existing knowledge and research gaps relating to the topic under study. The sources of the literature included available documents such as conference papers, articles, journals, and other published and unpublished reports. The literature review was guided by the themes arising from the research objectives as presented in chapter one of this study.

2.1 Types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment

There are several different types of social media platforms. Some of the most popular social media platforms include Google, Facebook, YouTube, WeChat, Instagram, Myspace, QQ, QZone, Weibo, Twitter, Tumblr, Telegram, Baidu Tieba, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, LINE, Skype, Snapchat, Pinterest, Viber, VK, Reddit, blogging, Flickr, Badoo, Quantcast and more (Okonkwo, et al., 2015; Eid and Al-Jabri, 2016)**.** Among the numerous social media networks, Facebook, Skype, Twitter, Blogs, Badoo, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Myspace seem to be the most popular among the youths (Okonkwo, et al., 2015). However, Facebook seems to be the most popular of them all, at least to the Zambian audience**.**

It is very important to note that not every blind person uses a screen-reader, some use zoom, large text, colour inversion, magnification, or a mixture of features. There are various social media platforms used by people with visual impairment that have been reported in the literature. This section of the study discusses the types of social media platforms commonly used by people with visual impairment. The aim is to give an overview of the various types of social media platforms that are available for people with visual impairment including students.

Vashistha et al. (2015) investigated the use and non-use of social media platforms by low-income blind users in rural and peril-urban India and found that Facebook was the most preferred platform followed by WhatsApp, while Twitter had the least adoption. According to Vashistha et al. (2015), participants reported broad usage of Facebook, which included, widening their social circle, accessing and sharing news, songs, and other informational content, sending photos, and chatting. Similarly, Bashir et al. (2014) also reported that the majority of persons with visual impairment (42.0 %) in their study indicated that they used Facebook as a media tool for social networking. The findings by Bashir et al. (2014) further revealed that others used Skype (25%), email (17.0 %), LinkedIn (5.0%), YouTube (5.0%), and only (2.0 %) were using Twitter as a media tool for social networking.

The findings by Vashistha et al. (2015) and Bashir et al. (2014) provide an overview of the different types of media tools for social networking. Based on the findings from these studies, it is evident that Facebook is the most used platform for social networking by people with visual impairment. This is because Facebook has shortcut keys that enable screen-reader users to carry out specific actions quickly and easily when on certain devices. However, Vashistha et al. (2015) and Bashir et al. (2014) did not specifically base their argument on students with visual impairment but rather targeted a mixture of visually impaired professionals, students, and others. Hence, the current study attempts to establish the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment in learning institutions to have a better understanding of the most commonly used media tools for social networking by this segment of the population. This is important because adolescents and young people use social media more than any other age group (Líbera & Jurbeg, 2017), hence the need to find out what social media platforms are mostly used by students with visual impairment.

In his qualitative study titled 'The Benefits of Media in Learning: Case Studies of Blind Learners of English as L2' Sabljak (2016) found that the majority of the participants (91.3%) used some type of social network. Facebook prevailed with almost 87% users among the focus group participants, and Skype followed with 78.3%, while the rest had a significantly lower usage. Besides, his findings also indicated that Instagram and Twitter encompassed 30.4% and 26.1% respectively, of the total results (Sabljak, 2016).

Asuncion et al. (2012) investigated the use and accessibility of social media by 723 post-secondary students with various disabilities including the visually impaired in Canada. Contrary to the findings by Bashir et al. (2014), Vashistha et al. (2015), and (Sabljak, 2016), Asuncion et al. (2012) found that YouTube was the most popular form of social media used by students with various disabilities. Their results revealed that 668 (representing 92.4%) of the 723 participants reported that they use YouTube, making it the most popular of the social media listed. This was followed by 614 participants indicating using Facebook, 531 using MSN/Windows Live Messenger, 279 participants using Skype, and only 162 using Twitter (Asuncion, et al., 2012). The differences here could be due to variations in the target population and the location in which the studies were conducted. Vashistha et al. (2015) and Bashir et al. (2014) targeted visually impaired professionals and students and these studies were conducted in developing countries, while Asuncion et al. (2012) targeted students with various satellites and their study was done in a developed country, hence, the difference. The findings by these studies are relevant to this current study because they provide evidence of the most commonly used social media platform by people (including students) with visual impairment.

In a descriptive exploratory study, Akakandelwa & Walubita (2017) examined the types of social media platforms students commonly use at the University of Zambia, their findings revealed that most of the students used WhatsApp as the most widely used social media platform followed by Facebook and tweeter. The reasoning here could be that WhatsApp offers real-time texting or communication, including the ease of sharing information or media content (Ahad & Lim (2014). The findings by Akakandelwa & Walubita (2017) are important to this study because they provide evidence that WhatsApp is the most commonly used social media platform by students in Zambia. However, Akakandelwa & Walubita (2017) based their argument on sighted users. The current study will target students with visual impairment. While research has been conducted on social media use by students in Zambia (Akakandelwa & Walubita, 2017), nothing has been published with an explicit focus on the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment. To address this gap, the current study is designed to establish the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment in selected institutions of learning in Lusaka, Zambia.

2.2 Use of social media by people with visual impairments

All social media involve some sort of digital platform, whether that be mobile or stationary. With the increasing popularity of social media, it is important to understand how students with visual impairment use it, as they are heavy users of such technologies and have challenges distinct from their sighted counterparts. Research has revealed that advanced technologies offer people with visual impairment tools to identify and understand visual content on social media (Voykinska et al., 2016). These include, for instance, image recognition, tactile graphics (Ladner, et al., 2005), and crowd-powered systems (Bigham, et al., 2010). Further interaction with visual objects is supported, for example, through tools that help blind people take better photos (Francine, et al., 2013), and by improving the experience of photo sharing with audio augmentations (Susumu, et al., 2013). However, these technologies have yet to be incorporated into the designs of popular social media.

Social media is an essential part of the life of adolescents and young people nowadays, and those with visual impairments are no exception. Using focus group interviews with students from a school for the blind and the visually impaired in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Líbera & Jurbeg (2017) found that despite the visual nature of social media, students with visual impairment use and enjoy these resources as much as their sighted peers. According to Líbera & Jurbeg (2017), these students are aware of the possibilities and constraints that social media might bring to them but, with the help of assistive technology, they make the most of it. Similarly, Bashir et al. (2014) found that the majority of persons with visual impairment in their study reported using social media several times a day, and only a small proportion used social media tools once a week.

Using a mixed-methods approach of semi-structured interviews and observations, Vashistha et al. (2015) examined the benefits received by low-income blind people from Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp and investigated constraints that impede their social media participation. Interesting findings from Vashistha et al. (2015) revealed that out of the 18 participants, all but three participants had used at least one of the three social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp). However, the findings by Vashistha et al. (2015) are only limited to low-income blind people; use of social media may vary across different socioeconomic characteristics. Hence, the findings by Vashistha et al. (2015) may not be a true assessment of how blind people use social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. In this regard, the current study will try to include participants from all socioeconomic statuses to have a better and wider understanding of the experiences of people with visual impairment particularly students in the use of social media.

Asuncion et al (2012) in their study titled 'Social Media Use by Students with Disabilities' asked participants to select specific social media-related activities that they had engaged in over the last month from a list. Participants reported engaging in the top five activities which included, watching a video on YouTube (91 percent); instant messaging service such as MSN/Windows Live, Messenger, Skype, Google Talk (79 percent); searching for someone they knew on Facebook (79 percent); adding someone they knew using Facebook (76 percent) and updating their status on Facebook (69 percent). The findings by Asuncion et al. (2012) provide an overview of the various social media-related activities that people with disabilities including the visually impaired usually engage in. However, Asuncion et al. (2012) investigated the use and accessibility of social media by post-secondary students with various disabilities but did not specifically look at students with visual impairment in secondary school set up, and as such this may not be a true assessment of how students with visual impairment in secondary schools use social media. Therefore, the current study aims to provide insights into how students with visual impairment use social media in secondary school level.

Researchers have investigated how blind people, specifically screen reader users, engage with visual content on social media such as Facebook and Twitter among others. For instance, Wu and Adamic (2014) studied visually impaired users' use of Facebook and found that they participate in all the main social activities (posting status updates, comments, and likes) just like the general Facebook population, including some photo-related features (e.g., photo comments and likes). While Voykinska et al. (2016) in their study found that blind users encountered accessibility challenges navigating large news feeds and often relied on sighted people to either check photo quality or take photos for them altogether. Their participants relied on textual supplements to photos such as location information and comments for clues on photos' content, as captions were often nonexistent or insufficient.

Wu and Adamic (2014) reported that when visually impaired users on Facebook produce and share personal content such as status updates, they received on average more feedback (shares, comments, and likes) from others. The findings by Wu and Adamic (2014) revealed that Facebook as a social media platform may enable people with visually impaired to openly share their experience, voice their concerns, and receive attention and support from others. However, Wu and Adamic (2014) only studied Facebook users, who may behave differently on other online social media such as Twitter and LinkedIn. Previous studies have shown that communication patterns on Twitter differ from those on friendship-based social networks like Facebook (Wu et al., 2011). In the same way, we may find that the results by Wu and Adamic (2014) are specific to the context of Facebook and do not generalize to other online social networks. Therefore, the current study will attempt to address this gap by including other online social networks such as Twitter and LinkedIn among others. However, the findings by Wu and Adamic (2014) are important to this study because they provide evidence that people with visual impairments including students participate in online social networks such as Facebook. This may enable them to voice their concerns, and receive attention and support from others.

In a qualitative study, Voykinska and colleagues (2016) explored blind people's motivations, challenges, interactions, and experiences with visual content on social media respondents in their study reported using social media daily or several times per week. According to Voykinska et al. (2016), many blind respondents had accounts on more than one social media, and many also had experience sharing and interacting with visual content on social media. The findings by Voykinska et al. (2016) give insights into how blind people engage with visual content on social media (particularly photos) in various ways. According to Voykinska et al. (2016), blind people take photos, post them, tag people in them, comment on them, and like other people's photos. Extending earlier findings from sighted Facebook users (Joinson, 2008), the findings by Voykinska et al. (2016) demonstrate that interactions around photos are crucial to the social media experience and to maintaining social connections for blind users, just as they are for sighted users.

As a small-scale qualitative study, Voykinska et al. (2016)'s work revealed interesting high-level patterns of how blind people engage with visual content on social media in various ways but did not explain the experiences of students with visual impairment in the use of social media and its impact on their social life in institutions of learning. The current study aims to gain deeper insights into these findings by answering questions that have remained unexplored: How do students with visual impairment use social media? What types of social media platforms are mostly used by students with visual impairment? What are the motivational factors to the use of social media for students with visual impairment? and how does social media use impact the social life of students with visual impairment? To answer these questions, the study will use an interpretative phenomenological analysis and conduct interviews with students with visual impairment in selected institutions of learning in Lusaka.

Literature continues to reveal that people with visual impairment specifically, screen reader users engage with visual content on social media. Morris et al (2016) surveyed 132 adults who used screen readers and analyzed their Twitter accounts along with a control group. Their findings indicated that of the users who customized their profile picture, about half (50%) reported getting assistance from a sighted person to choose a photo. Their analysis of profiles and tweets revealed differences in how blind Twitter users engage, namely that they tweet fewer photos, even though photos were becoming tweeted by the general (mostly sighted) Twitter population significantly more often during the study period.

Recent findings by Bennett and colleagues (2018) indicated that visually impaired teens in Seattle, Washington, USA engage with photos visually, similarly to their sighted peers, and have developed strategies around photo capture, editing, sharing, and consumption that attempt to mitigate usability limitations of current photography and social media apps. The findings by Bennett et al. (2018) demonstrated that despite visual impairment, visually impaired teens enjoy smartphone photography and social media apps popular among their peers, even when they are premised on photos and ephemeral. These findings provide evidence that visually impaired students use social media platforms to share photos with their peers. Bennett et al.'s (2018) work highlighted interesting findings of how teens with visual impairments access smartphone photography, from the time they take photos through editing and sharing them on social media, but did not explain their experiences in the use of social media and its impact on their social life. The current study aims to gain deeper insights by exploring the experiences of students with visual impairment in the use of social media and its impact on their social life in institutions of learning.

2.3 Motivational factors to the use of social media for students with visual impairment

Social media are widely popular across different age groups. Social networking sites like Facebook, for example, are among the most popular social media platforms used by college students (Smith et al., 2011). Pew (2012) claims that although the main purpose of using social networking sites is related to socialization, an increasing number of individuals seem to get news from social networking sites. Media sharing sites such as YouTube are also known as important sources for news. More recently, microblogs like Twitter are found to be used for getting news as well (Mitchell et al., 2013). Wikipedia has been known as another popular social media platform, which is often used as a starting point. A great number of people and students would begin with Wikipedia when searching for information because it often provides an overview of a new concept and also useful resources (Head & Eisenberg, 2010).

Previous studies have reported that blind users of social media have similar motivations to use social networking sites as sighted individuals, emphasizing the importance of fostering accessible experiences similar to sighted users (Voykinska et al., 2016; Morris et al., 2016). In their study titled 'How Blind People Interact with Visual Content on Social Networking

Services', Voykinska et al. (2016) observed that like sighted users, all of the participants used social media to maintain relationships with friends and family, for career-related purposes, to discuss their experiences as blind persons, to share useful news on the topic, or to advocate for visual impairment awareness. Similarly, Vashistha and colleagues (2015) also found that low-income blind people in India use social media platforms to expand their connections, receive instrumental benefits, uplift their social standing, and access informative and entertaining content.

Bashir et al. (2014) also gave insights into the main motivational factors to the use of social media by people with visual impairment. According to Bashir et al. (2014), people with visual impairment use social media for the acquisition of academic information, to communicate with friends and relatives, for sending and receiving messages, adding or removing friends, enjoying music, responding to events and invitations, and participating in on live seminars and conferences (Bashir, et al., 2014). Furthermore, Bashir et al. (2014) also observed that almost half (48.0%) of the participants in their study reported that they used social media for playing games, forming new social and academic groups, and getting contact information such as email address and phone number from others. A few of the participants (37.0%) in Bashir et al.'s (2014) study reported that they used social media for looking at or posting photos, videos and sharing these with others.

The findings by Bashir et al. (2014) provided a detailed analysis of the main reasons as to why people with visual impairment use social media but did not specifically explain why students with visual impairment use it. The reasons or motivational factors for using social media may vary among students and the general population. Because young people and teenagers are the main consumers of social media (Bennett, et al., 2018), underscores the need for further research on motivational factors to the use of social media by people with visual impairment focusing on students with visual impairment in institutions of learning. Hence, this study aims to address this lacuna by exploring motivational factors to the use of social media for students with visual impairment in selected institutions of learning in Lusaka.

2.4 Impact of social media use on the social life of students with visual impairment

Scientific research has shown that the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can be seen as an important factor for social inclusion in its different aspects - economic, social, relational, and informational, among others (Caran, et al., 2016). Inclusion potentiality is even more important for students with visual impairment who face limiting life conditions that determine social barriers. For this particular group of people, social media may increase their social circle (Vashistha, et al., 2015) and consequently, guarantee social inclusion. The fundamental advantage of using social media is the building of interpersonal relations through the creation of new connections (Abbas, et al., 2019). Social networks provide platforms to make friends by utilizing inconsequential interactions, communications, or participation in social groups and enable people to socially support one another (Hardy & Castonguay, 2018).

Literature has shown that social media is increasingly becoming a critical element of human society by changing our social norms, values, and culture (Chukwuere & Chukwuere, 2017). Information sharing and the distribution of content are becoming important social needs (Wolf, et al., 2015). Social media has changed how people, including university students, communicate, interact, and socialize throughout their learning processes in educational institutions (Terzi, et al., 2019). This form of media plays a vital role in content sharing among university students and the rest of society. Students now have the opportunity to participate in the social discussion by sharing images and pictures, posting their comments, disseminating ideas, documents among others (Kim, et al., 2018). Currently, social media generally impacts youths' daily lives and university students in particular (Stathopoulou, et al., 2019). Digital media and social networking are revolutionizing methods of everyday communication, collaboration, information sharing, and information consumption (Suseno, et al., 2018; Tulin, et al., 2018).

The positive benefits of social media for people with visual impairment have been widely recognized. Visually impaired people derive significant benefits by using social media platforms including social support. In their study titled 'Social Media Platforms for Low-Income Blind People in India', Vashistha et al. (2015) reported that blind people use social media to increase their social circle and strengthen their existing links. Oh, et al. (2013) claim that social networking platforms (for example, Facebook) are an important instrument for promoting social support since they make it possible to overcome geographical barriers by forming a virtual network of mutually supportive relationships. This is because social media platforms act as avenues for getting and sharing information. This viewpoint is supported by Vashistha et al. (2015) who reported that participants in their study considered social media platforms as an avenue to get information on interesting topics and current news, while others used these platforms for sharing photos, videos, jokes, and even documents with others. The findings by

Vashistha et al. (2015) provide insights into how social media enables information sharing, collaboration, and communication among blind users.

With the use of social media students with visual impairment can easily communicate or share information quickly with each other through various social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram among others.

For students with visual impairment, social media may also facilitate socialization. Research has shown that social media allow young people to exchange ideas and learn new things (Akram & Kumar, 2017). This invariably results in them becoming more confident in life. Akram & Kumar (2017) postulate that social media provides an easy and effective way in which students can share knowledge. Students can simply access the information, study, transform (if needed) and share. Hence, the flow of knowledge becomes smooth (Akram & Kumar, 2017). The lamentation by Akram & Kumar (2017) provides insights into how social media enables knowledge sharing among students. Knowledge sharing among students is important because it may help in improving the learning process of students since knowledge sharing enables one to learn new things. The same may be said for students with visual impairment because according to Vashistha et al. (2015) blind people consider social media platforms as avenues for getting and sharing various information including current news and documents among others. It is evident from the reviewed literature that social media is important for students with visual impairments because it enables socialization, information, knowledge sharing, communication, and collaboration. This is important for students because it can give them confidence in their life.

Despite social media having significant positive benefits for people with visual impairment, it has some negative impacts, particularly on students. Previous evidence revealed that social media use has a relationship with mental health in young students, female students showed more symptoms of depression than males (Kelly, et al., 2018). Research has also shown that excessive social media use may cause depression, stress, and anxiety among students (Gaspar, et al., 2016; Hawk, et al., 2019) and may increase caber-bullying (Carter, 2013), the wasting of time (Malita, 2011), and health hazards in a student's life (Lee, et al., 2018).

Abbas et al. (2019) examined the constructive and adverse factors that impact students' minds and how these helped students to share positive and negative aspects with others. Their findings revealed that the usage of social media in Pakistan has a negative influence on a student's behavior as compared to positive aspects. Abbas et al. (2019) concluded that the adverse effects of these social networking sites outweigh the positive ones. However, their results may not be generalized to the entire student community as findings are specific to the sighted respondents only. The use of social media by sighted students and those with visual impairment may vary and hence, the impact differs. Therefore, this study aims to examine the impact of social media use on the social life of students with visual impairment in selected institutions of learning in Lusaka.

2.5 Challenges students with visual impairment face when using social media

There are various challenges that VI people face when using social media. Many of these challenges relate to the design of social media, as well as accessibility issues. Other challenges include but are not limited to security challenges and cyberbullying among others.

Blind users typically interact with computers using screen readers, software that interprets what is being displayed on the screen and reads it to the user. However, research has shown that many websites continue to be inaccessible through screen readers (Voykinska, et al., 2016), even those that are intended for broad access such as library websites (Lazar, et al., 2007) and social media (Buzzi, et al., 2010). Normally, screen readers are designed to read in English. In situations where blind users are unable to understand English words, they are likely to encounter a lot of difficulties using social media. Research has shown that the language of screen reader software is one of the major limitations that impede students' use of social media platforms and the Internet. In a study conducted by Vashistha, et al (2015) in India, it was reported that participants complained about the language of audio output used in the screen reader software, they were unable to understand English words and the American accent output by the screen reader software. Vashistha, et al (2015) noted that the limited understanding of English by the participants also lowered their self-confidence and self-prestige in that they felt disadvantaged.

Previous studies have shown that ICT in general and social media in particular, have many accessibility challenges for VI people (Fuglerud et al, 2012). Wu and Adamic (2014) in their study reported several barriers that prevent visually impaired users from fully engaging with Facebook. They observed that technologically wise, using JavaScript to create highly dynamic web pages was challenging or rather caused problems for screen readers, and bugs related to accessibility were harder to capture and reproduce (Wu & Adamic, 2014). Practically, certain Facebook features, such as photo sharing, seem to be tailored to sighted users, and these make up some of the most popular features on Facebook. As such, VI people normally find it difficult to use these features because of accessibility issues. This is supported by Voykinska et al (2016) who reported that blind participants in their study faced profound accessibility challenges, including the prevalence of photos without sufficient text descriptions.

Literature continues to reveal how VI people find it difficult to effectively use social media. A study conducted by Vashistha, et al (2015) reported that despite chatting being the favorite and most frequently used feature on social media, many participants in their study were unable to use this feature because of screen reader difficulties in interpreting abbreviations common in texting and code-mixing. Vashistha, et al (2015) also stated that participants complained about accessibility features and navigational challenges. Vashistha, et al (2015) explained that in the case of using WhatsApp when a user presses the icon for sending a voice message, the output from screen reader software overlaps with the voice message sent by participants and this diminished the user experience of two WhatsApp users. Furthermore, Vashistha, et al (2015) observed that participants in their study found it challenging to navigate across panes and to remember the commands of screen reader software. It is evident from the studies cited above that VI people face numerous challenges when using social media, and many of these challenges relate to the design of social media, as well as accessibility and navigation challenges. This, therefore, underscores the importance of training and continued usage of the platforms to overcome these challenges.

2.6 Summary

Social media is an essential part of the life of adolescents and young people nowadays, and those with visual impairments are no exception. To sum up, literature has shown that students with visual impairment use and enjoy social media as much as their sighted peers. It was evident from the literature that the majority of persons with visual impairment in their study reported using social media several times a day. The literature has also surfaced interesting high-level patterns of how blind people engage with visual content on social media. The literature has also revealed that Facebook is a mostly used platform for social networking by people with visual impairment followed by WhatsApp. Although Facebook seemed to be popular. Blind users of social media have similar motivations to use social networking sites as sighted individuals.

Previous research has shown that using social media has the fundamental advantage of building interpersonal relations through the creation of new connections. It was evident from the reviewed literature that social media is important for students with visual impairments because it enables socialization, knowledge sharing, communication, and collaboration. It was also evident that excessive social media use may cause depression, stress, and anxiety among students and may increase caber-bullying, the wasting of time, and health hazards in a student's life. It is evident from the studies cited above that a lot has been written about the use of social media by people with visual impairment in other regions. However, such studies are non-exigent currently in Zambia, especially among students with VI.

Research has indeed been conducted on social media use by students in Zambia, however, very little has been published with an explicit focus on the experiences of students with visual impairment in Zambia in general. To address this gap, the current study attempts to provide evidence of the experiences of students with visual impairment in the use of social media with a specific focus on exploring how students with visual impairment use social media; their most used social media platform; motivational factors to the use of social media; and examining the impact of social media use on the social life of VI students in three selected secondary schools.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 overview

This chapter discusses the methods and techniques that were used in carrying out this study. It presents the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection methods and procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations of the study.

3.1 Research design

A research design is an overall strategy to integrate different components of a study coherently and logically thereby ensuring that the research problem has been addressed (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). It constitutes an outline for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. For the purpose of this study, a case study design was used. A case study is a ‘systematic enquiry’ into an event or set of related events that is aimed at describing and explaining the phenomenon of interest (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Nieuwenhuis (2007) argues that case study knowledge is more concrete, contextual and developed by interpretation than knowledge obtained using other techniques. Seventy-eight VI pupils were purposively selected from three secondary schools located in three provinces.

To meet the requirement of the information needed, the case study design utilized the quantitative approach to research. According to Coetzer (2012) quantitative research uses descriptive statistics that enable the researcher to summarize quantities of data by using graphs and numbers such as values and percentages. The quantitative approach was preferred because according to Creswell (2008), it is systematic and objective in its ways of using numerical data from a selected subgroup of a population being studied. This approach was used because the researcher was dealing with quantities or numerical data. It involved the gathering of measurable data and statistical analysis of the data. In this sense, the researcher developed questionnaires, which were administered to visually impaired pupils at Ndola Lions, Magweru, and Munali Secondary schools.

3.2 Study site

This study will be conducted in three schools, namely: Ndola Lions School, Magweru Secondary School, Munali Secondary. These schools were picked because they are known to have units or centres for VI students.

3.3 Target population

The study population for this study were all visually impaired students in secondary schools in Zambian, by 2017 Zambia had 1009 secondary schools. Ministry of Education reported that there were twenty-three thousand one hundred and eighty y three (23,183) visually impaired learners in Zambia out of this number twelve thousand two hundred and thirty-six (12,236) males and ten thousand nine hundred and forty-seven (10,947) females were in grades 1 to 9, while one thousand seven hundred and fifty- four (1754) males were in grades 10 to 12 (MoE). Ministry of Education also reported that there were twenty-four thousand nine hundred and thirty- seven (24,937) visually impaired learners in schools that host students with VI in Zambia. Furthermore, these schools have a substantial number of enrolled VI students who may provide the needed information to answer the research questions.

In 1996, Zambia adopted its first inclusive education policy. Since that time, teachers have been critical for the successful implementation of the inclusive education policy (Ngulube et al., 2020). Inclusive education stipulates that all schools now should admit VI learners in the mainstream. This study target VI learners at Ndola Lions School, Magweru Secondary School and Munali Secondary School.

According to available records from the schools under study, in 2021, Ndola Lions School has 100 VI students, Magweru Secondary School has 25 VI students and Munali Secondary has about 8 VI students. When we add up the population for the three schools, this gives a combined population of 133 visual impaired students. The schools were purposively picked as they are known to ho use visually impaired students. Therefore, this formed the study population; the study targeted visually impaired pupils at Ndola Lions, Magweru and Munali secondary schools. At the time the study was conducted they were nine (9) schools for the visually impaired in Zambia.

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedure

3.4.1 Sample size

According to Brink et al. (2012), a sample is a part or fraction of a whole, or a subset of a larger set, selected by the researcher to participate in a research study. The sample size was drawn from the three selected schools under study. The study used purposive sampling to pick 78 VI pupils from the three schools.

Therefore, 78 questionnaires were administered to the VI pupils at the three schools. However, 78 were returned and hence, the sample size for this study was 78. Therefore, a sample of 78 VI students in our target population was ideal to give us the confidence levels we need.

3.4.2 Sampling procedure

According to Brink et al (2012), sampling refers to the researcher's process of selecting the sample from a population to obtain information regarding a phenomenon in a way that represents the population of interest. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to come up with the sample size.

The selection of respondents was done through purposive sampling to select those who will offer the researcher comprehensive information about the phenomenon. At each field site (school), the researcher conveniently picked VI pupils who were easily accessed, available and willing to take part in the study. This was done to enhance efficiency in data collection because it is not easy to recruit this kind of people due to several reasons related to their disability coupled with their daily busy schedules.

This procedure was supported by Cohen (2007) who argued that convenience sampling involves choosing the nearest individuals or those who happen to be available and willing to serve as participants and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained. Moreover, Babbie (2013) also claims that convenience sampling is justified if the researcher wants to study the characteristics of people passing the sampling point at specified times or if less risky sampling methods are not feasible.

3.5 Inclusion Criteria and Exclusion Criteria

This study included all VI pupils who have had an active social media account for six months and more. This study considered six months to be a lot of time for someone including pupils with VI to connect with other people and communities on social media. These were expected to answer questions relating to the use of social media. All VI pupils who have no social media account were excluded from the study. This is because the focus of this study was to investigate the use of social media among VI pupils, and as such, the study only recruited those VI pupils with an active social media account.

3.6 Data collection methods and procedures

3.6.1 Data collection instruments

The data was collected through semi-structured questionnaires comprising of closed and open-ended questions. Interviewer-administered semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect data. The questionnaire comprised of questions written in English. Some of the questions in the questionnaire were adapted from various authors (Akakandelwa & Walubita, 2017; Outini, 2020) in the field of mass communication.

Due to the nature of the study participants (visually impaired pupils), the interviewer administered questionnaire was adopted. This is where the researcher helped the study participants to fill in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was chosen because it is the best tool for this study and it helps to increase the likelihood of obtaining accurate data (Babbie, 2013) because data is collected systematically and objectively. It is fast and time efficient as it reduces the uncertainty by the study participants in understanding and interpreting questions. It is also flexible for respondents over where and when to complete the questionnaire as they can fill it in at their own time. This method was adequate in facilitating the collection data to attain the research objectives. The questionnaire is attached to the appendix.

3.6.2 Data collection procedures

The researcher sought permission from the school ethics committee before embarking on the study. The researcher then visited the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) in the respect districts to obtain the relevant authorisation. The researcher then visited the head teachers and VI pupils of the selected schools to administer the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was administered by a sighted research assistant or the principal researcher. Babbie (2013) informs us that, there are three main methods of administering questionnaires to a sample of respondents, these are: self-administered questionnaires, in which respondents are asked to complete the questionnaire themselves; surveys administered by interviewers in face-to-face encounters; and surveys conducted by telephone. This study adopted the surveys administered by interviewers in face-to-face encounters, in which respondents were asked questions from the questionnaire and they responded. The interviewer administered questionnaire was preferred due to the nature of the study population.

3.7 Data analysis

According to Johnson & Christensen (2004), data analysis refers to the process of creating value from the raw data. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used as the statistical software for data analysis. Given the fact that quantitative data is usually large, the use of computer software was necessary to help with the process of data analysis.

SPSS can analyze common patterns of variables and their relationships and generate descriptive statistics. SPSS was preferred because it is within the researcher's capacity to use the statistical software since it is user-friendly (it is mostly point and click). The collected questionnaires were checked for completeness before entering into the SPSS software. The collected data from the questionnaire was coded and categorised.

To better understand the characteristics of each variable, descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages was calculated for each item in the questionnaire. To aid the interpretation of data, data was summarized and organized in tables and charts. Furthermore, inferential statistics with Chi-Square test was used to establish the level of significance. P-value <0.05 was considered to decide statistically significant.

3.8 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are essentially the key attributes of good measurement and the keys to assessing the trustworthiness of any research study, hence the need to ensure reliability and validity in this study.

3.8.1 Reliability

Reliability is a necessary condition for validity but may not be sufficient on its own, thus it is a prerequisite for validity. According to Adams et al (2007), reliability refers to the consistency and stability in the measurement. For the research instrument to be valid, it has to produce reliable results. In this study, open-ended questions in the questionnaire were minimized to enhance the reliability of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the researcher subjected the data collection instruments to expert review to improve the reliability and validity. This was done to ensure the stability of the questionnaire.

To establish the degree of internal consistency of the questionnaire, the researcher used the application of a coefficient alpha, known as Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's alpha test is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group (Huck, 2000). It is also considered to be a measure of scale reliability. The rule of thumb is that a

Cronbach’s alpha of .70 and above is acceptable. A Cronbach’s Alpha test was run in SPSS version 25 to check whether the questions in the questionnaire all consistently measured the same latent variable on the Likert item provided. This is important because, without reliability, it is going to be difficult to be sure about the validity of the data collected.

The questionnaire was considered reliable based on its reliability coefficient, which was .731. In other words, the questionnaire had a reliability score above 70%.

3.8.2 Validity

According to Borg and Gall (2007) content validity of an instrument provides adequate coverage of the topic. Content validity was improved through expert judgment. The researcher sought expert advice and assistance from the supervisor to help improve content validity of the instrument. This was done in order to ensure accuracy and consistency of the instrument. Additionally, a comprehensive in-depth literature review will be conducted before and during the development of the data collection instrument.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Berg (2005) outlined ethical concerns that ought to be adhered to before embarking on any social research. The same principles were adhered to by this study. The principles were to get consent from all respondents before administering the questionnaire. The identity of individuals from whom information was obtained in the course of the study was kept strictly confidential and anonymous. All the data collected were treated with utmost confidentiality and the identity of respondents was treated anonymous as names were not required to be included in the data collection instrument.

The nature and the purpose of the research was explained to the respondents by the researcher. The researcher also assured the respondents of their ability to withdraw from the study at will. The sampled participants had a voluntary option on whether to take part in the research project or not. Finally, this study obtained ethical clearance from the University of Zambia Ethics Committee.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided information about the methods and procedures that were employed to address the objectives of this study. The discussion was based on the following headings: research design, target population, sample size and sampling technique, data collection methods, instrument validity and reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis as well as ethical considerations.

The research design used was a case study targeting pupils with visual impairment. A total of 78 VI pupils were conveniently selected to take part in the study. Data was collected using interviewer administered questionnaires by going to the field sites to collect data. The study ensured validity and reliability of the data collection instruments using guidance from the supervisor. Data was analysis using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages was calculated for each item in the questionnaire. The study adhered to research ethics through voluntary participation and informed consent. All these methodological procedures were aimed at providing data to the research objectives of this study to fulfill the primary aim: to examine the use of social media among pupils with visual impairments in three selected secondary schools located in three provinces of Zambia. The next chapter presents the findings of the study following the collection and analysis of data collected from the field.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

Interviewer administered structured questionnaires were taken to the visually impaired pupils at Ndola Lions School, Magweru Secondary School and Munali Secondary. A total of hundred (100) questionnaires were administered and seventy-eight (78) were returned which resulted in a 78% response rate. This chapter presented the findings after the analysis of data collected from the field. The specific objectives of this study were: 1) to explore the extent to which students with visual impairment used social medial; 2) to determine the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment; 3) to establish reasons why students with visual impairment engage in using social media; and 4) to establish the impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment ;5) to identify the challenges visually impaired students face when using social media. The findings are therefore presented according to the specific objectives of the study.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Visually impaired pupils were the target population for this study. 78 VI students were recruited in this study. Table 1 below presents the background characteristics of the respondents. The distribution of respondents based on sex shows that the majority (53.8%) were females, while males were 42.4%. In terms of age, most (70.5%) of the participants were in the age group 17-20 years, while the rest fell in the 21-24 years (19.2%) and 14-16 years (10.3%), respectively. Finally, more than half (59%) were attending senior secondary, while the rest (41%) were attending junior secondary education at the time of the study.

Table1: Frequency and percentages of the characteristics of the respondents

Variable	**Values**	**Frequency**(n=78)	**Percent (%)**
Sex	Male	36	46.2
	Female	42	53.8
Age	14-16 years	8	10.3
	17-20 years	55	70.5
	21-24 years	15	19.2
Grade	Junior secondary	32	41.0
	Senior secondary	46	59.0
	Total	**78**	**100**

4.2The Extent to Which Students with Visual Impairment Use social media

The results reveal that the respondents had been using social media for a period ranging from three to six years with an average of 4.2 years. All the respondents reported that they used mobile phones to access social media. Figure 1 below shows that 79.9% of the respondents who reported using social media use Apple Voice Over as their screen-reader when accessing social media; 14.5% used Jaws and Sweed Accessibility Talk Back, respectively.

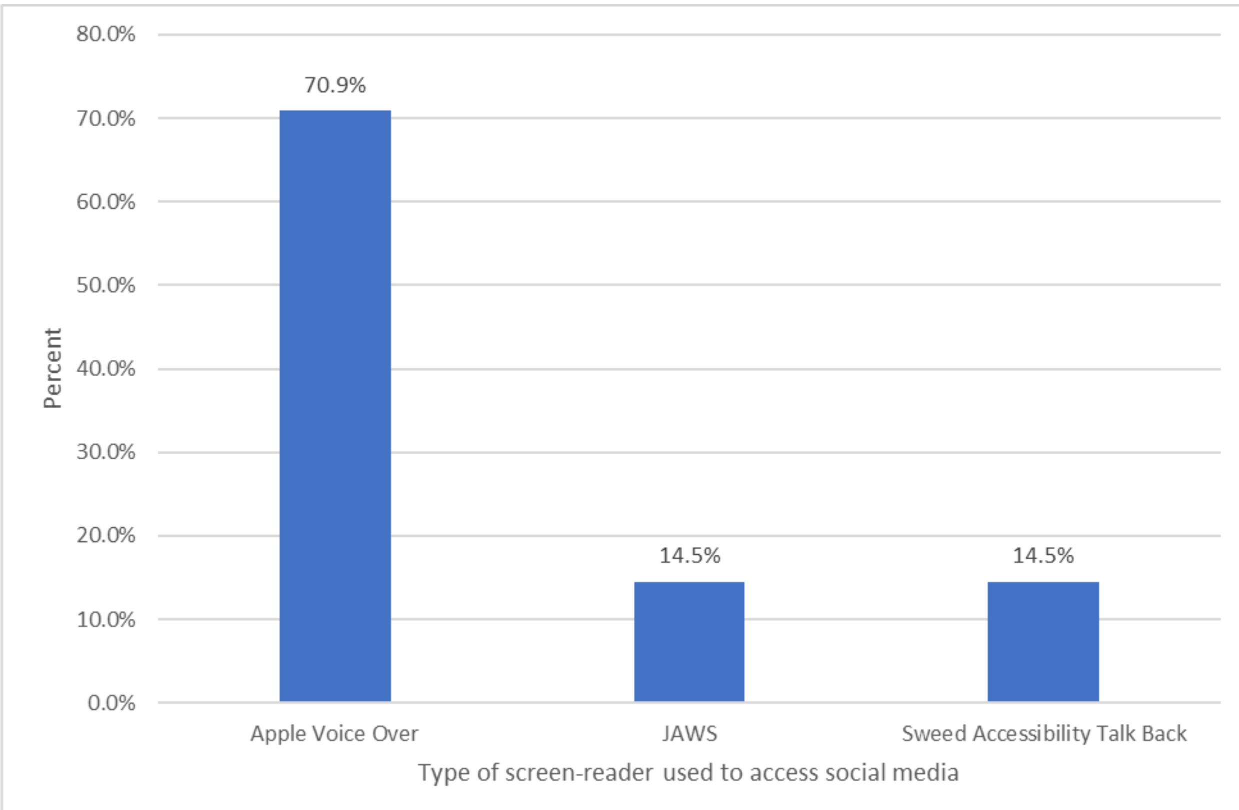

Figure 1: Type of screen-reader respondents use to access social media

Further analysis was conducted to establish whether the respondents were members of any social media group; the number of social media groups they belonged to; how often they used social media in a day; and the approximate number of hours they spent on social media per day. The findings are summarized in Table 2 below.

The results showed that the majority (79.5%) reported that they were members of a social media group. The remaining 20.5% indicated otherwise on this matter. Furthermore, most of the respondents belonged to one social media group (20.5%); 10.3% of the respondents belonged to 2, 4, 5, and 10 social media groups, respectively. In terms of the frequency of use social media, the majority (60.3%) reported they rarely used social media, followed by those who reported that they occasionally used it (19.2%). The rest reported that they either frequently of very frequently (10.3%) used social media. Furthermore, the findings revealed that most (39.7%) of the respondents spent 1 to 2 hours on social media, followed by 20.5% who spent less than an hour on social media per day. The rest indicated they spent 2 to 4 hours (10.3%), 4 to 6 hours (10.3%), and more than 6 hours (9.0%) per day.

Table 2: Extent to which respondents used social media

Variable	Values	Frequency	Percent
Whether respondent is a member of a social media group	Yes	62	79.5
	No	16	20.5
Number of social media groups respondent belongs to	1	14	17.9
	2	8	10.3
	4	8	10.3
	5	8	10.3
	10	8	10.3
	Not stated	32	41.0
Frequency of using social media in a day	Very frequently	8	10.3
	Frequently	8	10.3
	Occasionally	15	19.2
	Rarely	47	60.3
Approximate number of hours respondents spent on social media per day	<1 hour	16	20.5
	1 to 2 hours	31	39.7
	2 to 4 hours	8	10.3
	4 to 6 hours	8	10.3
	>6 hour	7	9.0
	Not stated	8	10.3

Further analysis was done to compare frequency of social media use between males and females. The results as shown in Table 3 reveals that there were more females (76.2%) who rarely used social media compared to men (41.7%). Males (22.2%) were more likely to use social media very frequently compared to their female counterparts (0%). A Chi-Square Test was conducted to test a null hypothesis that frequency of social media use was dependent upon gender, at a significant level of 0.05. The results are statistically significant (Chi-Square value=37.023, df3 and p-value 0.001). These findings suggest that male VI students use social media more frequently than female VI students. There is enough evidence to state that frequency of social media use is dependent on gender. More males use social media more frequently than females.

Table 3: Distribution of frequency of social media use by gender

	Frequency of SM Use				
Gender	**Very frequently**	**Frequently**	**Occasionally**	**Rarely**	**Total**
Male	8 (22.2%)	0 (0%)	13 (36.1%)	15 (41.7%)	36 (100%)
Female	0 (0%)	8 (19.0%)	2 (4.8%)	32 (76.2%)	42 (100%)
Total	8 (10.3%)	8 (10.3%)	15 (19.2%)	47 (60.3%)	78 (100%)

4.3 Types of Social Media Platforms Mostly Used by Students with Visual Impairment

The second objective of this study was to establish the types of social media mostly used by students with visual impairment. Figure 2 below presents the findings. The results revealed that out of the 78 respondents recruited for this study 70.5% used WhatsApp, 60.3% used Facebook, 20.5% used Twitter, 10.3% used Instagram, and 10.3% used YouTube. It is worth noting that most respondents used more than one social media platform.

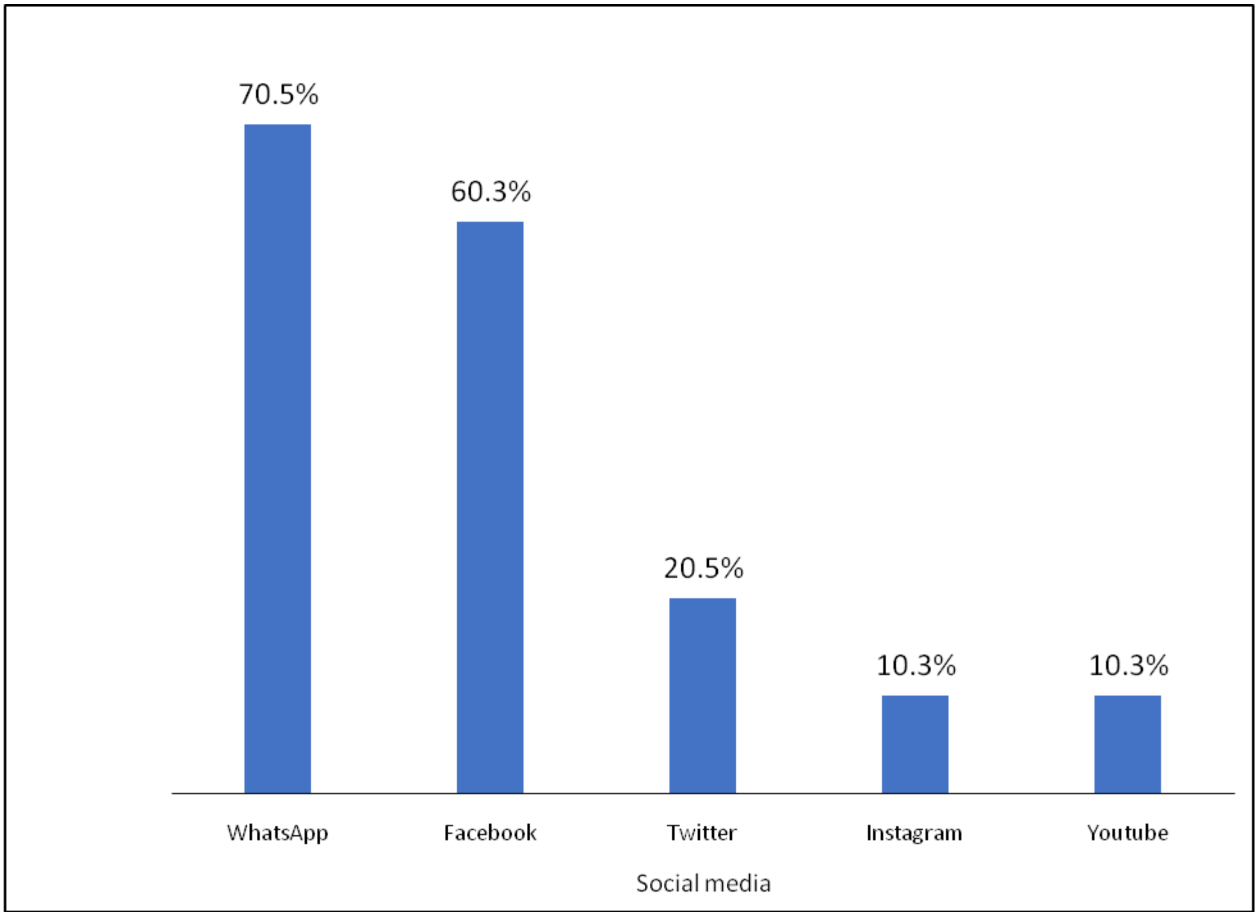

Figure 2: Types of social media platforms used by respondents

Table 4 above presents results on the social media preferences by gender. The results showed that there were differences between male and female students in their preference of social media platforms. As depicted in Table 4 above, more males (80.6%) used Facebook compared to females (42.9%). On the other hand, more females (81.0%) used WhatsApp than males (58.3%).

Table 4. Preference of social media platforms according to gender

			social media platform					Total
			Facebook	WhatsApp	Twitter	Instagram	YouTube	
Gender of respondent	Male	Count	29	21	8	6	6	36
		% within gender	80.6%	58.3%	22.2%	16.7%	16.7%	
	Female	Count	18	34	8	2	2	42
		% within gender	42.9%	81.0%	19.0%	4.8%	4.8%	
Total		Count	47	55	16	8	8	78

4.4 Reasons Students with Visual Impairment Used Social Media

The results as presented in Table 5 below showed that the majority (60.3%) of the respondents reported that they spent their time on social media reading articles or any other information. The rest indicated that they spend their time on social media sharing posts (41.3%), scrolling through other people's profiles (30.8%) and reading private messages (19.2%). Further analysis was conducted to establish the issues respondents discussed on social media. The results revealed that all (100%) the respondents discussed academic issues. Furthermore, only 10.3% of the respondents discussed social and political issues, respectively. None (0%) of the respondents reported discussing religious issues. In terms of what they usually posted on social media, the majority (60.3%) of the respondents reported that they usually posted educational stories on social media, followed by those who reported that they usually posted photos (30.2%), personal stories (29.5%) and videos (10.3%). However, none of the respondents reported that they usually posted disability stories on social media.

Table 5: Reasons for using social media

Variable		**Count**	**Percent**
Where do respondents spend their time on social media	Reading articles or any other information	47	60.3%
	Sharing posts	32	41.0%
	Scrolling through other profile	24	30.8%
	Private messages	15	19.2%
Issues respondents discuss on social media	Academic issues	78	100.0%
	Social issues	8	10.3%
	Political issues	8	10.3%
	Religious issues	0	0.0%
What do you usually post on social media?	Educational stories	47	60.3%
	Photos	24	30.8%
	Personal stories	23	29.5%
	Videos	8	10.3%
	Disability stories	0	0.0%

Figure 3 below presents findings on respondents' reasons for using social media. In their order of frequency, the reasons for using social media included to access and share information (65.7%), to keep in touch with family/friends (45.7%), to share good things with friends (45.7%), to facilitate school work (34.3%), to chat with others (34.3%), to find new friends (22.9%) and to maintain existing relationships.

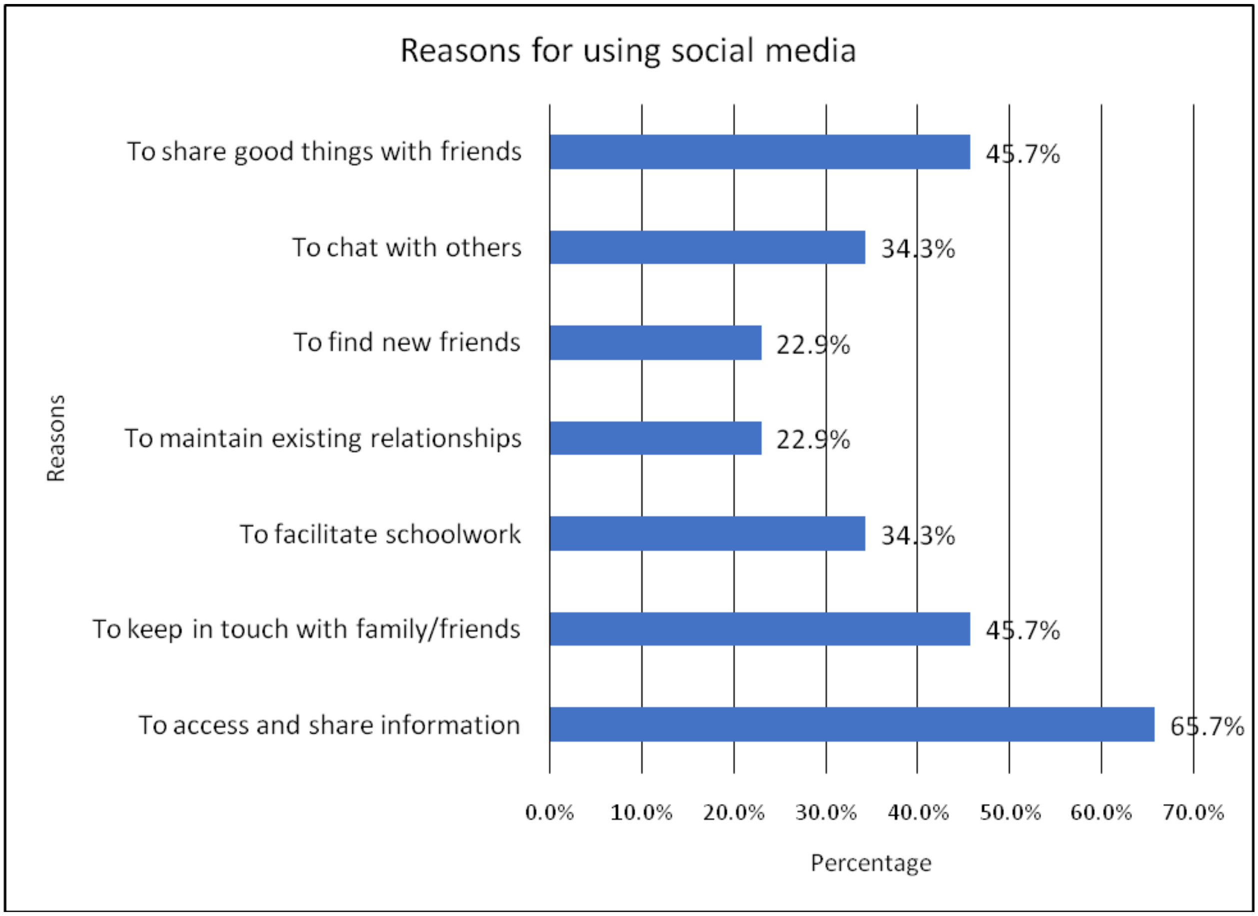

Figure 3. Reasons for using social media

4.5 Impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment

This section of the study presents information on the perceived impact of social media on the social life of VI students.

The results as presented in Figure 4 below revealed that the majority (69.2%) of the respondents indicated that overall, they had had positive experience with social media. On the other hand, 10.3% indicated that they had had a negative experience with social media; while 20.5% of the respondents did not state anything.

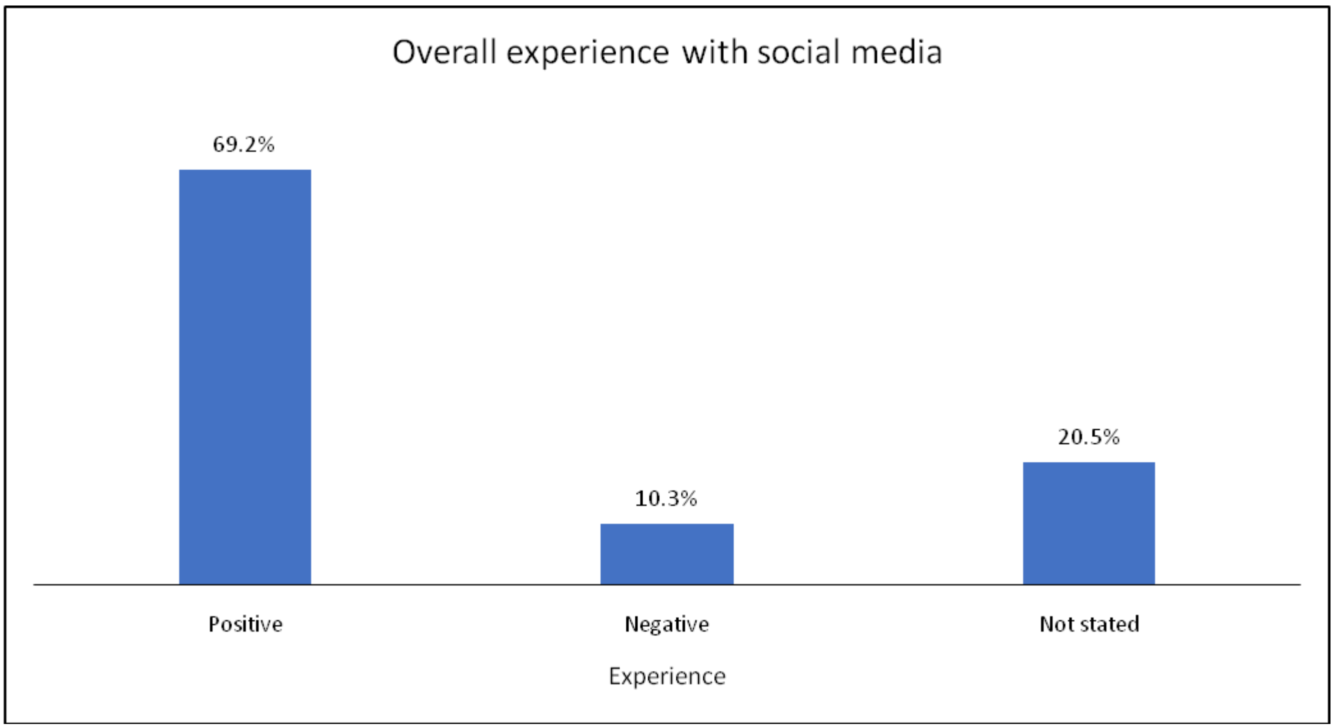

Figure 4. Overall experience with social media

The study investigated the impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment through a series of items to which respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement. Table 6 below presents responses on items related to perceived impact of social media on VI student's social life. The results showed that more than half (51.3%) of the respondents disagreed that they usually spent more time on social media. Further analysis indicated that the majority (70.5%) disagreed that they always checked social media sites before doing something else and 69.2% also disagreed that they felt that their academic productivity suffered because of excessive use of social media. Only 41.0% agreed that they had tried to cut down on time spent on social media but still failed, while the rest (59.0%) disagreed on this matter. Furthermore, the majority (69.2%) disagreed that other people negatively commented on their social media usage. Finally, the majority (59.0%) disagreed that they felt stressed out due to their use of social media, whilst 41.0% agreed to this matter.

Table 6. Responses on items related to perceived impact of social media on students' social life

	Agree		**Disagree**	
Statements	**f**	**Percent (%)**	**f**	**Percent (%)**
I usually spend more time on social media	38	48.7	40	51.3
I always check social media sites before doing something else	23	29.5	55	70.5
I feel my academic productivity suffers because of social media	24	30.8	54	69.2
I have tried to cut down on time spent on social media but still failed	32	41.0	46	59.0
Other people negatively comment on my social media usage	24	30.8	54	69.2
I feel stressed out due to the use of social media	32	41.0	46	59.0

In the study, respondents were asked whether they found social media useful. Their responses are presented in Figure 6 below. The results indicated that 45.9% found social media useful, and another 45.9% were not sure; only 8.2% found social media not useful.

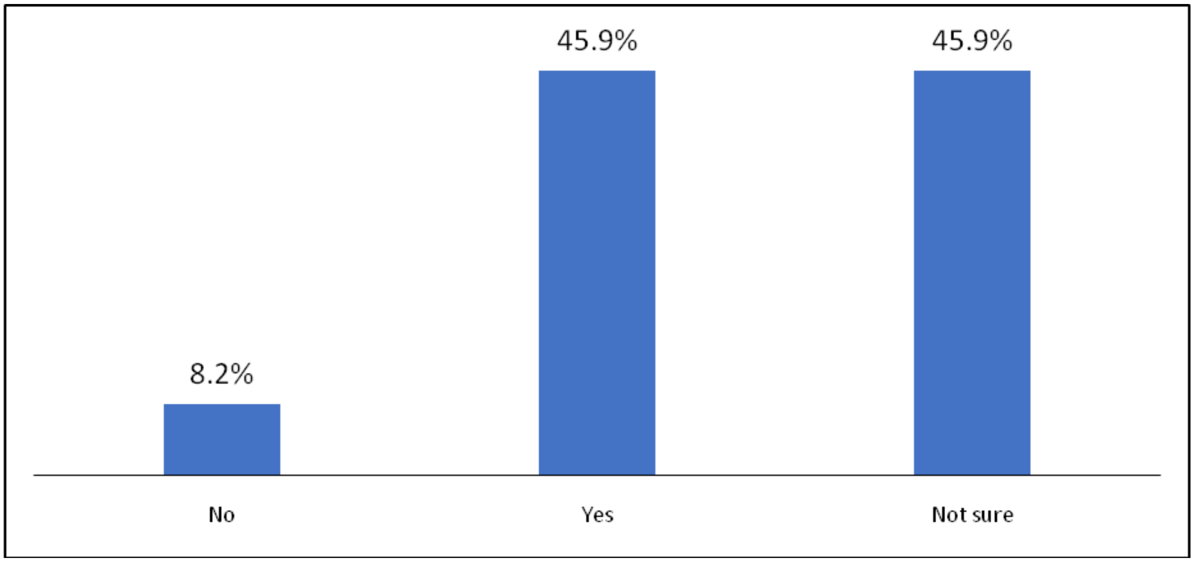

Figure 6. Whether VI students have found social media useful

Respondents were asked to indicate the benefits that they experienced from using social media. The results revealed that respondents had experienced the benefits of accessing information, communication and interaction with family and friends. In addition, respondents also reported that the use of social media had helped them to acquire motivation and education/knowledge.

4.6 Challenges students with visual impairment face when using social media

Table 7 below presents information on the possible challenges that VI students face when using social media. The findings revealed a number of challenges that VI students face when using social media.

As shown in Table 7 below, the identified challenges in their order of frequency included navigation (100%), lack of mobile phones with quality applications (91.0%), language barriers (79.5%), low computer (IT) literacy levels (79.5%), cyberbullying (70.5%), accessibility issues (69.2%) and lack of motivation and confidence in using social media (50.0%). However, the design of social media platforms was not considered a challenge by the majority (71.8%) of the respondents. Only 28.2% of the respondents indicated that the design of social media platforms is either a minor or major challenge.

Table 7. Challenges faced by VI student when using social media

Potential challenges	**Response**	
	Frequency	**Percentage**
Navigation	78	(100%)
Lack of phones that have quality applications	71	(91.0%)
Low computer (IT) literacy level	62	(79.5%)
Language barriers	62	(79.5%)
Cyberbullying	55	(70.5%)
Accessibility issues	54	(69.2%)
Lack of motivation and confidence in using social media	39	(50.0%)
The design of social media	22	(28.2%)

Other challenges reported by the respondents were related to system and language. One respondent commented that *"some of the challenges I face is language barrier; the system we use on social media cannot describe the photos used on social media"*.

Some respondents found it difficult to navigate through different apps. One respondent also commented that *"I find it challenging to navigate on social media"*. Additionally, other challenges identified were related to lack of privacy and security.

4.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the findings from the data which were analyzed using SPSS version 25. The results revealed that the respondents had been using social media for a period ranging from three to six years with an average of 4.2 years. All the respondents reported that they used mobile phones to access social media. The results revealed that WhatsApp (70.5%) was the mostly used social media platform followed by Facebook (60.3%), Twitter (20.5%), Instagram (10.3%) and You Tube (10.3%). The respondents had various reasons for using social media including accessing and sharing information, keeping in touch with family/friends, facilitating school work, finding new friends and maintaining existing relationships. The results also revealed that the majority (69%) of the respondents thought that participation in social media groups had helped them to overcome issues of social isolation and exclusion. Finally, the study findings revealed that respondents faced a number of challenges in using social media which included accessibility, system and language, navigation, lack of privacy and security issues.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings of this study which aimed to investigate the experiences of secondary school students with visual impairment in the use of social media and its impact on their social life. The findings have been discussed in light of the reviewed literature and research objectives. The researcher made an effort to reflect, confirm, and extend current knowledge and thinking on VI students' use of social media. `For clarity, the discussions are presented under the sub-themes as presented in the previous chapter of this study.

5.1 The Extent to Which Students with Visual Impairment Use Social Media

Nowadays, social media is an essential part of the life of adolescents and young people, and those with visual impairments are no exception. Advanced technologies offer people with visual impairment tools to identify and understand visual content on social media. Engaging in various types of social media has become an essential activity for most people and research has shown that such activity is beneficial as it enhances communication, social connection, and even improves technical skills (Zamri et al., 2018). To this effect, objective one of this study sought to explore the extent to which students with visual impairment use social medial. The study findings revealed that the sampled VI students had been using social media for a period ranging from three to six years with an average of 4.2 years. Students used mobile phones to access social media and the majority used Apple Voice Over as their screen-reader when accessing social media, while a small proportion used Jaws and Sweed Accessibility Talk Back. The current study highlights interesting findings of how student with visual impairments access social media through smartphones. These findings provide some form of evidence that visually impaired students use social media platforms to engage in various activities such as sharing photos with their peers. The findings of the current study seem to be in line with the works of Bennett et al. (2018) who demonstrated that despite visual impairment; visually impaired teens enjoy smartphone photography and social media apps popular among their peers. Similarly, a small-scale qualitative study by Voykinska et al. (2016) revealed interesting high-level patterns of how blind people engage with visual content on social media in various ways.

Furthermore, the study findings revealed that the majority of the VI students belonged to a social media group. This clearly indicates that by being members of social media group, VI students may experience a sense of belonging in which they will be participating in the main social activities such as posting status updates, comments, and likes including receiving and sharing information. These findings seem to agree with earlier observations by Wu and Adamic (2014) that visually impaired users participated in all the main social activities just like the sighted users.

Despite VI students engaging in social media activities, the study findings revealed that in terms of the frequency of social media use, the majority (60.3%) rarely used social media, and 19.2% occasionally used it. This could be due to a variety of challenges VI students face as compared to the sighted ones. Furthermore, the findings revealed that most of the VI students spent only 1 to 2 hours on social media per day. The fact that respondents spent 1 to 2 hours on social media suggests that most likely they used social media several times per day. The findings of this study agree with earlier findings by Bashir et al. (2014) who found that the majority of persons with visual impairment in their study reported using social media several times a day, and only a small proportion used social media tools once a week. Unlike in this study, few respondents rarely used social media. VI respondents in this study are not constantly on social media mainly due to social-economic factors and probably school restrictions.

Further analysis with Chi-Square test revealed that frequency of social media use was dependent on gender; it was not independent of gender. There was a significance difference between male and female students in their frequency of social media. More males frequently used social media than females. Females were found to rarely use social media. This could be due to the facts that males may have a favourable access to smart phones which enables them to have easy access to social media compared to their female counterparts.

The study findings suggest that although students with visual impairment were engaged in social media, they rarely used it and spend only few hours on social media a day. What this means is that students with visual impairment use social media to a lower extent as compared to their sighted counterpart. A study by Nkomo (2018) conducted among senior secondary school pupils of Kawama Secondary School in Mazabuka District showed that all the sampled pupils were heavily engaged in using social media. The pupils in that study were observed to be heavy users of social media compared to the students in this current study. Over 60% of the pupils in that study reported to frequently use social media on a daily basis. In conclusion, although VI pupils use social media, their usage of social media is not as frequent as compared to the sighted pupils.

5.2 Types of Social Media Platforms

The second objective of the study was designed to determine the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment. The study found that out of the 78 respondents recruited for this study 70.5% used WhatsApp, 60.3% used Facebook, 20.5% used Twitter, 10.3% used Instagram, and 10.3% used YouTube. The result suggests that the most used social media platform by students with visual impairments is WhatsApp followed by Facebook, while a small but significant proportion use Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Further analysis indicated that there were differences between male and female students in their preference of social media platforms. The findings showed that males were more likely to use Facebook compared to females, while more females used WhatsApp than males.

In relation to previous studies, the findings of this study seem not to be in line with the findings of a study conducted among low-income blind users in rural and peri-urban India by Vashistha et al. (2015) which found that Facebook was the most preferred platform followed by WhatsApp, while Twitter had the least adoption. Furthermore, the findings of the current study seem to disagree with the findings by Sabljak (2016) who found that the majority of the participants (87%) in their study used Facebook followed by Skype (78.3%), while Instagram and Twitter were used by 30.4% and 26.1% of the respondents, respectively. The differences here may be due to cultural factors and passage of time. Most recent studies are showing that majority of youth are shifting to WhatsApp and recently to Tik Tok. Facebook is no longer the favorite platform among youth, majority of the youth use YouTube, Instagram or Snapchat (Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

Compared with sighted students, the findings of this study seem to correspond to the findings done among sighted female students by Chukwuere and Chukwuere (2017) and Akakandelwa and Walubita (2017) who established that most students preferred WhatsApp followed by Facebook.

5.3 Reasons Students with Visual Impairment Used Social Media

Objective three of the study sought to establish reasons for VI students to use social media. In their order of frequency, the study found that VI students' reasons for using social media included to access and share information (65.7%), to keep in touch with family/friends (45.7%), to share good things with friends (45.7%), to facilitate school work (34.3%), to chat with others (34.3%), to find new friends (22.9%) and to maintain existing relationships. This is consistent with the earlier observations by Voykinska et al. (2016) who observed that like sighted users, all of the participants used social media to maintain relationships with friends and family, for career-related purposes, to discuss their experiences as blind persons, to share useful news, or to advocate for visual impairment awareness. Similarly, Vashistha and colleagues (2015) also found that low-income blind people in India used social media platforms to expand their connections, receive instrumental benefits, uplift their social standing, and access informative and entertaining content. The findings of this study suggest that VI students engage in social media for various reasons ranging from accessing and sharing information, socializing with friends and family, and to facilitate school work.

Furthermore, the study findings revealed that the majority (60.3%) of VI students reported that they spent their time on social media reading articles or any other information. Further analysis showed that all (100%) the respondents discussed academic issues. The implication of these findings is that VI students equally regard social media as a medium through which they can share and access information including for academic purposes. In relation to previous studies, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of a study done in India by Bashir et al. (2014) who also gave insights into the main reasons to the use of social media by people with VI which included acquisition of academic information, to communicate with friends and relatives, sending and receiving messages, adding or removing friends, and responding to events and invitations. Similarly, a study done among the sighted students in River State Nigeria showed that students used social media in various ways to accomplish a wide range of social responsibilities and just for fun too (Nwoburuoke & Eremie, 2021).

In terms of what VI usually posted on social media, it was established that the majority (60.3%) of the respondents posted educational stories on social media. Others posted photos/videos

(40.5%) and personal stories (29.5%). Previous studies by Bashir et al (2014) and Bennett, et al (2018) have also reported various items that people with VI usually post on social media.

5.4 Impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment

The fourth objective of the study sought to establish the impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment. This section of the study discusses the perceived impact of social media on the social life of VI students. Overall, the majority (69.2%) of VI students reported a positive experience with social media. Most respondents who stated that social media has had a mostly positive effect tended to stress issues related to connectivity and connection with others; that social media has had a positive impact because it helps them keep in touch and interact with others. Many of these responses emphasize how social media has made it easier to communicate with family and friends and to connect with new people, thus helping them overcome isolation. The findings of this study suggest that social media facilitates socialization for students with visual impairment. This means that VI students now have the opportunity to participate in social discussions by sharing images, posting their comments, disseminating ideas, documents just to mention a few. These findings are consistent with the claims by Hardy and Castonguay (2018) who noted that social media provide platforms to make friends by utilising inconsequential interactions, communications, or participation in social groups and enable people to socially support one another (Hardy & Castonguay, 2018). Pew (2012) claims that the main purpose of using social media is related to socialization.

This study also investigated the impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment through a series of items to which respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement. The results showed that most of the respondents disagreed that they usually spent more time on social media, others disagreed that they had tried to cut down on time spent on social media but still failed. Further analysis indicated that the majority disagreed that they felt that their academic productivity suffered because of excessive use of social media. Finally, the majority also disagreed that they felt stressed out due to their use of social media. It is clear from the study findings that social media use has had a positive impact on the social life of students with visual impairment. Students have gained extreme and tremendous benefits from using social media. The results revealed that respondents had experienced the benefits of accessing information, communication and interaction with family and friends. In addition, students also reported that the use of social media has helped them to acquire motivation and education/knowledge. The findings suggest that VI students have had a positive experience with using social media. In relation to previous studies, the findings of this are somehow consistent with the findings of a recent study done among sighted students in Nigeria by Nwoburuoke and Eremie (2021) in which it was reported that social media enabled students to participate in academic forums, disseminate and acquire knowledge pertaining to their studies. The findings of this study are also similar to a study done among sighted adolescents by Yebaoh & Ewur (2014) who also observed that the use of Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube increased the provisions and access to learning materials, anywhere, anytime and in various formats, and also has the potential to enhance students‟ capabilities. The positive benefits of social media for people with visual impairment have been widely recognized (Oh, et al., 2013). Vashistha et al. (2015) observed that participants in their study considered social media platforms as an avenue to get information on interesting topics and current news, while others used these platforms for sharing photos and even documents with others.

5.5 Challenges students with visual impairment face when using social media

The findings identified a number of challenges that VI students face when using social media. The study identified challenges in their order of frequency included, navigation, lack of phones that have quality applications, language barriers, low computer (IT) literacy level, cyberbullying, accessibility issues and lack of motivation and confidence in using social media. Other challenges reported by the respondents were related to system and language. These finding are supported by Ondin (2015) who also reported that language (screen reader not always reading the text correctly), visual issues, challenges with audio and multimedia some of the main challenges facing students with visual impairment in using social media. The implication here is that in addition to the inherent problems they face as VI people, students with VI continue to face hinderance in socialising via social networks. Consequently, they are limited in their interactions both offline and online and as a result they don't fully enjoy the benefits associated with using media like their sighted counterparts.

Some VI students found it difficult to navigate through different apps. Furthermore, other challenges identified were related to privacy and security. Previous studies have also shown how

VI people find it difficult to effectively use social media (Fuglerud et al., 2012; Wu & Adamic, 2014; Vashistha, et al., 2015; Voykinska et al., 2016). These scholars have reported similar challenges that people with VI face in using social media. Therefore, it can be stated that though students with VI impairments are engaged in using social media, they face several challenges in accessing certain content and doing various things like navigating freely while using social media. There is need to make social networks more accessible to screen readers so that these communities can benefit from the power of social media. This will allow VI students to have greater collaboration and participation in the world at large. There is need for the Ministry of Education and School authorities to identify and acquire suitable assistive and adaptive technologies that can be used to assist VI students use and navigate through social media.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the findings of this study in light of the revealed literature and research objectives. It is was evident from the study findings that although VI students are engaged in using social media, they rarely use it and spend only few hours on social media a day. This entails that VI students use social media to a lower extent. Furthermore, the study findings revealed that the mostly used social media platforms by VI students in their order of frequency included WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. In addition, VI students reported various reasons for engaging in social media and the majority expressed that they have had a positive experience with social media. The findings suggested that use of social media by VI students has had a positive impact on their social life. However, VI students faced several challenges in using social media.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

This is the final chapter of the study. It presented the summary, conclusion, as well as the recommendations based on the findings of the study. This section of the study presented a recap of the objectives of the study, methodology used, and summary of the key findings.

6.1 Summary

This study explored the use of social media by students with visual impairment and its impact on their social life. Specifically, the study was designed: 1) to explore the extent to which students with visual impairment used social medial; 2) to determine the types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment; 3) to establish reasons why students with visual impairment engage in using social media; and 4) to establish the impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment.

The case study design was adopted and nested on the quantitative approach. The study was conducted in three schools, namely: Ndola Lions, Magweru Secondary, and Munali Secondary schools. The study targeted VI students in these schools. Data was collected through interviewer-administered semi-structured questionnaires from 78 VI pupils conveniently selected from the three schools. Data was analysed using SPSS version 25 both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the process of data analysis.

The study findings revealed that VI students had been using social media for a period ranging from three to six years with an average of 4.2 years. Students used mobile phones to access social media and the majority belonged to at least one social media group. The study established that students are engaged in social media and they used it several times a day. The study established that the commonly used social media platforms in their order of frequency included WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The study also established that VI students engaged in social media for various reasons ranging from accessing and sharing information, socialising with friends and family to facilitating school work. It was clear from the study findings that social media use has had a positive impact on the social life of students with visual impairment. Students have gained extreme and tremendous benefits from using social media. The results revealed that respondents had experienced the benefits of accessing information, communication and interaction with family and friends. The findings suggested that VI students have had a positive experience with using social media. The study identified several challenges that VI students face when using social media. These challenges included difficulties to navigate social media due to poor design of the platforms and lack of phones with quality applications. Other challenges were language barriers, digital literacy level, cyberbullying, and accessibility issues.

6.2 Conclusion

The study explored the experiences of secondary school students with visual impairment in the use of social media and its impact on their social life. The study findings provided a basic understanding of VI students' use of social media. Hence, teachers should be encouraged to integrate social media in their teaching practice to enhance VI pupils learning process and their life skills. Furthermore, VI pupils should be encouraged to use social media for academic purposes. Since VI often face challenges when accessing education, understanding their social media usage is important as it may provide insights in designing interventions for improving the education of students with VI through the use of technology in education. Thus, the findings suggested contextually specific evidence which may be taken into consideration when rethinking and designing programmes to improve the social welfare of people with VI in Zambia.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been put forward. The study recommends that:

1. It is important that students with VI are considered when planning for the adoption and integration on ICT in teaching and learning processes.
2. In view of the fact that VI students reported using social media for various reasons, there is need for stakeholders in the education (i, e. Ministry of Education) to find innovative ways to promote the use of social media among VI students both in institutions of learning for promoting educational purposes.
3. There is need to ensure that VI students are assisted with suitable devices that they can use to access social media without difficulties.

4. There is need for school management and key stakeholders to provide assistive technologies to VI pupils to help them have easy access to social media and other ICT resources
5. School counselors should educate VI students on the negative and positive influence of Social media on their social and academic performance.

References

Abbas, J., JAman, a., Nurunnabi, M. & Bano, S.,(2019). The Impact of Social Media on Learning Behavior for Sustainable Education: Evidence of Students from Selected Universities in Pakistan.

Adams, R. J., Lucash, C., Schutte, L. & Waits, P. L.,(2007). *Locating hybrid individuals in the red wolf (Canis rufus) experimental population area using a spatially targeted sampling strategy and faecal DNA genotyping.* s.l.:Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Molecular Ecology (2007) 16, 1823–1834 doi: 10.1111/j.1365-294X.2007.03270.

Akakandelwa, A. & Walubita, G., (2017). Students' Social Media Use and its Perceived Impact on their Social Life: A Case Study of the University of Zambia. *The International Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Research.*

Akram, W. & Kumar, R., (2017). A Study on Positive and Negative Effects of Social Media on Society. *International Journal of Computer Sciences and Engineering,* 30 October, 5(10), pp. 347-354.

Asuncion, J. V. et al., (2012). Social Media Use By Students With Disabilities. *Academic Exchange Quarterly,* 16(1), pp. 30-35.

Babbie, E. R., (201)3. *The practice of social research.* Belmont: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Bashir, R., Fatima, G., Malik, M. & Safdar, M., (2014). Social Networking as a Learning Resource for Persons with Visual Impairment. *Academic Research International,* May.5(3).

Bennett, C. L. et al., (2018). *How Teens with Visual Impairments Take, Edit, and Share Photos on Social Media.* Montreal, ACM.

Bigham, J. P., Samual, W. & Yeh, T., (2010). *VizWiz: nearly real-time answers to visual questions.* s.l., s.n., pp. 333-342.

Buzzi, C. M., Buzzi, M., Leporini, B. & Akhter, F., (2010). *Is Facebook really "open" to all?.* s.l., s.n., p. 327– 336.

Buzzi, M., Buzzi, M., Leporini, B. & Akhter, F., (2010). *Is Facebook really "open" to all?.* s.l., s.n., p. 327–336.

Caran, G. M., Santini, R. M. & Biolchini, J. C. d. A., (2016). Use of social network to support visually impaired people: A Facebook case study. *Transinformação, Campinas,* August, 28(2), pp. 73-180.

Carter, M., (2013). Protecting Oneself from Cyber Bullying on Social Media Sites—A Study of Undergraduate Students. *Procedia Soc. Behav. Sci,* Volume 93, p. 1229–1235.

Chen, F., Carter, S., Denoue, L. & Kumar, J., (2013). *SmartDCap: semi-automatic capture of higher quality document images from a smartphone..* s.l., s.n., p. 287–296.

Chukwuere, J. & Chukwuere, P., (2017). The impact of social media on social lifestyle: A case study of university female students. *Gend. Behav,* Volume 15, p. 9966–9981.

Creswell, J. W. & Miller, D. L., (2000). Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry. *Theory into Practice, 39 (3),* pp. 124-130.

Davis, F., (1985). *A Technology Acceptance Model for empirically testing new end-user information systems: theory and results,* Cambridge, MA: MIT Sloan School of Management.

Davis, F., (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly,* 13(3), pp. 475-87.

Davis, F., Bagozzi, R. P. & Warshaw, P. R.,(1989). User acceptance of computer technology: a comparison of two theoretical models. *Management Science,* 35(8), pp. 982-1003.

Eid, M. & Al-Jabri, I., (2016). Social networking, knowledge sharing, and student learning: The case of university students. *Computers &Education.*

Ellison et al, (2007). The benefits of Facebook "friends:" Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,* 12(4), pp. 1143-1168.

Fishbein, M. & Ajzen, I., (1975). Beliefs, Attitude, Intention, and Behaviour: An Introduction to the Theory of Research.

Francine, C., Scott, C., Laurent, D. & Kumar, J., (201)3. *SmartDCap: semi-automatic capture of higher quality document images from a smartphone.* s.l., s.n., pp. 287-296.

Fuglerud K. S et al, (2012). Use of Social Media by People with Visual Impairments: Usage Levels, Attitudes and Barriers. Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg., p. 565–572.

Gaspar, R., Pedro, C., Panagiotopoulos, P. & Seibt, B.,(2016). Beyond positive or negative: Qualitative sentiment analysis of social media reactions to unexpected stressful events. *Comput. Hum. Behav,* Volume 56, p. 179–191.

Global Digital Report, (2019). *Essential insights into how people around the world use the internet mobile devices, social media, and e-commerce,* s.l.: s.n.

Green, J. & Thorogood, N., (2004). *Qualitative methods for health research.* London: Sage.

Harada, S. et al., (2013). *Accessible photo album.* s.l., s.n., pp. 2127-2136.

Hardy, B. & Castonguay, J., (2018). The moderating role of age in the relationship between social media use and mental well-being: An analysis of the (2016). General Social Survey. *Comput. Hum. Behav,* Volume 85, p. 282–290.

Hawk, S., van den Eijnden, R., van Lissa, C. & ter Bogt, T., (2019). Narcissistic adolescents' attention-seeking following social rejection: Links with social media disclosure, problematic social media use, and smartphone stress. *Comput. Hum. Behav,* Volume 92, p. 65–75.

Head, A. & Eisenberg, M.,(2010). How today's college students use Wikipedia for course-related *First Monday,* 15(3).

Joinson, A. N., (2008). *Looking at, looking up or keeping up with people?.* s.l., s.n., pp. 1027-1036.

Kaplan, A. M. & Haenlein, M., (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons,* 53(59).

Karimi, L., Khodabandelou, R., Ehsani, M. & Ahmad, M., (2014). Applying the Uses and Gratifications Theory to Compare Higher Education Students' Motivation for Using Social Networking Sites: Experiences from Iran, Malaysia, United Kingdom, and South Africa. *CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY,* 5(1), pp. 53-72.

Kelly, Y., Zilanawala, A., Booker, C. & Sacker, A., (2018). Social Media Use and Adolescent Mental Health: Findings from the UK Millennium Cohort Study. *EClinicalMedicine,* Volume 6, p. 59–68.

Kemp, S., (2021). *Digital 2021: Global Overview Report.*

Kim, T., Karatepe, O., Lee, G. & Demiral, H., (2018). Do Gender and Prior Experience Moderate the Factors Influencing Attitude toward Using Social Media for Festival Attendance?. *Sustainability,* 10(3509).

Kvale, S., (2007). *Doing interviews.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ladner, R. E., Slabosky, B. & Martin, A.,(2005). *Automating tactile graphics translation.* pp. 150-157.

Lazar, J., Allen, A., Kleinman, J. & Malarkey, C., (2007). What Frustrates Screen Reader Users on the Web: A Study of 100 Blind Users. *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction,* 22(3), p. 247–269.

Lee, C. et al., (2018). A multi-group analysis of social media engagement and loyalty constructs between full-service and low-cost carriers in Hong Kong. *J. Air Transp. Manag,* Volume 73, p. 46–57.

Líbera, B. D. & Jurbeg, C.,(2017). Teenagers with visual impairment and new media: A world without barriers. *British Journal of Visual Impairment,* 35(3), pp. 247-256.

Malita, L., (2011). Social media time management tools and tips. *Procedia Comput. Sci,* Volume 3, p. 747– 753.

Manning, J., (2014). Social media, definition, and classes of. In: *In K. Harvey (Ed.) Encyclopedia of social media and politics.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 1158-1162.

Mayoh, J. & Onwuegbuzie, A. J., (2013). Toward a Conceptualization of Mixed Methods Phenomenological Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* 9(1), pp. 91-107.

Mitchell, A., Holcomb, J. & Page, D., (2013). News use across social media platforms.

Morris, M. R. et al., (2016). *"With most of it being pictures now, I rarely use it": Understanding Twitter's Evolving Accessibility to Blind Users.* New York, s.n., pp. 5506-5516.

Mvula, M., (2018). *Knowledge Management Practices in University Administration: The Case of the University of Zambia,* s.l.: Stellenbosch University.

Oh, H. J. et al., (2013). Facebooking for health: An examination into the solicitation and effects of health-related social support on social networking sites. *Computers in Human Behavior,* 29(5), pp. 2072-2080, Okonkwo, E. E., Eyisi, A. & Ololo, N. G., (2015). Social Media Platforms and Their Contributions to Tourism Development and Promotion in Nigeria. *Nsukka Journal of the Humanities,* 23(2), pp. 103-117.

Osborn, M. & Smith, J. A., (1998). The personal experience of chronic benign lower back pain: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *British Journal of Health Psychology,* Volume 3, pp. 65-83.

Outini, I., (2020). *The Impact of Social Media on the Social Lives of People with Visual Impairment (Facebook Groups as a Case Study),* Fayetteville: University of Arkansas.

Pew, (2012). YouTube & news: A new kind of visual journalism.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J. & G, E., (2003). Designing and selecting samples. In: J. Lewis, ed. *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers.* London: Sage, p. 77–108.

Sabljak, J.,(2016). *The Benefits of Media In Learning: Case Studies of Blind Learners of English AS L2,* Zagreb.

Smith, A., Rainie, L. & Zickuhr, K., (201)1. College students and technology.

Stathopoulou, A., Siamagka, N.-T. & Christodoulides, G., (2019). A multi-stakeholder view of social media as a supporting tool in higher education: An educator-student perspective. *Eur. Manag. J. in press.*

Suseno, Y., Laurell, C. & Sick, N., (2018). Assessing value creation in digital innovation ecosystems: A Social Media Analytics approach. *J. Strateg. Inf. Syst,* Volume 27, p. 335–349.

Susumu, H. et al., (2013). *Accessible photo album*, pp. 2127-2136.

Terzi, B., Bulut, S. & Kaya, N., (2019). Factors affecting nursing and midwifery students' attitudes toward social media. *Nurse Educ. Pract,* Volume 35, p. 141–149.

Tulin, M., Pollet, T. & Lehmann-Willenbrock, N.,(2018). Perceived group cohesion versus actual social structure: A study using social network analysis of egocentric Facebook networks. *Soc. Sci. Res,* Volume 74, p. 161–175.

Vashistha, A., Cutrell, E., Dell, N. & Anderson, R., (2015). Social Media Platforms for Low-Income Blind People in India.

Veil, S. R., Buehner, T. & Palenchar, M. J.,(2011). A Work-In-Process Literature Review Incorporating Social Media in Risk and Crisis Communication. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management,* 19(2), pp. 111-122.

Voykinska, V., Azenkot, S., Wu, S. & Leshed, G., (2016). How Blind People Interact with Visual Content on Social Networking Services.

Wolf, D., Wenskovitch, J. J. & Anton, B.,(2015). Nurses' use of the Internet and social media: Does age, years of experience, and educational level make a difference?. *J. Nurs. Educ. Pract,* 6(68).

Wu, S. & Adamic, L.,(2014). *Visually impaired users on an online social network.* p. 3133–3142.

Wu, S., Hofman, J. M., Mason, W. A. & Watts, D. J.,(2011). *Who says what to whom on Twitter.* pp. 705-714.

Zamri, S. N., Zaihan, A. N. & Samat, F. M., (2018). A *review on social media usage among students.*

Appendices

Appendix I: Interviewer-administered questionnaire for pupils with Visual Impairment

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

The survey administered questionnaire by interviewers in face-to-face encounters

Date of interview……………………….

TOPIC: The Use of Social Media Among Students with Visual Impairments in Zambian Secondary Schools: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools for The Blind in Zambia

Dear respondent, I am a masters' student from the University of Zambia conducting research on the above topic. Kindly note that this research is for academic purposes and the information you are requested to give will be treated with maximum confidentiality.

Thanking you in anticipation.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. No names or anything that can identify you will be asked
2. You will be asked questions and you are required to respond by expressing your view according to your experience.

Please respond to all questions.

Section A: Background information of respondents

Q1. Sex of respondent?

1. Male [ ] 2. Female [ ]

Q2. What is your age?.......................................

Q3. In what grade are you?

a. Grade 8 [ ]
b. Grade 9 [ ]
c. Grade 10 [ ]
d. Grade 11 [ ]
e. Grade 12 [ ]

Section B: Visually impaired students' use of social media

Q4. Do you use social media?

a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]

Q5. For how long have you been using social media?..........................

Q6. What type of device do you use to access social media? Please tick as many as apply.

a. Mobile phone [ ]
b. Desktop computer [ ]
c. Laptop [ ]
d. Tablet [ ]
e. Other, specify……………………………………………………………………

Q7. What type of screen-reader do you use? Please tick as many as apply.

a. Apple Voice over [ ]
b. JAWS [ ]
c. NVDA [ ]
d. Windows JAWS/NVDA [ ]
e. Other (please specify): ---

Q8. Are you a member of any social media groups?

a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]

If yes, how many social media groups do you belong to?...................................

Q9. How often do you use social media in a day?

Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Very Rarely	Never

Q10. Approximately how many hours do you spend on social media per day?

Less than 1 hour	1 to 2 hours	2 to 4 hours	4 to 6 hours	More than 6 hours

Q11. Do you post regularly on social media?

a. Yes [ ]   b. No [ ]

Q12. What do you usually post on social media? Please tick as many as apply.

Photos	Videos	Personal stories	Educational Stories	Disability stories	More than 6 hours	Others, specify

Q13. Please respond to the questions in the table below as honestly as possible.

Question	Yes	No
Do you post on others’ timelines on social media?		
Do you comment on other people’s posts (videos, notes, photos) on social media?		
Do you regularly check your profile?		
Have you created any social media groups?		
Have you created any social media pages?		
Are you part of any disabled community group on social media?		
Are you part of any educational group on social media?		

Q14. Which of the following issues do you discuss on social media? Please tick as many as apply.

a) Academic issues [ ]

b) Social issues [ ]

c) Religious Issues [ ]

d) Political issue [ ]

e) Others (please specify): --

Q15. Do you communicate with your friends and /or family through social media?

a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ]

If **yes to Q15 above**, how often do you communicate with your friends and /or family through social media?

a. Always [ ]
b. Usually (6 times a week) [ ]
c. Sometimes (4 times a week) [ ]
d. Rarely [ ]
e. Never [ ]

Q16. Where do you spend your time on social media? Please tick as many as apply.

Sharing posts	Private messages	Reading articles or any other information	Scrolling through other profile	Other, specify

Section C: Types of social media platforms mostly used by students with visual impairment.

Q17. From the list of social media platforms given in the table below, which one(s) do you normally use?

Social media	**Yes**	**No**
Facebook		
WhatsApp		
Twitter		
Instagram		
LinkedIn		
Imo		
Skype		
MySpace		
Snapchat		
Badoo		
Youtube		
WeChat		
GOAT		
We		
Blog		
Wiki		
Others (Please specify) -- --		

Q18. Overall, what has been your experience in using social media?

a. Positive [ ] b. Negative [ ]

Section D: Factors that motivate students with visual impairment to use social media

Q19. Do you use social media groups for practical concerns in your everyday life?

b. Yes [ ] b. No [ ] c. Not sure [ ]

If yes, Explain...

………………………………………………………………………………………

Q20. Please describe your attitude towards social media groups as a means for socializing?...

………………………………………………………………………………………

Q21. What is the motivation behind your social media usage? Please tick as many as apply.

Leisure	Entertainment	Communication	Social integration	Socialization	Information

Q22. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the reasons indicated below for which you use social media.

Reasons for using social media. I use social media:	**Agree**	**Disagree**
To access and share information		
To keep in touch with friends		
To facilitate schoolwork		
To keep in touch with family/friends		
To maintain existing relationships		
To find new friends		
To chat with others		
To share good things with friends		
To share bad things with friends		

Q23. Do you use social media for news or information?

a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ] c. Not sure [ ]

Section E: Impact of social media on the social life of students with visual impairment

Q24. Do you think participation in social media groups helps you overcome such issues as social isolation and exclusion?

a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ] c. Not sure [ ]

Q25. The table below shows some statements relating to the perceived impact of social media on students' social life. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements provided in the table below.

Statement	**Agree**	**Disagree**
I usually spend more time on social media		
I always check social media sites before doing something else		
I feel my academic productivity suffers because of social media		
I have tried to cut down on time spent on social media but still failed		
Other people negatively comment on my social media usage		
I feel stressed out due to the use of social media		

Q26. Have you found social media beneficial?

a. Yes [ ] b. No [ ] c. Not sure [ ]

Q27. What benefits do you experience using social media?…………………………………...

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Section F: Challenges students with visual face when using social media

Q28. The table below shows a list of potential challenges in using social media. Please respond by ticking appropriately in the box of your choice

Potential challenge		Response		
		Not a challenge	**A minor challenge**	**A major challenge**
a.	The design of social media			
b.	Accessibility issues			
c.	Navigation			
d.	Language barriers			
e.	Lack of motivation and confidence in using social media			
f.	Low computer (IT) literacy level			
g.	Cyberbullying			
h.	Security challenges			
i.	Lack of phones that have quality applications			

Q29. In addition to the ones in the table above, list some of the problems/challenges that you face when using social media

……
……
……
……
……………………………………………………………………………………

End of the questionnaire, thank you for participating in this study*!!!*

Appendix II: Research work plan

Researchers: WAILORA MARTHA GOMA
Topic: Experience of Students with Visual Impairments in the Use of Social Media in Selected Secondary Schools in Zambia

NO	**2020**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**
1	ACTIVITY											
2	Chapter one (Introduction)											
3	Chapter two (Literature review)											
4	Chapter 3 (Methodology)											
5	Submission of the draft proposal to the supervisor											
	2021											
7.	Design of data collection instruments											
8.	Submission of complete proposal for ethical clearance											
9	Data collection											
10.	Data processing and analysis											
11.	Presentation of research findings											
12	Discussion of findings											
13.	Conclusion & recommendations											
15.	Submission of complete dissertation for examination											
	N.B. All activities are dependent on procedural clearances and approval											

Appendix II: Research budget plan

Table 1. Estimated budget

	Activity	Quantity	Cost
1	Ethics Fee	1	K500
3	Data Collection Tools; voice recorders		K1500
	Printing of data collection tools		K700
4	Transport		K600
	Food		K500
	Internet		K500
5	Results Dissemination Article	1	K1000
6	Printing and binding of Report	1	K400
	Sub - Total		**K5, 300**
	Contingency (Calculated at 20% of the budget)		K1,060
	TOTAL		**K6,360**