



TERTIARY STUDENTS' SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT ATTITUDES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN CROSS RIVER STATE

Arop, Festus Obun Ph.D., Agunwa, Judith Nonye, Ph.D. & Owan, Valentine Joseph

Department of Educational Administration and Planning, University of Calabar, Calabar.

Abstract: This paper examined the relationship between tertiary students' social media management attitudes and their academic performance in Cross River State, with a specific focus on Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram. To achieve this purpose, three null hypotheses were formulated accordingly. The study adopted a correlational research design. Cluster and simple random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 1000 students from the entire population. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Tertiary Students' Social Media Management and Academic Performance Questionnaire (TESSMAPQ). The reliability of the instrument was established through Cronbach alpha and estimate of .93 was obtained indicating that the instrument was internally consistent in measuring what it purports to measure. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis used to analyze data and to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between tertiary students Facebook management attitudes ($r. cal_{.0.032} < crit. r_{.0.062}$), WhatsApp management attitudes ($r. cal_{.0.038} < crit. r_{.0.062}$), and Instagram management attitudes ($r. cal_{.0.009} < crit. r_{.0.062}$) respectively, with their academic performance. Based on these findings it was recommended among others that; tertiary students' social media usage should be regulated by smartphones producers and internet service providers; in such a way that a maximum monthly login interval (MMLI) is provided that will restrict users to a limited number of login chances. This will ensure that students maintain focus when they have been barred.

Keywords: Tertiary students; Social media; Management; Attitudes; Social media management; Academic performance.

Introduction

Any nation's growth and productivity is measured by the quality of its citizens. This quality is in turn determined by the citizens' abilities to generate new ideas that are borne out of creativity. It is from this that innovation comes into play and increases the chances of rapid economic development. All of these cannot be achieved if the schools are not effective in producing graduates that can become change agents and that can help drive the economy smoothly to its intended destination.

Academic performance is the rate at which students achieve educational goals as well as the purpose for which they were sent to school. Poor academic performance is the failure to meet up with the purpose of schooling. There is generally a serious trend of poor academic performance of undergraduates in Cross River State. Many factors have been identified as the causes of poor

academic performance in tertiary institutions which include: teaching methods, study habits, leadership styles, poor provision of facilities and resources by government and many others.

The era of technology has brought a lot of changes to the society generally and to education specifically; especially the development of the internet. There is an increasing trend towards using social media by tertiary institution students to facilitate their learning process. According to Amin, Mansoor, Hussain, and Hashmat (2016), social media has become very popular all over the world due to rapid development in technology. Not only do celebrities use social media, but the general public has also turned out to be huge users of these social media sites.

Through the support of the internet, such social media channels as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Eskimi, WeChat, Google-talk, Google+, Skype and others are hosted and provided.



Facebook is a social media platform that offers users the opportunity to communicate across remote locations by sending and receiving textual and graphics contents (information) such as pictures, emoji, and videos. Recent versions of Facebook provides users with the ability to communicate through real-time video chat where both users can communicate and see themselves with the help of Webcams mounted usually at the rear of modern smartphones and computers.

WhatsApp is another popular messenger that is commonly used. Just like Facebook, WhatsApp can be used to share information and other resources from one person to another, within groups or between groups. The development of WhatsApp led to the downfall of the once popular 2go messenger that once took the world by storm in early 2008 to around 2013. The unique nature of WhatsApp provides that you chat and communicate with only those whom you have their contacts. The purpose is to increase security and eliminate the problems that arose through Facebook and 2go. It is the most popularly used social media by university students. Many groups and forums are created on WhatsApp for ease of communication, and for passing information to a group of not more than 250 participants.

Instagram is also a social media that permits the transmission of videos, texts and other graphic elements. It is mostly used by celebrities and other organizations to send short videos, photos, and texts across international borders. Usually, an Instagram account of celebrities is denoted through the verified logo that appears underneath the person's profile picture. However, it is also used by many university students as well as other interested persons for their own gratification.

All these social media mentioned here, no matter the form or name, were developed to provide benefits and foster communication among users. The use of these social media in recent times by students have caused a lot of stir in the entire societies. With a lot of undergraduates not managing the proper use of these sites. It is usually common to see people chat even while walking on the roadside, in the toilet, market places, churches and where have you. This is perhaps because of the portability and mobility of phones. It, therefore, suffice to say that, in recent times, people can use social media wherever they find themselves. This does not exclude sensitive locations such as schools as students are often observed chatting while lectures are ongoing. The use of social media during classes, church services,

and on the road does not imply proper management. Social media management refers to a systematic and deliberate process of making use of social media at the right place, time and in the right proportion. While it is good to make use of social media, it is better to manage the utilization of these sites to save time, resources, energy, and to create a balance in carrying out activities.

Using social media all the time is an indicator of poor social media management attitude. Researches have shown that the use of social media by students have an effect on them. Oji (2007) noted that the growing incidence of students using the internet not necessarily for academic purposes but for anti-social activities is at an astonishing rate. They use websites for pornography, fraud and for other social vices in the society. Schill (2011) asserted that social media sites encourage negative behavior among students such as catching up with unknown friends and so on. Wang, Chen, and Liang (2011) showed that social media use is negatively associated with academic performance. They noted that two-thirds of the students are found using social media while in class studying or doing homework. This multitasking increase distraction and becomes detrimental to students' performance and study habits and reading habit.

Olutola, Olatoye, and Olatoye (2016) revealed among other findings that; there is a significant influence of students' level of social media utilization on their study habit; Based on their findings, they recommended that regular orientation should be given to students on how to and when to use social media to enhance their study habit and achievement. Also, students of tertiary institutions should be encouraged to improve upon their study habit for better performance in their academic.

Having explored the literature, it can be deduced that several gaps exist in terms of the paucity of empirical studies, especially in Cross River State. It becomes pertinent for a study of this nature to be carried out to bridge the gaps existing in the literature. It was on this note that this study was conducted to tertiary students' social media management attitudes and their academic performance in Cross River State.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to examine tertiary students' social media management attitudes and their academic performance in Cross River State. This study sought specifically to examine the relationship between tertiary students:



- i. Facebook management attitudes and their academic performance
- ii. WhatsApp management attitudes and their academic performance
- iii. Instagram management attitudes and academic performance.

Research hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study

- i. There is no significant relationship between tertiary students’ Facebook management attitudes and academic performance.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between tertiary students’ WhatsApp management attitudes and academic performance.
- iii. There is no significant relationship between tertiary students’ Instagram management attitudes and academic performance.

Research methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design where the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable were sought after. The population of this study comprised of all tertiary students in Cross River State. Out of these, a total of 1,000 students were randomly selected from 7 tertiary institutions in the State, using Cluster and simple random sampling techniques. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Tertiary Students’ Social Media Management and Academic Performance Questionnaire (TESSMAPQ).

The instrument was arranged in two sections with section A, dedicated to capturing respondents’ biodata; while section B was made of 28 items designed to gather data from the four variables of this study. The reliability of the instrument was established through Cronbach alpha and estimate of .93 was obtained indicating that the instrument was internally consistent in measuring what it purports to measure.

The instruments were administered to selected students by the researchers with efforts made to avoid loss. All the completed questionnaires were eventually retrieved without any loss representing a 100 percent return rate. Collected data were prepared and scored accordingly for negative and positive worded responses. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the null hypotheses were all tested at .05 alpha level using

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the aid of Microsoft Excel v2013.

Results

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between tertiary students’ Facebook management attitudes and academic performance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of results showing the relationship between tertiary students’ Facebook management attitudes and their academic performance (n =1000).

Variables	ΣX	ΣY	ΣXY	r. cal.
Facebook Management Attitudes	14334	212248	259476	0.032
Academic Performance	18083	338111		

Crit. r = 0.062; $\alpha = .05$; df = 998

The results presented in Table 1 above indicates that the calculated r-value 0.032 is less than the critical r-value 0.062 at 998 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we retain the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between tertiary students’ Facebook management attitudes and their academic performance. However, the calculated r-value of 0.032 indicates a very weak positive relationship.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between tertiary students’ WhatsApp management attitudes and academic performance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of results showing the relationship between tertiary students’ WhatsApp management attitudes and their academic performance (n = 1000).

Variables	ΣX	ΣY	ΣX^2	ΣY^2	ΣXY	r. cal.
WhatsApp Management Attitudes	14901	230059			269810	0.038
Academic Performance	18083	338111				

Crit. r = 0.062; $\alpha = .05$; df = 998

Table 2 summary indicates that the calculated r-value of 0.038 is less than the critical value of 0.062 at .05 level of significance and



998 degrees of freedom. This means that the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between tertiary students' WhatsApp management attitudes and their academic performance, is retained. The relationship indicated by the value of 0.038 indicates a very weak positive relationship between WhatsApp management attitudes of tertiary students and their academic performance.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between tertiary students' Instagram management attitudes and academic performance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of results showing the relationship between tertiary students' Instagram management attitudes and their academic performance (n = 1000).

Variables	ΣX	ΣX^2	ΣXY	r. cal.
	ΣY	ΣY^2		
Instagram Management Attitudes	7847	62517	142559	-0.009
Academic performance	18171	341455		

Crit. $r = 0.062$; $\alpha = .05$; $df = 998$

The results in Table 3 above indicates that the calculated r-value of -0.009 is less than the critical value of 0.062 at .05 level of significance and 998 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we retain the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between tertiary students' Instagram management attitudes and academic performance. There is a weak negative relationship between Instagram management attitudes of tertiary students and their academic performance.

Discussion of findings.

The findings of this study established that tertiary students' academic performance does not relate to their Facebook management attitudes. The relationship was a very weak and positive one, it means that an increase in the Facebook management attitudes of tertiary students, will only lead to a very small and insignificant increase in their academic performance and vice versa. However, it was also discovered that many tertiary students log on to Facebook to read what others have posted, some also indicated that they post all their activities as they happen to Facebook, some engage in online dating, while others took personal decisions to be uploading new pictures on Facebook.

One expects all these to have a negative relationship on their academic performance. One will expect regular Facebook users to pay less attention to their books and other non-social activities competing for their time. This finding may be because the majority of the respondents are of the view that chatting on Facebook does not hinder their academic activities and their persistent attendance to classes. The finding does not support the findings of Olutola, Olatoye, and Olatoye (2016), which revealed that there is a significant influence of students' level of social media utilization on their study habit.

This study also established that; WhatsApp management attitudes of tertiary students do not relate to their academic performance. This was also followed by a weak positive relationship. It, therefore, means that an increase in WhatsApp management attitudes of tertiary students will only lead to a very small and insignificant increase in their academic performance and vice versa. The reason for this finding may be due to the fact that many tertiary students use WhatsApp as a learning platform, an avenue to pass and receive vital academic information from their colleagues. Some even noted that WhatsApp helps them to avoid missing classes. This finding is contrary to the position held by Oji (2007), who noted that the growing incidence of students using the internet not necessarily for academic purposes but for anti-social activities is at an astonishing rate. They use websites for pornography, fraud and for other social vices in the society. Oji was speaking from a more general perspective of internet usage while the findings of this study were more specific to WhatsApp.

It was also established through this study that; Instagram attitudes of tertiary students do not significantly relate to their academic performance. However, there was an inverse relationship between the two variables. Meaning that an increase in the tertiary students' management attitudes of Instagram, will lead to a small (insignificant) decrease in their academic performance and vice versa. This result is quite worrisome because anybody will expect appropriate management of Instagram usage to improve the academic performance of students. The finding of this study is, however, on the contrary. This finding also agrees with the finding of Wang, Chen, and Liang (2011) which showed that social media use is negatively associated with academic performance. They noted that two-thirds of the students are found using social media while in class studying or doing homework. This multitasking



increase distraction and becomes detrimental to students' performance and study habits and reading habit. Although, Instagram is part of social media, the finding of Wang et al, is more general on social media than the specificity of Instagram as a subset of social media.

Conclusions

Tertiary students' academic performance does not relate to social media management attitudes. Students whose attitudes reflect the management of Facebook or WhatsApp will only increase a very small output of their academic performance. While those who managed the use of Instagram will witness a small decrease in their academic performance. The reason for this result may be due to the instruments used or other variables that could not be controlled by the researcher during the data collection process. Social media also contributes to the learning goals of students as many students read important educational materials from these sites. Social media also help students pass vital information to peers and colleagues at an affordable cost through various groups that serve educational purposes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

- i. Students' in tertiary institutions should use social media strictly for academic purpose only. Groups created for academic purposes should not be bulked with irrelevant and unnecessary posts.
- ii. The rate at which students use such social media channels as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram should be reduced with more efforts apportioned towards reading books, journal articles, and other educational materials in either print or electronic forms.

- iii. Tertiary students' social media usage should be regulated by smartphones producers, and internet service providers; in such a way that a maximum monthly login interval (MMLI) is provided that will restrict users to a limited number of login chances. This will ensure that students maintain focus when they have been barred.

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