

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

BY

Osumah, Obase Agbonluae, Ph.D: Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education,
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria; E-mail: osumahobaze@gmail.com

Abstract

The study investigated the influence of social media usage on undergraduate students' academic achievement among undergraduates in Edo State, Nigeria. The correlational design was employed in this study. The population covered all the 56,388 regular students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and University of Benin, Benin City in the 2020/2021 session. The proportional random sampling technique was used to select 1% of the total number of students across each of the faculties in the institution. Hence, 564 students were selected from both universities. The instrument was a Social Media Usage Questionnaire (SMUQ). The test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The researcher personally collected students' raw performance scores from the sampled schools. The simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses and all the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that influence of social media visit frequency, time spent on social media and number of membership with social media significantly influences students' academic achievement in public universities in Edo State. It was recommended that student should set their priority right by taking advantage of social media more for learning, online discussion, seeking academic help from academic faculty, downloading materials for reading and research purpose, and for solving academic related problems.

Keywords: Social media, Frequency, Time spent, Membership

Introduction

Social media are sites or mobile applications that enable people of common interest and purpose to interact through an electronic and internet-enabled medium such as personal computers, smart phones or an equivalent device. It is in the course of engaging oneself in these practices that users share activities, events, ideas and interest within their individual network. These practices are carried out primarily on the internet, through social web applications such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram among others. In all these cases, the original idea was to allow people from different locations to instigate debates and share information using different kinds of support, such as pictures, videos, and notes (Osharive, 2020). However, their usage among Nigerian students at tertiary level has become so frequent and time consuming, that students now tend to spend more time surfing Facebook and other social networks. The interference of these media usage may therefore affect their emotional balance, self-concept, social life, ability to plan study time and also affect their learning readiness and academic achievement.

Posting a new status, reply messages, checking likes, dislikes, comments, sharing pictures and watching videos are just some of the very many things that could compete with student's time for study and other academic achievement. It is a common sight in school campuses in Nigeria to see students fondling with their cell phones during lectures, when walking on pathways, and even when eating in restaurants. This is because most of the students have social networking sites running at the background of their smart/cell phones and as such get distracted when messages pop up on their phones with an alert tone which they spend lengths of hours browsing through, replying and pasting posts. Akinlosotu (2016) asserted that this situation can be more complicated for students that hold membership with more than one social media site and therefore have to shuffle between or among several sites for new updates on the social media accounts or handles.

Frequency of visit to social media sites among undergraduate students has been investigated and similar findings have been reported in studies (A'lamElhuda & Dimetry, 2020; Fori, 2019). A'lamElhuda and Dimetry (2020) examined Romanian student opinions regarding Social Networking Websites (SNWs). 172 university students participated. The result showed that the higher the frequency of visit to social media, the lower the students' academic achievement. Fori (2019) investigated the challenges of social media usage on Ahmadu Bello University students. The study adapted the survey research method, using a sample size of 200 respondents drawn from the population of 2,733 students of Faculty of Social Sciences Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Findings (among other results) revealed that majority of the students

totally 136 (68%) respondents use social site several times a day, 44 (22%) of the respondents indicated that they use it once a day influences their academic achievement.

Recent studies have tried to investigate the possibility of the amount of time devoted by students to social networking on their self-directed learning readiness. For instance; Goel and Singh (2019) in their study investigated the impact of social networking activities on evangelical Christian college students. 1,342 students participated in the study. The result further shows that time spent on online social media significantly influences students' academic achievement. Heffner (2021) examined how social media use by undergraduate students affects their academics as well as their social life in college at Rowan University. The study conducted used a correlational design. The study showed that a student's GPA is more likely to decrease due to the amount of time spent using social media. Mingle and Musah (2019) examined social media network engagement and academic performance in senior high schools in Ghana. The cross-sectional survey method was used in the study. The result showed that there was a relationship between social media network participation and academic achievement of students in senior high schools in Nigeria. Hadebe, Owolabi and Mlambo (2019) determined the effect of growing use of social media sites on the academic performance of the students of universities and colleges in Pakistan. Results indicated that the effect of social media can be positive as in this study closely determined students' academic achievement.

Mass failure of students in public examinations could be traced to several factors that can be compartmentalized into the domains of parents, students, teachers, schools, government and the society. In other words, the causes of mass failure of students in public examinations are multi-dimensional in nature (Hameed, Maqbool, Aslam, Hassan & Anwar, 2018) found out that the students' factors responsible for poor academic achievement were poor study habits, psychological adjustment problems, lack of interest in school programme, low retention, association with wrong peers, low achievement motivation and emotional problems. Hameed, Maqbool, Aslam, Hassan and Anwar (2018) submitted that the search for the factors responsible for poor academic achievement is unending and some of the teacher related factors they put forward are: teachers' consultation, class interaction, academic qualification, mastery of subject content, professional development/continuing teacher training problems.

Usually, University administrators, principals and teachers among other school administrators have often been consulted in making conclusions on the predictors of students' academic achievements in previous studies (Hasnain, Nasreen & Ijaz, 2015). The use of social networking sites among science students has become a source of concern to many parents, school administrators because of the distraction they create within the school. Some of the manifestations of these are lateness to class, low readiness to involve in individual and group practical, unwillingness to carry out their assignment and decline in the time set aside for their study engagement. Some studies have been carried out on social media-achievement nexus. The study by Osharive (2020) examined the influence of social media and academic achievement of students in University of Lagos and found that frequency of visit to social media affects academic achievement of students in University of Lagos are addicted to social media. Fatokun (2020) examined the effect of social media on undergraduate students' achievement and interest in Chemistry in the north-central geo-political zone of Nigeria using students from Nasarawa State University Keffi, University of Abuja, and Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi. The result further showed that visit frequency to social media affects students' academic engagement in the north-central geo-political zone of Nigeria.

In spite of what we known on social media in Nigeria, it is not to the researcher's knowledge that any study has established the influence of social media usage on the academic achievement of undergraduate students in public universities in Edo State. Hence, a knowledge gap exists. This study will therefore be carried out to fill this knowledge gap by investigating the influence of social media usage on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses was formulated and tested in this study at 0.05 level of significance

- 1) Frequency of visit to social media has no significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State, Nigeria.
- 2) Time spent on social media has no significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State, Nigeria.

- 3) Number of membership with social media has no significant Influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The correlational design was employed in this study. The population covered all the 56,388 regular students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and University of Benin, Benin City in the 2020/2021 session. The proportional random sampling technique was used to select 1% of the total number of students across each of the faculties in the institution. Hence, 564 students were selected from both universities. The instrument for the study was Social Media Usage Questionnaire (SMUQ). The inventory (SMUQ) was divided into two Sections: Section A, and B. Section A was used to collect data about the students and their social media usage behaviour in terms of frequency of visit to social media, average time spent using social media and number of membership held with social media. Section B was used to collect a self-report of students GPA or CGPA. The content validity of this instrument was carried out by two other experts in Measurement and Evaluation. This was to ensure face and content validity of the instrument. Their correction and suggestion were incorporated in the instrument. The test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. This method was used to obtain responses from a total of 20 undergraduates from public schools in the study area. The instrument were administered to them and re-administered after a few weeks to the same set of teachers. Their responses in the first and second test were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique. The result of the coefficient produced an r-value of 0.74 which shows that the instrument was reliable. The simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses of the study. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Frequency of visit to social media has no significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis of between Frequency of Visit to Social Media andon Undergraduate Students' Academic Achievement

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		p-val.	Remark
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-val.		
Model						
(Constant)	1.054	.142		7.550*	.000	Significant
Frequency of visit to social media	.355	.077	.388	4.632*	.000	Significant

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

b. Predictors: (constant), Frequency of Visit to Social Media

*t-value and f-values are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)

Table 1 showed that the r-value (R) is .546. This value showed that the strength and direction of the predictor (frequency of visit to social media and the dependent variable (academic achievement) were moderate and positively related respectively. The r-square (R^2) and adjusted r-square (R^2) are .246 and .253 respectively. These coefficients of 0.246 and 0.253 are the goodness of fit of the model which showed that 24.6% to 25.3% of variations in academic achievement can be attributed to frequency of visit to social media by undergraduate students. The F-statistic (26.173) and the t-value for the frequency of visit to social media (-4.632) were both statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implied that frequency of visit to social media significantly predicted undergraduate students' academic achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 2: Time spent on social media has no significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State.

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis on Time Spent on Social Media on Undergraduate Students' Academic Achievement

R = .516^a
R-square (R²) = .296
Adjusted R-square = .287
F= 35.184*

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		p-val.	Remark
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-val.		
Model						
(Constant)	1.214	.145		7.340*	.000	Significant
Time spent on social media	.301	.053	.356	3.542*	.000	Significant

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

b. Predictors: (constant), Time Spent on Social Media

*t-value and f-values are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)

Table 2 showed that the r-value (R) is .516. This value showed that the strength and direction of the predictor (Time spent on social media and the dependent variable (academic achievement) were moderate and positively related respectively. The r-square (R²) and adjusted r-square (R²) are .296 and .287 respectively. These coefficients of 0.287 and 0.296 are the goodness of fit of the model which showed that 28.7 to 29.6 percent variations in students' academic achievement can be attributed to the time spent on social media by undergraduates. The F-statistic (35.184) and the t-value for time spent on social media (t-val = 3.542) were both statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implied that time spent on social media significantly influences students' academic achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 3: Number of membership with social media has no significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State.

Table 3: Simple Regression Analysis on Number of Membership with Social Media on Senior Secondary School Students' Academic Achievement

R = .456^a
R-square (R²) = .456
Adjusted R-square = .452
F_(3,228) = 34.533*

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		p-val.	Remark
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-val.		
Model						
(Constant)	1.456	.148		7.245*	.000	Significant
Number of membership with social media	.345	.067	.353	3.654*	.000	Significant

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Achievement

b. Predictors: (constant), Number of membership with social media

*t-value and f-values are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)

Table 4 showed that the r-value (R) is 0.456. This value showed that the strength and direction of the predictor (Number of membership with social media and the dependent variable (students' academic achievement) were moderate and positively related respectively. The r-square (R²) and adjusted r-square (R²) are 0.452 and 0.456 respectively. These coefficients which represent the goodness of fit of the model showed that 45.2 to 45.6 percent of variations in students' academic achievement can be attributed to number of membership with social media handles held by undergraduate students. The F-statistic (34.533) and the t-value for number of membership with social media (-3.654) were both statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This implied that number of membership with social media significantly influences undergraduate students' academic achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The result showed that frequency of visit to social media has significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State. The result agreed with that of Fordache and Lamanauskas (2018) who found that the higher the frequency of visit to social media, the lower the students' academic

achievement. The result is in line with that of Shehu and Shehu (2018) who found that majority of the students totally 136 (68%) respondents use social site several times a day, 44 (22%) of the respondents indicated that they use it once a day influences their academic achievement.

The result showed that time spent on social media has a significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State. The result agreed with that of Goel and Singh (2019) who found that time spent on online social media significantly influences students' academic achievement. The result supported that of Heffner (2021) who found that a student's GPA is more likely to decrease due to the amount of time spent using social media.

The result showed that number of membership with social media has a significant influence on undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State. The result is in line with that of Mingle and Musah (2019) who found that there was a relationship between social media network participation and academic achievement of students in senior high schools in Ghana. The result corroborates with that of Hadebe, Owolabi and Mlambo (2019) who found that the effect of social media can be positive as in this study closely determined students' academic achievement.

Conclusion

The use of social networking sites among students could affect their learning readiness in three ways. The first is the frequency of visit to the sites which can be measured in terms of how often a user of social media visit a social media site on an hourly basis, daily basis, weekly basis or monthly basis. Based on findings, it was concluded that influence of social media visit frequency, time spent on social media and number of membership with social media significantly influences undergraduate students' academic achievement in Edo State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Undergraduate students should set their priority right by taking advantage of social media more for learning, online discussion, seeking academic help from academic faculty, downloading materials for reading and research purpose, and for solving academic related problems.
- 2) Lecturers can adopt the strategy of online learning by channeling assignments or discussions on social media platforms to help inculcate the habit of using these media platforms for academic work by the students.
- 3) Awareness programmes relating to social media usage should be arranged at the institutional, faculty and departmental levels, to enlighten students on the impact of Internet addiction as a means of lessening their chances of falling prey to the harmful impacts of social media.

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