UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES UNDERGRADUATES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of social media usage on the scholarly performance of Social Studies students in higher education institutions within Delta State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The research design was descriptive survey and a questionnaire consisting of four-point Likert scale items were used. The reliability coefficient was 0.75 using Cronbach alpha method. A sample of 203 students at the 300 level from tertiary institutions participated in the study, and data collected were analyzed with the use of t-test statistical analysis, mean, and standard deviation with the assistance of SPSS version 26. The results of the study revealed two significant findings. First, there was a notable disparity between the use of social media and the academic achievements of students in Social Studies. Second, there was a notable disparity in the exposure to social media among male and female Social Studies students in higher education institutions in Delta State. Based on these findings, it recommended that educational institutions should prioritize providing proper guidance

and education to help Social Studies students effectively utilize social media for academic purposes, discouraging its frivolous use.

Keywords: Social media, Academic attainment, Social Studies, Tertiary institutions.

Introduction

The world of communication has undergone a quantum leap and true revolution as a result of contemporary technology advancements in the middle of the 2000. This technological surge has had a profound impact on every individual connected to this network, granting them access to a multitude of multimedia resources. The internet has expanded globally, bridging the gaps between various corners of our vast world and facilitating the convergence of societies, enabling the exchange of thoughts, ideas, and desires.

Undoubtedly, the work of Igere (2019) underscores that student who dedicated a substantial amount of time to social media usage exhibited a decrease in positive academic behaviors, such as completing assignments and attending classes. Moreover, their academic self-assurance was diminished, and they encountered a greater number of challenges affecting their school performance, including issues like sleep deprivation and substance use. Notably, there were two specific activities related to media consumption that were positively associated with higher grade point averages: listening to music and reading newspapers. Additionally, it was observed that nearly 40% of students in higher education confessed to being unable to go for more than 10 minutes without checking their mobile devices, which interestingly aligns with the time it typically takes to walk to a class.

According to Anho (2016)'s study, 98 percent of the 500 students polled stated they own a digital gadget, and many said that the technology has helped them fit more activities into their hectic schedules. Eighty-five percent of respondents claimed that they save two hours a day on average while studying thanks to their smartphones. Oche and Aminu (2010) claim that the first social networking website launched in 1997, and that it was

SixDegrees.com. This website allowed users to create personal profiles, particularly for those who commented on the site's content and sent text messages to other users. In 2013, MySpace.com followed this website, which was followed by Facebook.com. Oche and Aminu (2010) pointed out that MySpace.com was followed by Facebook.com. Users of this website can share news and information with one another and grant friends access to their own files. The latter website has an impact on clients' social, political, cultural, and religious realities in addition to the size of the virtual community.

Technology's rapid advancement has caused the world to change quickly, making it the finest means to delve into the enormous universe of knowledge. In a publication within the "Journal of Cases on Information Technology," Mensah and Nizam (2016) conducted a comprehensive examination of college students' utilization of social media. Their study delved into an impartial assessment of the impacts, both positive and negative, that social media usage had on students' conduct and academic achievements. The research emphasized that academic success or competence plays a pivotal role in determining an individual's positioning within educational institutions and the professional realm. As a result, many people are less interested in strategies that can improve academic performance. A lot of research on the conditions for academic excellence's promotion has been stimulated by the attention on it that is placed on it all over the world. Achieving academic success plays an undeniable role in predicting an individual's overall life success, including their placement in higher education institutions and their employability prospects.

These online social platforms, as highlighted by Asemah and Edegoh (2012), have become the primary means for individuals to connect with both old acquaintances and new pals. The rapid evolution of technology has significantly transformed our world, making technology the most effective tool for exploring vast realms of knowledge. A study featured in the "Journal of Cases on Information Technology" by Mensah and Nizam (2016) provided an empirical assessment of how college students engage with social media and its impacts on their academic achievement and behaviour.

The key results of this research underscored both the good and bad impacts of social networking sites on students. University students are drawn to these platforms for various reasons, including easy access to information, but this can hinder their capacity to study and conduct effective research. Furthermore, students who heavily engage with social networking sites while studying often struggle with reduced concentration and increased distractions.

Attaining high levels of academic performance holds a significant position in determining an individual's placement, both within educational institutions and in the job market. Consequently, many individuals seek ways to improve their academic achievements. The global emphasis on academic excellence has spurred numerous studies aimed at understanding and encouraging it. The impact of academic achievement, not only as a predictor of overall life success but also as a determinant of academic progression within higher education institutions and career opportunities, cannot be overstated.

In contemporary times, the majority of young individuals and students maintain Facebook accounts. This widespread adoption can be attributed to the increasing integration of Facebook into various aspects of professional life. However, some researchers attribute this trend to the behavior of educators. Oche and Aminu (2010) have observed that undergraduates are extensively engaged in social media, spending approximately 24 hours online. This engagement extends to classroom and lecture settings, where certain students are consistently occupied with chatting and social interactions instead of focusing on learning, academic research, and innovative pursuits. This diversion of attention towards making new online acquaintances and discussing less pertinent matters is a concern, as it often leads to setbacks in academic progress for many students. Furthermore, as indicated in the study conducted by Obi, Bulus, Adamu, and Sala'at (2012), the use of these social media platforms also had an influence on students' language usage and grammatical skills. Students tend to employ abbreviated forms of words and expressions commonly used in their online chat rooms, and this carries over into their classroom communication.

Analysis of the study of researchers, reveals that students possess a considerable awareness of the utility of social networks for scholarly purposes and exhibit a proficient level of competence in using them. A substantial portion of students expresses contentment with these platforms, finding them valuable for data gathering and information retrieval. Additionally, social networks facilitate students' participation in educational communities, foster interaction with peers, and provide access to e-learning resources. Furthermore, research carried by US academics Junco, Heiberger, and Loken (2011) highlights the potential adverse effects of adolescents using mobile phones to send text messages on their speaking abilities. The research indicates that texting can negatively impact proper speech and significantly impede language and learning abilities. The investigators explain that youngsters who rely on text messages for communication with their peers frequently make language errors and often resort to colloquial language, abbreviations, and numerical substitutes for letters in their messages, which can, in turn, have repercussions on their academic achievements.

The number of social media users (male and female) has increased since social networking first appeared in the 90s, with students making up the majority of those users (Jibrin, Musa and Shittu, 2017). A significant number of students in Nigeria, particularly those residing in Delta State, are frequent users of social media platforms for sharing information, files, images, videos, messages, and real-time conversations, according to the researcher's observations. These students predominantly utilize sites such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and 2go for social interactions, occupying a substantial portion of their time. Unfortunately, this heavy reliance on social media has had an adverse impact on the educational performance of Social Studies undergraduates in higher institutions.

Social media has recently taken a significant place in students' minds and in the world at large, leading to many dramatic measures taken by students, teachers, and even educational officials in general. It is imperative to explore into the pressing issues impacting students' academic achievements considering the prevalence of social

media. With the vast potential resources available through social media, students at various educational stages find themselves splitting their focus between academic endeavours and other activities. Hence, the examination of how social media usage affects the academic performance of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State is a valuable and timely endeavour.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the research is to explore the utilization of social media and its impacts the academic achievements of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State. The specific purpose of this study are to:

i.   determine the extent of the disparity between the utilization of social media and the academic accomplishments of Social Studies students in Delta State's tertiary institutions in Nigeria; and

ii.   examine the distinction in social media exposure between male and female Social Studies students enrolled in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

Research Questions

In line with the stated objectives, this research is guided by the following research inquiries:

i.   What is the extent of the disparity between the utilization of social media and the academic accomplishments of Social Studies students in Delta State's tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

ii.   Is there a distinction in social media exposure between male and female Social Studies students enrolled in tertiary institutions in Delta State?

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were generated by the researcher and it will be tested in this study:

Ho$_1$: There is no significant disparity between the utilization of social media and the academic accomplishments of Social Studies students in Delta State's tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Ho$_2$: There is no significant distinction between the exposures of male and female Social Studies students to social media in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

Methods

The study's methodology was a descriptive survey. This particular design was chosen since it allows for the collection of data without affecting the surroundings. The study's population consists of all the three hundred level of students in the Department of Social Studies in all tertiary institutions in Delta State. The schools are Delta State University, Abraka, University of Delta, Agbor, College of Education, Warri and Physical and Health Education, Mosogar, were all used for the study the and the sample uses a subset of the population to represent and generalize the entire population. As a result, 50 percent of the population was drawn at random, representing 203 respondents from five (5) different levels at Delta State University, Abraka's Department of Social Studies. Questionnaire were distributed to the sampled students having done reliability test and validation. Using the Cronbach Alfa and the obtainable value were 0.75. This was considered reliable and the validation of the instrument were done using researchers who are knowledgeable and have been in the field of research. The questions items in the questionnaire were constructed on the 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 point, Disagree (D) 2 points, Strongly disagreed (SD) 1 point. Each respondent will be required to tick (") on the options most appropriate to him or her. The data from the returned questionnaires were scored and analyzed using the T-test with the help of Software packages for social sciences (SPSS).

Results

Research Question One: To what extent is the difference between social media use and academic attainment of Social Studies

students in tertiary institutions in Delta State Nigeria?

Table 1: Extent of social media on student academic attainment of Social Studies students

S/N	Items	Mean	STD	Remark
1.	Using facebook help me to improve my academic performance	1.98	0.80	Disagree
2.	Using Instagram enable me to increase my academic performance	1.97	0.87	Disagree
3.	Using twitter help me to improve my academic performance	2.13	0.94	Disagree
4.	Using black board help me to increase my academic performance	3.30	0.64	Agree

Table 1 shows the difference between social media use as it affect´ academic attainment of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State Nigeria. The highest mean from the table is item 4 which stated that using black board help me to increase my academic performance with mean value of 3.30±0.64 and it remarked Agree. Whereas items 1, 2 and 3 show disagree as they fall below bench mark of 2.5 level of acceptances. It then shows that Instagram, twitter and facebook show alike on how it affects academic performance.

Research Question Two: What is the difference between male and female exposures to social media among Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State?

Table 2: Responses on male and female exposures to social media among Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State

S/N	Items	Mean	STD	Remark
1.	Male and Female students use social media networks differently in different frequencies	3.93	0.25	Agree
2.	Female students use social networking sites more to explicitly foster social connections	3.97	0.18	Agree
3.	Gender determines the level of social network usage	3.50	0.56	Agree
4.	Males are more effective at using social networking sites for non-academic purposes	3.98	0.14	Agree

Table 2 indicates the extent to which social media influences male and female academic performance in Social Studies students. The greatest mean in the table is item 4, which indicated that males are more effective at using social networking sites for non-academic objectives, with a mean value of 3.980.14 and it is agree as seen in the noted column of remark. Item 1, 2, and 3 also were agree because they exceed the benchmark of 2.5 acceptances. Without a doubt, the responses suggest that male students are more grossly involved in non-academic social networking sites than their female counterparts. Unequivocally, the responses shows that male students are effectively engaged in social networking sites for non-academic purposes than the female counterparts.

Ho$_1$: There is no significant difference between social media use and academic attainment of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State Nigeria

Table 3: One-Sample Statistics on social media use and academic attainment of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Social Media use Academic performance	203	2.93	.324	.023

	T	df	p-value	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Social Media use Academic performance	129.01	202	.000	2.932	2.89	2.98

Table 3 depicts the hypothesis tested, which suggested that there is no significant difference between social media use and academic attainment of Social Studies students in Delta State Nigeria tertiary institutions. The test results reveal that the hypotheses are rejected at t = 129.01, df = 202, and p-value (sig) = 0.000, with a mean difference of 2.932. The above hypothesis was rejected because the P-value was less than the 0.05 threshold for significance, and it was reiterated that there is a significant difference between social media use and academic attainment of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria.

Ho$_2$: There is no significant difference between male and female exposures to social media among Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

Table 4: One-Sample Statistics on male and female exposures to social media among Social Studies students in tertiary institutions

	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	49				
		203	3.0778	.17925	.01258
Female	154				

		t	Df	p-value Difference	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
Male	49						
		244.65	202	.000	3.08	3.0530	3.1026
Female	154						

Table 4 shows the hypothesis tested which stated that there is no significant difference between male and female exposures to social media among Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State. The test depicted that the hypotheses is rejected where t = 244.65, df = 202 with the p-value = 0.000 where the mean difference 3.08. Since the p-value obtainable is lower the 0.05 level of significance, the above hypothesis was rejected and restated that there is a significant difference between male and female exposures to social media among Social Studies students in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

Discussions

That there is a noteworthy disparity between the utilization of social media and the academic performance of Social Studies students in tertiary institutions situated in Delta State, Nigeria. This study was in line with that of Nwoburuoke and Eremie (2021) when they study and looked at how social media affects students' academic performance and what that means for counselling in Rivers State.

There is a substantial distinction between the levels of social

media engagement among male and female Social Studies students in tertiary institutions located in Delta State, Nigeria. This study was in consonance with the study of Udemudia et al. (2017) where they developed a research model to explore gender disparities in social media utilization. Their research outcomes indicated that females hold a more pronounced and statistically significant perception regarding ease of use, compatibility, relative advantage, and potential risks when engaging with social media compared to males. Additionally, our own findings corroborate that males tend to have a greater perception of satisfaction and information quality while using social media, relative to females.

Conclusion

Social Studies students are being severely impacted by social media, despite the fact that they should be at the forefront enlightening other students and serving as a resource for offering control measures on the use of social media handles. Instead, they are becoming casualties of social media's detrimental effects. As a result of the foregoing, it was discovered that social media use and academic achievement among students studying Social Studies differ significantly. On this ground, the time spent on social media instead of studying could barely be made up, which hurts their academic attainment in school. Another conclusion is that Social Studies students in postsecondary institutions in Delta State differ significantly in their use of social media between the sexes.

Recommendations

There is a critical need for school administrators and educational authorities to provide proper guidance and education to assist Social Studies students in utilizing social media in a manner that supports their academic objectives rather than engaging in frivolous activities that do not contribute to their academic progress. To mitigate the adverse consequences of social media, it would be advisable for the government to consider establishing an entity responsible for overseeing and regulating the online activities of young individuals on social networking sites (SNS).

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