

Full Length Research Paper

Influence of Social Media on Science Student Academic Performance in Rivers State University, Nkpolu Oroworukwo

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ABSTRACT: The study investigated the influence of social media on the academic performance on science student in Rivers State University, Nkpolu Oroworukwo Rivers State Nigeria. To this end three research questions guided the study. The study used the casual comparative research design. 400 students of the University were randomly sampled from a population of 29,939 students. The instrument for the study was a questionnaire titled Social Media and Academic Performance Scale (SMAPS) developed by the researcher. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was determined by Pearson product moment as a measure of its stability over time. The reliability coefficient of the instruments was 0.82. Data was collected and analyzed using percentages mean and standard deviation. The majority of Rivers State University students use social networking sites for a variety of purposes, including entertainment, communication, sociability, and education, according to the survey. Male students utilized social media for information and academics, while female students used it for sociability and amusement. Male students

are more likely to use social media for information and academics than female students are. The majority of Rivers State University students spend at least 6 hours a day on social networking sites (SNSs) visiting websites and connecting with other users for intellectual and non-academic purposes. SNSs, according to the majority of respondents, distract them from their lectures, library sessions, and academics in general. Students feel that social media sites have a detrimental impact on their academics, and that in order to enhance their scores, they must minimize their usage of social media sites. It recommended, among other things, that administrators at Nigerian tertiary institutions implement guidelines and restrictions that limit or prohibit students' use of social networking sites during lectures and library sessions; and students utilize social media for academic purposes.

Keywords: Social media, science student, academic performance

INTRODUCTION

Millions of individuals across the world utilize social media on a regular basis for various reasons thanks to the Internet revolution in the 1990s and the advent of social networking sites in 1994 and beyond (Daluba and Maxwell, 2013). Social media utilization spans several age groups; however, research has indicated that it is more common among younger people (Onuoha and Saheed, 2011) and students in higher education

institutions (Dahlstrom et al., 2011; Al-rahmi et al., 2014). Rosen (2011) discovered that people born between 1965 and 1979 (Generation X) spend about 13 hours per day on social media, whereas those born between 1990 and 1999 spend at least 20 hours per day. These young individuals, according to Kalra and Manani (2013), utilize social media for interaction, sociability, and amusement.

Due to social media's popularity and domination among

students in higher education, stakeholders in the educational sector throughout the world have been deeply worried about its potential implications on students' academic performance (Maib et al., 2012; Ezeah et al., 2013). This is attributed to research indicating that social media has both beneficial and bad effects on kids (Yahya et al., 2013).

Benefits of social media include encouraging more social interaction through digital means, offering better access to resources and information, helping create a feeling of connection by many participants, removing obstacles to interactivity and connectivity including such location and financial standing, and boosting the innovation skills and capabilities of consistent social media users, and many more (Zwart, Lindsay, Henderson and Phillips, 2011).

Nonetheless, anxiety, poor eating habits, short attention spans, disrupted significantly greater analytical abilities between regular social media users, an overestimation of one's ability to multi-task, and technology being viewed as a substitute for the analytical reasoning process have been identified as potential risks (Rosen, 2011; Anderson and Rainie, 2012). "A category of internet-based applications that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content," according to Anjugu (2013). Ezeah et al (2013) define it as "modern interactive communication channels via which individuals engage with one another, share ideas, experiences, photographs, messages, and information of common interest."

Anjugu (2013) categorizes social media into the following categories:

- Social Bookmarking – engage with others by marking websites and going through other people's website books (Blink List, Simple);
- Social News – Participate by voting on articles and leaving comments on them (Digg, Propello).
- Social Networking – Add friends, comment on photos and profiles, and so on to communicate. discussion groups for sharing (Facebook, 2go, Blackberry Messenger chat).
- Social photo and video sharing – Engage with the user input by sharing images or videos and leaving comments (YouTube and Flickr).
- Wikis – Contribute by writing new articles and revising those that have already been written (Wikipedia).

In Nigeria and throughout the world, social media is quickly becoming a very popular form of both personal and public communication. "The conventional means of meeting each other is long gone, and today the globe meets via social media platforms," Daluba and Maxwell (2013) stated. The participatory element of social media separates it from traditional forms of communication, allowing users to engage from anywhere in the globe. When McQuail (2010) said that "previous mass

communication was fundamentally one-directional, while new forms of communication are essentially participatory," he is referring to social media.

According to Ahmed and Qazi (2011), the first official social networking site was classmate.com, which was founded in 1995 to give students with a way to communicate during or after school. While admitting that classmate.com was launched in 1995, Boyd and Ellison (2007) pointed out that, according to their definition of social networking sites, sixdegrees.com, launched in 1997, was the first identifiable social networking site. It was the first because it enabled users to create profiles, list their friends, and browse friends lists, all of which classmates.com couldn't do at the time.

According to Ahmed and Qazi (2011), sixdegree.com was developed after it (classmates.com) in 1997, resulting in the birth of Cyworld (2001), Friendster (2001), Skyblog (2004), Myspace (2005), Yahoo 360 (2005), Twitter (2006), and Facebook (2006). There are over 100 social networking sites online that connect millions of users, including 500 million users on Facebook, 130 million users on Myspace.com, 75 million users on LinkedIn.com, 90 million users on Friendster.com, over 10 million members on Stumbeleupon.com, Orkut.com with 100 million users, 50 million participants on Classmates.com, 2 million users on Meetup.com, Xanga.com with 27 million users, and Care2.com with over 9 million subscribers.

According to Ahmad (2014), the number of Nigerians on all social networking sites was less than 40,000 in 2007, but in 2009 and 2010, there were 212,000 and 657,360 Facebook users who indicated Nigeria: a nearly 53 percent rise, with more than 60 percent indicating they were students. According to the author, there were 6,630,200 Nigerian Facebook users in 2014, based on statistics from the Internet World Statistics, Statistics. Given the popularity of social networking sites, particularly among young people, there have been efforts to incorporate them into the educational process.

Social media for academic purposes

Millions of individuals across the world use social media on a daily basis for a variety of purposes. A sizable proportion of social media users are young people, the majority of whom are university students. Indeed, according to a recent poll of 3000 students from throughout the United States, 90 percent of the students use Facebook and 37 percent use Twitter (Dahlstrom et al., 2011).

According to research, Facebook is the largest social tool for communication, with 85 to 99 percent of university students using it for diverse reasons (Jones and Fox, 2009; Matney and Borland, 2009). The usefulness of interactive social media technology in universities and colleges is now acknowledged in the manner that

learning and teaching methodologies are becoming more worldwide (Gray et al., 2010). The most frequently claimed advantages of social media by academics is its capacity to enhance collaborative learning and communication among colleagues as well as with those outside of academic circles (Rowlands et al., 2011).

Another key feature of social networking is its potential to promote dissemination of information. Among the possibilities include blogging tools, which are utilised by many students to share knowledge within their neighbourhood, among their classmates, and to everyone throughout the world (Bukvova et al., 2010). Other benefits of social media include the chance to explore unasked questions in a less formal setting, having a powerful voice through online technology, and having a place to discuss concerns in an open, public setting (Kirkup, 2010). Academic fields such as social sciences and education systems as a whole are benefiting greatly from social networking. At different social and academic levels, numerous researchers have explored different components utilizing social media sites.

From 2007 to 2010, undergraduate IT students affirm that social networking has enhanced their academic accomplishment (Smith and Caruso, 2010). Because it is where they spend the majority of their time, most students in higher education institutions hope their institutions will change their methods of communication to social networks in order to better class instruction. Social media usage improves educational access and engagement, and it bridges the informal knowledge gaps for both teachers and students (Bull et al., 2008).

Students in higher education are more likely to use social media for both amusement and study. University students utilize numerous social media technologies to such a degree that they have become an integral part of their daily lives for both personal and educational needs (Coa and Hong, 2011; Dahlstrom, 2012). Portable devices and mobile phones integrate social media on their fingertips and at their simple and personalized operation (Dahlstrom, 2012).

However, there are several drawbacks to using social media for academic reasons. One of the issues regarding utilizing social networking sites for scientific studies, according to reports, is that students may spend too much time on them, depriving other vital areas of their studies the attention they need (Rowlands et al., 2011). Rithika and Selvaraj (2013) also pointed out that while social media may help students learn more by allowing them to communicate with one another, there are issues when social media is used in an academic setting.

Notwithstanding, one of the most obvious benefits of utilizing social media to aid learning and teaching can only be fully achieved with the existence of clear rules that stipulate the do's and don'ts so as to ensure that whatever students engage in are aimed at gaining the educational benefits of social media (Rutherford, 2010). Where higher education institutions restrict the use of

social media to a certain extent, the potential advantages have been realized in the majority of situations (Kears, 2010).

The concept of academic performance

Academic performance alludes towards how students approach their academics and how they engage with or complete the tasks assigned to them by their instructors (Hameed et al., 2013; Helou and Rahim, 2014). Academic accomplishment denotes to "a by grades, marks, and scores of descriptive commentary," whereas academic performance refers to "a by grades, marks, and scores of descriptive commentaries." It involves how students approach their academics and how they cope with or complete the necessary tasks assigned to them by their lecturers throughout the course of a set period of time or educational year" (Adene, 2013). Academic accomplishment of students is critical in developing high-quality graduates who may well serve as successful individuals and workforce for the nation, and therefore be accountable for its economic and social progress.

Students' academic progress is influenced by four kinds of elements, according to Adene (2013): home-related factors, school-related factors, student characteristics, and teacher-side factors. While admitting that "academic performance is a multifaceted concept," Salvation and Asharuddin (2014) reckon it has three dimensions: student characteristics, instructor abilities, and educational setting. The characteristics of the student academic performance element concern how students cope with their studies and how they cope with or finish the tasks assigned to them by their teachers. This dimension helps estimate the magnitude of performance (Loo and Choy, 2013). This component is determined by the student's IQ, personality, and socioeconomic situation. In an education setting, for comparison purposes, a student's capacity to learn and recall knowledge, as well as convey their understanding vocally or even on writing, improves academic performance. Competence of a teacher's academic performance, conversely, is focused on how successfully instructors can convey facts to learners. According to Chukwuemeka (2013), significant environmental elements influencing children's academic achievement include school amenities, climatic conditions, family background, and technology.

Effects of social media on academic performance

Social media has both positive and negative effects on the academic performance of students across the world. According to Eke et al. (2014), social media has the following favourable effects on students' academic performance:

Web engagement

Online engagement is important for business; students are becoming experts at developing a sense of internet presence. Not only basic and even complex functions in order to do so. As a result, students utilize social networking websites to discuss class-related topics with their peers and even lecturers.

Informal knowledge and skill

Social networking sites can facilitate learning and skill development outside formal learning environments by supporting peer – to peer learning, skills collaboration and diverse cultural expression.

Education

Social networking sites help in schools and universities programs. For example, social networking sites like blogs help to leverage or complement formal educational activities and enhancing outcomes. SNSs are again utilized to enhance opportunities for formal learning across geographical contexts.

Individual identify and self-expression

Social networking sites can provide users with a space to work out identity and status, make sense of cultural cues, negotiate public life and increase user's sense of personal belonging. This sense of personal belonging and identity has been positively corrected with academic performance.

Strengthening interpersonal relationships

Social media has been found to strengthen individual interpersonal relationships. social networking, instant messaging, and email may all be used to expand new barriers people may face to forming and maintaining public places together, limited transport to get there, and time free of structured activities such as school and sport.

Negative effect

Social media has been noted to have some negative effects on students' academics: student's academic performance since time meant for studies is utilized for non-academic purposes such as conversing and meeting new people. (Salvation and Asharuddin, 2014).

Health issues and psychological ailments

Stress, sadness, inadequate nutrition, as well as a lack of exercise; particularly regular social media users, shorter attention spans and impaired higher-order thinking skills like as focus, perseverance, and logical skills;

Overestimation of one's capacity to multitask and manage tasks; and the use of technology as a replacement for critical thought. Collectively, these play roles in a student's educational process to various degrees and at various times.

In their study "The effects of social networking sites on the academic performance of students in College of Applied Sciences, Nizwa, Oman," Mehmood and Taswir (2013) discovered that learners utilize social media for the following purposes: downloading/uploading music/video, posting photos, chatting, blogging polls/quizzes, submitting articles to website and communication with teachers/class. Thus, while the first three are basically for entertainment purposes, the three however, are for academic purposes. The researchers therefore pointed out: "This indicates that students mostly utilized social networking sites for fun and not for scholastic objectives. Whereas a number of learners utilized social media for amusement, 72 percent said they were using it while focusing on an academic project. This large value shows that learners view social media to be beneficial in terms of obtaining information and assistance about their discipline.

Onyeka et al. (2013) investigated the "effect of social networking site usage on the studies of Nigerian students" and looked at how the use of social media affects students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. 600 respondents were chosen from three higher institutions in Adamawa State. The findings show that students utilize social networking sites to stay in touch with others, while away time; maintain a sense of belonging, and to solve social problems.

In "Social media usage among students of higher education institutions in South-East Nigeria," Ezeah et al (2013) discovered that Nigerian students use social media to view movies, expose themselves to pornography, and debate significant national topics such as governance, business, and religion. Eke et al. (2014) evaluated social networking site usage among undergraduate students at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The descriptive survey research design was used in the investigation, with a sample size of 150 university undergraduate students. Data was collected from the subjects' using questionnaire. According to the findings of the study, UNN students use Social Networking sites for the following purposes: communicating and interacting with friends; job, academic discussion, and finding study partners online; watching movies; connecting and interacting with business partners; having conversations, coordinating, and promoting political problems such as elections, financial system, and religious matters; and modifying profile details.

In a survey of six institutions in Pakistan, Ahmed and Qazi (2011) discovered that the majority of students spend one-three hours each day using social networking websites. In a study conducted at St. Cloud State

University in Minnesota, Thame (2011) discovered that, while both male and female college students spent time on social media sites, the same amount of time significantly reduced as the respondents' ages increased, and the findings show that female university students spent more time on social networking sites than male university students.

Asemah et al. (2013) investigated the impact of social media on the academic performance of Kogi State University undergraduate students. The researchers used survey method, with a questionnaire as the data collecting instrument, and was based on social information processing theory and media equation theory. The study discovered that social media has a negative impact on Nigerian students' academic performance: they spend more time on social media than reading their books; they rely on social media to complete assignments without consulting other sources; and those who spend more time on social media are more likely to perform poorly in their academic activities than those who do not.

Onuoha and Shaeed (2011) conducted a survey of undergraduates at selected institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria, to determine the perceived effect of online social networks on academic achievement. The study adopted descriptive survey design with 402 students from Babeok University, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, and Olabisi Onanbanjo University. Data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage counts. According to the findings, the majority of students utilise online social networks, even if their motive is primarily for social contact than academic goals. The majority of student social networks have a beneficial impact on academic success.

Mehmood and Taswir (2013) evaluated the educational effects of social networking sites on the language and social behaviours of undergraduate students at the College of Applied Sciences in Nizwa, Oman. The study discovered that social media had a favourable impact on academic performance of Oman students, who have begun to use social networks for academic objectives. Although some students saw social media as a source of distraction and were afraid to express their views, a large proportion of those polled saw it as a resource for finding knowledge, joining educational networks, and looking for job prospects. Because their online acquaintances were largely folks they met in college, using social media offered them a sense of belonging to an intellectual community. Student-to-student and teacher-to-student interactions supported academic learning through social networks. However, social networks must be used with caution, as they might cause students to become distracted from their studies.

Helou and Abraham (2014) discovered in their study "The effect of social networking sites on students' academic performance in Malaysia" that most students use SNSs for socializing rather than academic aims.

However, the majority of respondents believe that SNSs improve academic performance because they can be used for a variety of academic activities such as communicating with faculty and university authorities, communicating with lecturers and supervisors, discussing academic topics with classmates, and chatting with friends about educational topics. Meanwhile, the negative impacts of SNSs on academic performance are minor. Ahmed and Qazi (2011) reported a consistent drop in grades among student social networking site users.

Enikuomohin (2011) examined ICT, CGPA: Consequences of Social Networks in an Internet-Driven Learning Society, which looked into the impact of social networking on students at Lagos State University in Nigeria's Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). The study surveyed 1,860 students, who supplied information on their current and previous CGPAs, as well as how much time they spend on social media. Combining social media exploration with actual studying resulted in a poorer CGPA for the students.

Anjugu (2013) investigated how social media affects student academic achievement (a study of students of the University of Abuja). The study, which comprised 150 students from four University faculties, employed a survey technique. The findings suggest that most students utilized 2go and Blackberry Messenger (BBM) chat more frequently than any other social networking site, and that they spent between 6 and 8 hours each day on social media. More time is spent on amusement than on educational matters, and many acknowledge that social media has harmed their academic achievement.

It has been suggested that the detrimental effects of social networking sites on students' grades are linked to their addictive nature. This seems to be the factor why Englander et al. (2010) discovered that internet usage is negatively associated with student users' academic performance.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of social media on academic performance among science students at Rivers State University.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to examine the influence of social media on the academic performance science students in Rivers State University, especially to:

1. Examine why students of Rivers State University make use of social media.
2. Determine how often students of Rivers State University make of social media.
3. Determine whether social media affects the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of students of Rivers State University.

Research questions

This study was undertaken to answer the following

research questions:

1. Why do students of Rivers State University make use of social media?
2. What is the number of hours each day spent by students of Rivers State University on social media?
3. What is the effect of social media on the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of students of Rivers State University?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A causal comparative (or ex-post-facto) research design was used in this study. The causal comparative study design is used when the researcher wants to determine the cause-and-effect connection between two variables of interest without changing any of them. The researcher is just seeking to link a current influence or observation to specific elements that operate as causative agents.

Population of the study

The population of this study was the entire students of the university which is 29,939 as sourced from the Rivers State University News Bulletin (2014, April).

Sample and sampling techniques

The sample size study was 395 science students drawn from the faculties of science and education of the university via simple random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

The instrument for the study was a questionnaire titled the Social Media and Academic Performance Scale (SMAPS) developed by the researcher.

Validity of the instrument

To ensure that the SMAPS has validity Copies of the draft questionnaire questions were given to a panel of experts to vet. After vetting the instruments, the researcher modified them along the lines suggested by the comments of the experts.

Reliability of the instrument

To establish the reliability of SMAP the instrument, a pilot test was carried out by using 50 undergraduates from

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt who were not part of the main study. The instrument was administered to the respondents after a period of two weeks then was re-administered to the same respondents thereafter the reliability coefficient of the instrument was determined by Pearson product moment as a measure of its stability over time. The reliability coefficient of the instruments was 0.82.

Administration of the Instrument

The instrument was administered on the respondents by the researcher.

Data analysis technique

Data generated were analyzed using simple percentages frequencies, mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the number of hours each day spent by science students of Rivers State University. Table 1 illustrates how much time students spend on social networking sites on a daily basis: 92 (23.29 percent) spend 1 to 3 hours daily, 200 (50.63 percent) spend 4 to 6 hours daily, 53 (13.41 percent) spend 7 to 10 hours daily, and 50 (12.65 percent) are always connected to social networking sites.

Research question 2: Why do science students of Rivers State University make use of social media?

Table 2 demonstrates that all of the categories are agreed upon by the respondents, indicating that these are all reasons why Rivers State University scientific students utilise social media.

Research question 3: What is the effect of social media on the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of science students of Rivers State University?

The Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of respondents were as follows: 198 (50.12 percent) students had a CGPA of 1.00 to 2.49; 110 (27.84 percent) students had a CGPA of 2.50; 49.52 (13.16 percent) students had a CGPA of 3.50 to 4.49; and 35 (8.86 percent) students had a CGPA of 4.50 to 5.00 (Table 3).

DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that 92 (23.29 percent) of student respondents spend 1 to 3 hours per day on social networking sites, while 200 (50.64 percent) spend 4 to 6

Table 1: Hours spent on SNS daily (in frequency and percentage).

Hours	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 hours	92	23.29
4-6 hours	200	50.63
7-10 hours	53	13.41
Always	50	12.65
Total	395	100

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation showing why Rivers State university students make use of social media

Item	Mean	Std.dev	Decision
Watching movies	3.35	.616	Agree
Academic discussion	3.49	.501	Agree
Dating	3.13	.586	Agree
Interacting with friends	3.35	.616	Agree
I use social networking sites for private messaging and updating profile information	3.75	.581	Agree
I use social networking sites for fun and leisure	3.25	.573	Agree
I use social networking sites for discussion about my course works	3.13	.586	Agree
I use social networking sites for finding friends online	3.43	.541	Agree

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation showing the effect of social media on the cumulative grade point average (CGPA)

GPA	Frequency	Percentage
1.00 – 2.49	198	50.12
2.50 – 3.49	110	27.84
3.50 – 4.49	52	13.16
4.50 – 50.00	35	8.86
Total	395	100

hours per day, 53 (13.41 percent) spend 7 to 10 hours per day, and 50 (12.65 percent) are always connected throughout the day. Throughout the day, the amount of time spent on social networking sites did not alter much.

Ahamed and Qazi (2011), Onyeka et al (2013), Anjugu (2013) all reported that students spent between 1 and 6 hours each day on social networking sites. The fact that the majority of the respondents in this survey spend at least 6 hours per day on social media not only demonstrates that students gain great joy and happiness from social media, but also the potential for social media to supplant students' academics.

Table 2 reveals that the majority of Rivers State University science students utilize social media (SNSs) for a variety of purposes ranging from amusement to communication to socializing and education. As a result, the majority of respondents utilized SNSs for: making online friends, communicating with them, messaging and updating their profiles, fun and leisure, academic studies, viewing online movies, intellectual debate, and dating. Students utilize social networking sites for academic and non-academic purposes, according to research by Mehmood and Taswir (2013), Onyeka et al (2013), and Helou and Abraham (2014). However, the results contradict some of the findings of Ezeah et al (2013) and Eke et al (2014), which claim that South-East Nigerian

students do not utilize social media for academic purposes. The discrepancies in the results might be due to variances in time, research region, apparatus, sample size and procedure, or the study's population.

In terms of the impact of social media on respondents' cumulative grade point averages (CGPAs), Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents (73.16 percent) feel that SNSs have no beneficial impact on their academic performance. Similarly, 325 (82.89 percent) respondents say that social media distracts them from their academics, while another group believes that social media takes away time from their academic pursuits.

Many students would advise against using social media sites if they want to do well in school. SNSs, according to the majority of respondents, distract them from their lectures, library sessions, and academics in general. In terms of student grades, it is clear that Rivers State University's scientific students are the majority. Students feel that SNSs have a detrimental impact on their academics, and that if they minimize their usage of SNSs, their grades would increase. They also believe that without SNSs, their grades will be better than they are now.

The findings of the study accord with those of Enikuomehin (2011) and Anjugu (2013) who discovered that students' usage of social networking sites had a

detrimental impact on their academic performance in a variety of ways. However, the findings contradict those of Roblyer et al (2010), Onuoha and Shaeed (2011), and Mehmood and Taswir (2012). (2013). SNSs, on the other hand, have been found to boost students' academic performance by Helou and Abraham (2014).

Conclusion

The study used Rivers State University as a case study to look at the impact of social media on university students' academic performance in Nigeria. Students at Rivers State University utilize social networking sites for a variety of purposes, including amusement, communication, sociability, and education, according to the survey. Female students utilized social media for socializing and pleasure, while male students used it for knowledge and academics. Similarly, more students from the faculty of sciences. The majority of Rivers State University students feel that using social media negatively affects their academics because it reduces the amount of time they spend studying, distracts them during lectures and library sessions, and has a direct impact on their cumulative grade point average.

Recommendations

Authorities at Nigerian tertiary institutions should implement rules and regulations that limit or prohibit students from using social networking sites during lectures and library hours. Students should be informed about the good and negative consequences of social networking sites as a medium of engagement on their academic achievement at tertiary institutions.

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