



RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES STUDENTS IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF NASSARAWA STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, AKWANGA

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ABSTRACT

KEYWORDS:

Study habits, Academic performance, Networking, Time allocation, Time management, Student.

Reports of large scale academic failures among Nigerian students in collages of education have become a subject of concern for stakeholders today. Although, a lot have been written on other factors of study habit and academic performance of students in many areas but the effects of social media on academic performance of CRS students seems to be a neglected area. This study, therefore, attempted to isolate social media as a factor of study habit and examine its effects on the academic performance of CRS students in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga. The following hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the opinions of CRS students on the effects of social media on academic performance in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga" guided the study. Primary data were used in the study which were collected through Study Habit Inventory. The primary data were analyzed using tables and simple percentages while independent t-test was employed to test the hypothesis. The results revealed that majority of CRS students at NCE level in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga mismanaged the use of social media which was likely to have affected their academic performance. It was therefore recommended, among others, that the students should be educated on the proper use of social media.

INTRODUCTION

Meaningful learning needs good study habits towards assignment, reading, note taking, proper allocation and management of one's time, concentrating during the hours of study, consultation with lecturers for clarification of concepts not well understood and using of good study techniques. A lot of factors such as students' attitudes, organized study methods, socio-economic background of parents, time allocation and management, absenteeism, and social networking have been identified as some causes of poor students' academic performance in Christian Religious Studies (CRS). This view is supported by Kurshid, Tanveer and Quasmi (2012) that the importance of learners study habits cannot be overemphasized as it has a great part to play in determining academic performance.

The problem of mass failure of students in our colleges of education generally is an area of concern and concerted effort is needed to address it. Colleges of education are established not just to impart broad based knowledge to the students but to also groom and inculcate into them the abilities to transfer that knowledge to others. They are established as teaching and foundational institutions to equip teachers with sound and productive knowledge in line with the changing society. It can be recollected that the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) is the minimum teaching qualification thus, teachers produced by these Colleges of

Education (COE) form the core teachers at the primary and secondary schools.

Several factors are involved when it comes to study habits and academic performance of students and these include: proper time allocation and management, note taking, concentration during the hour of lecture, teacher consultation, study period procedures, examinations and written work, religious background of the students, social life, economic background of the students, organized study methods and location of the study activity. The difference between secondary and higher level of education is that, at secondary level, the students are expected to study what they have been taught in the class under a close supervision of the teacher. But at the tertiary level, the students however are expected to study independently. The students at this level have much freedom about the use of time. Under this condition, the students are left to decide what they should study at a particular time and how they should go about it. These students usually are faced with a variety of activities at the tertiary level and this is when the problem of choice comes in. For one to choose an activity and how to go about it requires the ability to organize oneself effectively.

Since the students have much freedom, they tend to waste much of this time on social activities such as face book, twitter and so on. Most of them usually hang around to chat with friends until late at night thereby forgetting to study.

Some are so much involved in commercial activities at the expense of their academic work. Such students do not have the time to study and consult other sources of information to widen their scope. Others spend more time on social network than on their studies.

It has been observed by the researchers that in spite of the concerted efforts to improve the teaching and learning of CRS in colleges of education in Nigeria through the provision of equipped libraries and recruitment of qualified teachers by the school management, poor academic performance continue to be a reoccurring phenomenon and students continue to have difficulties in performing well academically as evidenced by their performances at the end of semester examinations. The poor performance of these students may be because of ineffective study habits. Majority of students are fully aware of the need to study, but the problem is that they do not know how to go about it and how to do it effectively, and this seems to affect their academic performance negatively.

The implication of this mass failure in colleges of education means that in the near future, there will be incompetent teachers to mount the educational industry for effective teaching and learning process. This will have negative effects on the achievement of our national objectives which is dependent on the quality and the number of qualified teaching personnel.

Although, a lot have been written on study habits and academic performance of students in many areas but the effect of study habit on academic performance of CRS students seems to be a neglected area. This study, therefore, attempted to isolate social media as a factor of study habits and examine its effects on the academic performance of CRS students in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social networking has been defined as a form of electronic communication through which users interact among themselves, create, share, exchange information, ideas, personal messages, and other content about each other using a multimedia mix of personal words, pictures, videos and audio (Ogendegbe, Emmanuel & Musa 2012) in (Michikyan et al, 2015). It is used to describe any website that enables users to create public profiles within that website and form relationship with other users of the same website who access their profile. It is used to describe community base website, online discussion forum, chat rooms and other social space online. Commonly, the phrase "social networking sites" is used as an umbrella term for all social media and computer-mediated communication, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Myspace, as well as the inaugural social networking sites of Cyworld, Bebo and Friendster.

Kuss & Griffiths (2011) define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to construct profiles, display user connections, and search and traverse within that list of connections. A social media is an online service or platforms that focus on facilitating the building of social network among people who share interest, activities and background on real life connections. It is a website that allows users to share information within a selected group and a great way to stay connected and a convenient way to share photos from trips. It consists of representation of each user (profiles), social links and a variety of additional services. The coming of social network sites has changed different aspects of people's lives. The concept of social networking has evolved, much like other innovations, and is becoming

increasingly sophisticated with advancements in technology.

Social network sites are web based services that enable individuals to construct a semi-profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share connection with, views and go through their list of connections and those made by others within the system, although the nature and nomenclature of these connections has variation (Choney, 2010).

In the past years, social network sites have become common, providing young people with a new way to interact with each other and communicate with the world. Recently social networking became popular after the creation of Facebook and MySpace. Acheaw & Larson (2015) opines that Facebook, for example has over 500 million members and it is still growing and approximately 85% of tertiary institution students are Facebook users. These numbers are expected to grow on a daily basis since the world population is on a steady increase. And the same thing applies to the numbers of YouTube users. There is no doubt, social networking websites provide tools by which people can communicate, share information, and create new relationships. According to Edegoh (2012), the popularity of social networking sites has affected our social interaction in different ways as we adapt to our increasingly technological world. The way web users interact and talk to each other has changed and will continue to change. These users now socialize through the internet and it takes away from the person socialization that has been around forever.

The evolution and rapid advancement of social network sites has greatly impacted on peoples' communication on a daily basis. The growing dimension of the use of the social networking sites among our youth today cannot be over emphasized. Over the years, social networking among students has become more and more popular. It is a way to connect with other people, not only on campus but with friends outside the school. Social networking is a way that helps people feel they belong to a community. Due to the increase in popularity, scholars and educationist are now beginning to ask questions whether grades of students will not be affected by how much time is spent on these sites. Not only scholars and educationists, parents and guardians have also expressed their worries that students are spending so much time on Facebook and other social network sites and not having enough time to study. Confirming this fear is the work conducted by Choney (2010) which shows that the use of social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace are most important factors that can influence the study habits and academic performance of students positively or adversely. This is because multitasking with these social networking sites can interfere with students learning process.

Social networking is an explosion in the world of information and technology with high impact on the development of students academically because it is one of the fastest way of getting information for academic exercise. But research has shown that even with the positive impact of social networking sites, excessive usage of this network particularly the use of Facebook by students affect their academic performance negatively. It is worthy to note that students who are always on Facebook perform poorly academically. Michikyan, Subrahmanyam & Dennis (2015) point out that social network has given people the ability to connect with others from around the globe thereby making sharing of information easy. They further posit that the social

network has become a habit for majority of students that they can't study one hour without visiting any of the sites.

There is no doubt about the fact that the use of the social network has contributed positively to the academic performance of some students but some students also become poor academically. The darker side of social network sites evolution has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback of values of life among students who form the majority of users. These days most students have Facebook accounts so the reason why most of them perform poorly academically may not be far fetched. Though many people are quick to blame this on other factors, but they should try harder to reflect on the use of Facebook frenzy. Junco (2012) states that students these days are so fascinated with the use of social networking sites that they are almost 24 hours online.

The use of the internet by students is not a bad idea because the world has become a global clique due to the development in information and technology, but if the students use the internet for the purpose of leisure activity which interferes with his or her academic activities then, it will definitely affect the performance negatively. This can be seen among students in college of Education who are fond of using social network especially facebook while receiving lectures, studying and doing assignment. It has been observed that some students are always busy ping, going or Facebooking while lectures are on. This act is multitasking for the students and increases distraction which affect their performance negatively. It has also been discovered that using social networking while studying or doing assignment by student could affect their academic performance since it lead to procrastination, a serious huddles between students and their academic tasks. A study conducted by Junco (2012) shows significant low GPA among students facebook users than those who are not using the network. Khan, (2016) supports this view by adding that there are risks associated with the use of any social network since many students spend most of their time on the internet and less time on studying. Khan further posits that multitasking with the use of social networking sites decreases both efficiency and productivity in an academic setting. Time that ought to be channeled towards studying has been crushed by the passion to meet new friends and to discuss trivial issues. Hence most students study habits and academic performance suffer setback as a result of distraction.

Good education produces outstanding students who will bring about the prosperity of their respective educational institution and subsequently are proved as strong contributors to the national well-being. Graeme (2010) opines that student users are affected by the internet and this impact is determined by the type of internet usage. They are positively affected by the informative use of internet while having drastic impact of recreational use of internet on them. Jonah (2013) also added that internet is advantageous to both students and teachers if used as a tool to create knowledge. The effect of social network sites usage will depend on the type of choice the student is using makes, if student uses the internet for the purpose of leisure activity that interferes with academic activities, it will affect the student academic performance negatively.

Palani (2012) admits that students who multi-task between social networking sites and homework are likely to have 20% lower grades than a student who does not have a social networking site in visual range. He believes that even running a social networking site on the background on a

student's PC while studying or doing homework could lower a student's grade. He further believes that the problem is that most people have Facebook or other social networking sites, their e-mails and maybe instant messaging constantly running in the background while they are carrying out their academic tasks.

A research conducted by Kietzmann (2012), Olowu & Seri (2012) found a continuing drop of grades among student users of social networking sites. However, many researchers also found a positive association between use of internet and social networking sites and academic performance of the student users. Students, using internet frequently, scored higher on reading skills, test and had higher grades as well. The following hypothesis guided the study: There is no significant difference in the opinions of CRS students on the effects of social media on academic performance in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga. One of our respected traditional rulers, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar III made the following observation:

He expressed concern at a development where social media is diverting attention of female (and male) students in the country at the closing ceremony of the sixth national education of the quaranic recitations competition in Sokoto. The sultan went further to say that: there is a disturbing development where the attention of students is being diverted from their studies through the use of various social others. The traditional ruler urged youths, particularly girls to stop spending too much time on social media at the expense of other engagements that would add more values to their lives (Abubakar, 2017:41).

This a cogent observation by one of the stakeholders which should be taken seriously.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Primary and secondary data were used in study. The primary data were collected through an inventory and the secondary data from relevant materials. The total population of CRS students in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga is 437. For purposes of in-depth study, 20% (or 87) of CRS students in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga were taken as the sample. This choice can be supported by the views of Kothari & Garg (2014) on adequate sampling procedure who asserted that 20% of a population is an adequate sample.

For this study, study Habit Inventory (SHI) was used. This SHI was designed, developed and standardized by Professor C.G.M Bakare, a renowned educational psychologist, in 1977 and adopted by Kolo in 2006. The version by Kolo puts the questions in statement form and the statements are rated on a 5-point scale. The main purpose for using the Study Habit Inventory is that once ineffective study practices are known, necessary steps can be put in place to correct them. SHI is a self-report inventory which assists individual students to describe the situations, habits and conditions which affect their study habits and by extension academic performance. The inventory comprises 45 items that are in a form of statements. The students are required to rate the statements on a 5-point scale on how frequently they behave that way.

This inventory is divided into 8 sections (A.B.C.D.E.F.G.H). Section A deals with issues about Home Work and Assignments, B deals with issues about Time

Allocations why C dwells with issues on Reading and Note Taking. Section D takes care of issues about Period Procedures with section E dealing with issues about Concentration. Issues about Written Work are dealt with in section F while sections G and H deal with issues about Examinations and Teacher Consultation respectively. Only section B which deals with social media was adopted for this study and copies of the inventory were randomly administered on the CRS students.

The primary data was analyzed using tables and simple percentages while independent t-test was employed to test the hypothesis.

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The scoring is based on the fact that for each statement, there are responses that portray desirable or effective study

practices on the one hand, and undesirable or ineffective study practices on the other. Desirable practices should attract high scores while undesirable one attracts low scores. The responses are scored on a 5-point scale depending on whether it is a positive or negative. For example, for Positive/Desirable Practice: Almost never - 1; Less than half the time - 2; Almost half the time - 3; More than half the time - 4; and Almost always 5.

The following is a list of statements concerning students' habits and methods of study. Read each statement carefully and answer it as accurately and as truthfully as possible. Put an X in the circle within the column that best describes your habit.

Table 1. Time allocation and management.

| Items | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| You waste too much time talking or on social network at the expense of your studies | 15 (17.2%) | 10 (11.5%) | 15 (17.2%) | 20 (23%) | 30 (34.5%) |
| You find that having many other things to do cause you to get behind in your school work and therefore spend much time browsing | 12 (14%) | 15 (17.2%) | 12 (14%) | 20 (23%) | 25 (28.7) |
| Problems especially social networking outside of the classroom-with other students or at home-cause you to neglect your school work | 10 (11.5%) | 10 (11.5%) | 12 (14%) | 25 (28.7) | 30 (34.5%) |
| You study for at least three hours each day after classes and spend more time on social networking | 17 (19.5) | 15 (17.2%) | 15 (17.2%) | 35 (40.0%) | 25 (28.7%) |
| Your time unevenly distributed; you spend too much time on some subjects and not enough on others | 16 (18%) | 16 (18%) | 13 (15%) | 37 (42.5%) | 35 (40%) |
| You spend too much time reading fiction (novels), browsing, or going out for the good of your school work | 10 (11.5%) | 15 (17.2%) | 15 (17.2%) | 24 (27.5%) | 23 (26.4%) |

Source: survey, 2017

Table 1 shows that 30 (or 34.5%) of the 87 respondents agreed that they almost always waste much time talking or on social network at the expense of their studies while 20 (or 23%) said they spend more than half of their time on these activities to the detriment of their studies. Only 15 (or 17.2%) indicated that they almost never waste much time talking or on social network and 10 (or 11.5%) engaged less than half of their time in these activities. However, 15 (or 17.2%) of the respondents said they engage in these activities (media like facebook, twitter, whatsapp, 2go and instagram and among) about half of their time.

The number and percentage of respondents as regards their opinions on each of the questions about time allocation and management can be read off table 1.

Using independent t-test (a parametric test), the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant difference in the opinions of CRS students on the effects of time allocation and management on academic performance in Nassarawa State College of Education, Akwanga" was tested.

Table 2: Group

| | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| | A | B |
| | 50 | 25 |
| | 45 | 27 |
| | 55 | 20 |
| | 60 | 32 |
| | 72 | 32 |
| | 47 | 25 |
| Total | 329 | 161 |

Calculation of the Mean (A)

| X | X - \bar{X} | (X - \bar{X}) ² |
|-----|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 50 | -4.83 | 23.32 |
| 45 | 09.83 | 96.63 |
| 55 | 0.17 | 0.03 |
| 60 | 5.17 | 26.73 |
| 72 | 17.17 | 294.81 |
| 47 | -7.83 | 61.31 |
| 329 | | 502.83 |

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{329}{6} = 54.83$$

$$\text{Variance} = \frac{502.83}{6} = 83.81$$

$$\text{S.D} = \frac{\sqrt{502.83}}{6} = 9.15$$

Calculation of the Mean (B)

| X | X - \bar{X} | (X - \bar{X}) ² |
|-----|---------------|-------------------------------|
| 25 | -1.8 | 3.24 |
| 27 | 0.2 | 0.04 |
| 20 | -6.8 | 46.24 |
| 32 | 5.2 | 27.04 |
| 32 | 5.2 | 27.04 |
| 25 | -1.8 | 3.24 |
| 161 | | 106.84 |

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{161}{6} = 26.8$$

$$\text{Variance} = \frac{106.84}{6} = 17.8$$

$$\text{S.D} = \frac{\sqrt{106.84}}{6} = 4.22$$

Student t -test
Formula:-

$$t = \frac{(\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2) \sqrt{\delta_1^2 + \delta_2^2}}{n}$$

Where as:

\bar{x}_1 = mean of (A)

\bar{x}_2 = mean of (B)

S₁ = Standard Deviation of (A)

S₂ = Standard Deviation of (B)

$$t = \frac{(54.83 - 26.8) \sqrt{83.72 + 17.81}}{6}$$

$$= \frac{(54.83 - 26.8)}{6} \sqrt{101.53}$$

$$\sqrt{101.53}$$

$$= \frac{(28)}{6} \sqrt{16.92}$$

$$\sqrt{16.92}$$

$$= 28$$

$$\frac{4.11}{6}$$

$$t = 6.81$$

Degree at freedom

$$\begin{aligned} df &= n_1 + n_2 - 1 \\ &= 6 + 6 - 2 \\ &= 10 \end{aligned}$$

The results are as follows: calculated value is 6.81, critical value-1.812 at 0.05 level of significance and at 10 degree of freedom. Since the calculated value of t-test is greater than critical value of distribution table the null hypothesis is rejected. This means the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the opinions of CRS students on the effects of social media on academic performance in Nasarawa State College of Education, A is kwanga accepted.

The rate at which students spend time on social network is worrisome and may pose imminent danger to our society. This improper use of social media is likely to affect academic performance of the students as expressed by the respondents in the study. These results are in consonance with the observation made by one of our respected traditional rulers, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar III.

He expressed concern at a development where social media is diverting attention of female (and male) students in the country at the closing ceremony of the sixth national education of the quaranic recitations competition in Sokoto. The sultan went further to say that: there is a disturbing development where the attention of students is being diverted from their studies through the use of various social others. The traditional ruler urged youths, particularly girls to stop spending too much time on social media at the expense of other engagements that would add more values to their lives (Abubakar, 2017:41).

The rate at which students spend time on social network is worrisome and poses imminent danger to our society. This improper use of social media by our students is likely to affect their academic performance.

From the discussion, one inescapable conclusion is that since the CRS students at NCE level in Nasarawa State College of Education, Akwanga have much freedom they tend to waste much time on non-essential things to the detriment of their studies. This habit may eventually affect their academic performance negatively. It is therefore, recommended that since time is a scarce resource and once used cannot be recovered, students should be taught to use social media effectively and properly for enhancing academic performance. Orientation programmes should be organized by the college management for CRS students on the proper use of social media.

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