



Social Media and Research Output in Colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study established the relationship between use of social media and research output of students in Colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State. It examined the relationship between Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and research outputs. The research design adopted for the study was correlational research design. The population of the study comprised of 1,024 undergraduate students of selected Theological colleges in Akwalbom State. The sample size of the study was 104 respondents. The researcher developed an instrument tagged "Social Media and Research Output Questionnaire (SMROQ)" for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts in Library and Information Science. The reliability coefficient was established using Cronbach Alpha statistics, which yielded. 86 reliability coefficient. The obtained data were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlational Coefficient to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that YouTube and WhatsApp correlates significantly with research output. It was recommended that Students should possess WhatsApp account to enable exchange of soft copy lecture notes and research materials.

Keywords: Social media, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and Research output.

Introduction

Research is made easier by the relentless development of information and communication technologies, particularly the internet. Users of the traditional Web (also known as Web 1.0) could only communicate in one direction as online websites were used to publish the contents, and there weren't many ways for individuals to express themselves in the digital sphere. Meanwhile, the development of new services and technologies have brought people into an era of two-way communication. A constant stream of new services has evolved that allow people to exchange material, connect, and work together. The term "Web 2.0" or "social media tools" is frequently used to describe these new services.

The functionality of social networking technologies has evolved as social networking websites now complement message boards, forums, and instant messaging programs. The use of social media in research encompasses many different activities, such as discussing work, reading research papers, and lab activities online. It also includes using the social network to gather and share resources and stories with colleagues, collaborative writing, attend conferences, share photos, and engage in other related activities. The majority of faculty members, according to Tyagi¹, use social media primarily for three functions: web-based teaching and research; interactive learning elements; and to stay current on topics of interest.

However, social media's use in higher education is still nascent and students' research output can be impacted by their use of social media platforms. According to Abu-Seman², social media usage on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Instagram have a big impact on students' ability to produce quality research.

Users can create personal profile pages, add friends, and send messages on Facebook. The company, founded by Mark Zuckerberg in February 2004, has become the most popular social networking site since its launch. Facebook provides users with the tools and opportunity to join international communities that engage in direct communication with one another or with other sizable communities while exchanging views and content. Stay³ discussed the advantages of utilizing Facebook for academic research and listed Facebook pages, groups, advertising, surveys, and Facebook connect as advantages. It is clear that the social and personal aspects of the Facebook platform have given it a distinct advantage in information sharing, when this is used properly can turn into a valuable research tool. Building ties with present and future scholars is a goal shared by all social networking sites, and Facebook is an excellent venue for doing so.

On YouTube, users can find information in formats such as display, overlay, in-search discovery, sponsored cards, video to name a few Stokes⁴.

The quantity of watched and/or shared videos, as well as comments and likes, can be used to determine how effective YouTube communications are Wendt⁵. However, a number of indicators, including user reviews and recall of ads, viewer engagement, comprehension, and feedback, can also be used to assess the effectiveness of YouTube's communication. Most academic research, however, rely on qualitative in-depth interviews Viertola⁶, content analysis Wendt⁷, and/or research surveys and these can be accessed using YouTube platform. The most widely used platform for sharing videos is YouTube, this make academics disseminate both current and archived video content to audiences through YouTube's interactive platform.

WhatsApp is a useful tool for mobile learning when used as part of a blended learning strategy. Using a mobile app like WhatsApp to do course tasks in a mixed-mode lecture is superior to having in-person or in-class conversations Chokri⁸. Students utilize WhatsApp for academic and educational purposes. It is a useful tool for transmitting material from the classroom and for students to share their academic expertise. In addition, they utilize this program to interact with peers, share media contents, obtain information, and engage in informal learning. Academic researchers now frequently use WhatsApp and other instant messaging platforms for private communication. As this channel became more well-known, people's interest in using them for research also increased. Researchers can establish a private chat session with another researcher using WhatsApp's direct messaging feature.

The rigorous appraisal of studies relevant to a certain issue or subject is referred to as research. According to American sociologist Earl Robert Babbie, research is a rigorous examination to define, explain, foresee, and control the observed phenomenon. Inductive and deductive methods are employed. While inductive research techniques look into an observed event, deductive research methods confirm a seen occurrence. Inductive methods are more usually linked to qualitative research, whereas deductive methods are more frequently linked to quantitative analysis. Research is carried out in order to i. Identify current and future areas of interest, ii. Better understand current research, iii. Define realistic research goals, iv. Construct successful techniques; v. solve problems, and vi. Develop a plan for research expansion.

This study was conducted in AkwaIbom State, a state carved out of Cross River State on September 23, 1987 with the promulgation of degree 24 of that year by Gen. Babangida. It is bounded on the north by Abia State; south by the Atlantic Ocean; East by cross River sate and west by Rivers state. There are many theological colleges in AkwaIbom State. But the study focuses on St Joseph Major Seminary, Nigerian Christian Bible College, Samuel Bill theological college and Essien Ukpabio Presbyterian Theological College.

At its inception in 1976, the St Joseph Major Seminary in AkwaIbom State was a philosophy campus of Bigard Memorial

Seminary, Enugu under the erstwhile Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province of Anambra State, Nigeria. In the 1970s, the Bigard Memorial Seminary, Enugu witnessed an upsurge in population and to make for a smooth running of the system and quality formation of priests for the erstwhile province, they needed to decongest. Accordingly, in 1978, a campus for the study of philosophy also named Bigard Memorial Seminary (affiliated to the Pontifical Urban University, Rome) was opened in IkotEkpene community in the present AkwaIbom State. The Seminary existed as a philosophy campus until the 1989/1990 academic session when the Department of Sacred Theology was opened and the first set of theology students admitted. Consequently, the bishops of the erstwhile Onitsha Province wisely decided to re-name the seminary to St. Joseph Major Seminary, to reflect its new status. This came into effect on 1st March 1991 St. Joseph Major Seminary *Kalendarium*⁹.

Nigerian Christian Bible College (NCBC) was the first college of the Bible in Nigeria started in 1954 on twenty beautiful acres in the village of Ukpom, Abak, AkwaIbom state. NCBC is hailed as the flagship of Christian education in the nation. The school is actually five years older than its overseeing organization, African Christian Schools. Since 1954 programs offered on the campus have varied. The "tried and true" training of ministers is a constant throughout the years. NCBC currently has three program tracks for the students. The Diploma in Theology is offered as the standard preaching school certificate. This diploma has been the standard for churches in Nigeria and West Africa for decades. This program is a rigorous 3-year program, this accredited program is offered through an affiliation with the University of Calabar which allows NCBC to offer this valuable degree in Nigeria. Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies is good for students who are seeking a more challenging program than the Diploma and who may want to continue on in their studies. Bachelor of Arts in Religious Education is another accredited program offered through an affiliation with the University of Calabar which allows NCBC to offer this valuable degree. With this degree, graduates can seek employment in the public sector teaching¹⁰.

Samuel Bill Theological College, IkotEkang/IkotAkpabio, Abak, AkwaIbom State, Nigeria (Africa). The college was founded in 1941as an independent theological school and interdenominational in admission of students. It is now affiliated to a university for the award of BA (Hons) in Religious Studies. There is room for the training of women-workers who are born-again to enable them handle Christian Religious Education in schools and Women Education in churches. EssienUkpabio Presbyterian Theological College, Itu, AkwaIbom State (PTC), is a bible college that trains ministers in Presbyterian churches. It is a degree awarding institution that offers courses including Religious studies. It is found that similar studies have been carried out in other areas but not in the area and institutions studied by the researcher that is why the researcher decided to undergo the study in this area.

Statement of the problem: According to past studies like Tyagi¹¹ findings, social media may be useful for education and research. While some of these studies concentrate on how lecturers and students use social media, others look at the motivations behind it and how specific social media platforms, like Facebook, YouTube, and Whatsapp, are used for teaching.

Others have demonstrated how ICT, the internet, and internet resources can improve teamwork and research output. However, little is known about how social media affects students' research output at Akwalbom State's theological colleges. Hence, investigating the impact of social media on students' research productivity at colleges of theology is therefore essential.

Purpose of the Study: The general purpose of the study is to examine how social media correlates with research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State. The specific objectives of the study are to: i. Find the relationship between the use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State. ii. Examine the relationship between the use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State, iii. Investigate the relationship between the use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Research Questions: The study was conducted to answer the following research questions; i. What is the relationship between the use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State? ii. What is the relationship between the use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State? iii. What is the relationship between the use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State?

Research Hypotheses: The following hypotheses were postulated to guide the study; i. There is no significant relationship between the use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State, ii. There is no significant relationship between the use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State, iii. There is no significant relationship between the use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Methodology

The population of the study comprised of 1,024 undergraduate students of selected Theological colleges in Akwalbom State. The sample size of the study was 104 respondents derived by selecting 10% of each school's population.

A researcher-designed questionnaire tagged "Social Media and Research Output Questionnaire (SMROQ)" was developed for the study. The instrument was subjected to face validity by three research experts.

Out of 104 questionnaires distributed only 102 were collected and became useful for data analysis. Data obtained were statistically treated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the research questions and research hypotheses. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.5 significance level.

Results and Discussion

The results are presented by answering research questions and testing of hypotheses.

Answering Research Questions: Research Question-1: What is the relationship between the use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State?

Table-1: Summary of relationship between use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Variables	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	R	Remarks
Use of Facebook	102	415	172225	273485	.035	Weak negative relationship
Research output	102	659	434281			

Table-1, showed the correlation coefficient value of .035. This value is found to be weak negative relationship. This indicates that students' use of Facebook has a weak negative relationship with their research output. Thus, the result implies that there exists no relationship between use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Research Question-2: What is the relationship between the use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State?

Table-2: Summary of relationship between use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State

Variables	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	R	Remarks
Use of YouTube	102	700	490000	461300	0.67	High positive relationship
Research output	102	659	434281			

The result in Table-2 showed the correlation coefficient value of 0. 67. This value is found to be high positive relationship. This indicates that use of YouTube platform has a high positive relationship with research outputs. Thus, the result implies that there exists a relationship between use of YouTube and research output of student sin colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Research Question-3: What is the relationship between the use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State?

Table-3: Summary of relationship between use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Variables	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r	Remarks
Use of WhatsApp	102	628	394384	413852	0.52	Moderate positive relationship
Research output	102	659	434281			

Table-3 showed the correlation coefficient value of 0.52. This value is found to be moderate positive relationship. This indicates that use of WhatsApp has a moderate positive relationship with research output.

Thus, the result implies that there exists a relationship between use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Hypotheses Testing: Hypothesis-1: There is no significant relationship between the use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Table-4: The Result of PPMC analysis of the relationship between use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Variables	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	R	p-value	Decision
Use of Facebook	102	415	172225	273485	.035	0.051	NS
Research output	102	659	434281				

NS= Not significant, df=100

The result in Table-4 showed a calculated r-value of .035 and a p-value of .051 when compared with significant level of 0.05. Since the r-value is less than the acceptable level of significance, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between use of Facebook and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State, is retained.

This implies that students' use of Facebook has no significant relationship with their research output.

Hypothesis-2: There is no significant relationship between the use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Table-5: The Result of PPMC analysis of the relationship between use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Variables	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	R	P-value	Decision
Use of Youtube	102	700	490000	461300	0.67	0.015	S
Research output	102	659	434281				

S= significant, df=100.

The result in Table-5 showed a calculated r-value of 0.67 and a p-value of 0.015 when compared with at a significant level of 0.05. Since the r-value is greater than the acceptable level of significance, the null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between use of YouTube and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State, is rejected. The implication is that students' use of YouTube has a significant relationship with their research output.

Hypothesis-3: There is no significant relationship between the use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Table-6: The Result of PPMC analysis of the relationship between use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

Variables	N	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r	p-value	Decision
Use of Whatsapp	102	628	394384	413852	0.52	0.025	S
Research output	102	659	434281				

S= significant, df=102.

The result on Table-6 showed a calculated r-value of 0.52 and a p-value of 0.025 when compared with at a significant level of 0.05 since the r-value is greater than the acceptable level of significance. The null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant relationship between the use of WhatsApp and research output of students in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State, is rejected. This means that students' use of Whatsapp has a significant relationship with their research output.

Summary and Discussion of Findings: Relationship between use of Facebook and students research output: The analysis of data and the result finding revealed that Students use of Facebook has a weak negative relationship with their research output and has no significant relationship with their research output in colleges of Theology in Akwalbom State.

The finding is in consonance with the findings of Akpan, et al¹² who revealed that there is no universal agreement on the impact of using Facebook since users have diverse opinions about the site; some find it to be beneficial, while others find it to be disruptive. Although some people think that the Facebook platform doesn't correlate with research output because people visit Facebook to interact with their friends rather than view research works. In another reflection, Stay¹³ argues that when it comes to making resources for scholarly study available on its network, Facebook hasn't found the sweet spot yet. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that students' use of Facebook has a tenuous negative association with the quality of their research.

Relationship between use of Youtube and students research:

The findings showed that Students use of YouTube platform has a high positive relationship with research outputs and there exists a significant relationship with their research output in colleges of Theology in AkwaIbom State. The findings is in line with the findings of Duncan et al¹⁴ who observed that YouTube videos are now often used for classroom instruction and extracurricular learning in higher education and that YouTube users can create a networked community and stay in touch by subscribing to the channels of video makers, sharing videos on other social networking sites, and commenting on videos relating to their research areas. Based on the result, the findings of this study holds that Students use of YouTube platform has a high positive relationship with research outputs in colleges of Theology in AkwaIbom State.

Relationship between use of WhatsApp and students research output:

The finding from the study indicated that Students use of WhatsApp has a moderate positive relationship with research output and that there exist a significant relationship with their research output in colleges of Theology in AkwaIbom State. This result stems from the fact that many students relies on e-books and soft copy of documents shared through WhatsApp platform. The finding is in line with the finding of Cohavi¹⁵, who observed that WhatsApp is used as a tool to enhance learning and research by creating a WhatsApp group where students can engage in collaborative study and communicate with one another, also by using WhatsApp's many capabilities such as text messages, photos that can be attached, audio files, video files, and links to websites. On this note, the findings of this study maintains that Students use of WhatsApp has a moderate positive relationship with research output; and that there exist a significant relationship with their research output in colleges of Theology in AkwaIbom State.

Conclusion

The World Wide Web has recently been dominated by platforms in the social network model. The most popular ones as revealed in this study are Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp. The study therefore conclude that social media supports engagement within academic communities in variety of ways including allowing people to search for, find, and connect

with one another as well as exchanging multimedia information in a visually appealing and straightforward manner. On this note, students' use of YouTube and WhatsApp correlate significantly with their research output while Facebook does not correlate with students' research output in Theological colleges in AkwaIbom State as revealed in this study.

Educational Implications of Findings: The study's findings have a number of implications for both students and lecturers because it has been found that WhatsApp and YouTube can help students identify others who share their research interests outside of the classroom. The platforms can also make it possible for instructors and students to share, locate, and rate their multimedia data. They provide a forum for dialogue and engagement between instructors and students in a variety of methods, resulting in quality research outputs.

Contribution to Knowledge: The study has contributed to knowledge by demonstrating the extent to which students' capacity to do high-caliber research is impacted by their use of social media sites. This can be achieved by students carrying out findings on YouTube and sharing information through WhatsApp. The study also increases the knowledge of social media usage and student research outputs.

Recommendations: The following are the recommendations made based on findings of the study: i. Students should avoid the use of Facebook posts when conducting research and only use it when it is most necessary. ii. Students should make use of YouTube platform that can enhance their research, iii. Students should possess WhatsApp account to enable exchange of lecture contents and soft copy of research materials.

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