

Social Media Usage and Personality as Predictors of Academic Performance among Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

This study investigated effect of social media usage and personality on academic performance among undergraduate students. The target population was 250, while the sample size was one hundred and eighty-seven (187) participants, age range of 20 to 35 years, with mean age of (M= 6.67=SD = 2.75) randomly drawn, using simple random sampling technique. Three sets of instruments were used social media scale (SMS) by Baym and Boyd (1998), Validated in Nigeria by Akim (1994) with 9-items, Big five personality scale. (BFPS) by John, Kentle and Tonahue (1991) validated by Umeh (2004) with 44-Items and Academic performance scale (Aps) by Williams and Johnson (1990) validated by Obiora (2001) with 15-Items. The survey design adopted while hierarchical multiple regression was used for the data analyses, the results revealed that Social media is significant predictor to academic performance and personality is significant predictor to academic performance among undergraduate students, The result equally showed that both Social media and personality significantly predictors to academic performance among undergraduate students. The implication of the study were discussed and further suggestions were revealed.

Keywords: Social Media, Personality, Academic Performance

Background of the Study

Working and learning together in any environment in ways that make the world better has been a primary goal of higher education throughout the ages. When people learn and grow, they are empowered to create results that make a difference, which can lead to academic performances. Academic performance refers to the extent to which a student, teacher has attained their short or long term educational goals, which can be measured through examinations or continuous assessment. Elger (2007) states that performances can be an individual or a group of people engaging in a collaborative effort. Developing performance is a journey, and level of performance describes location in the journey. Current level of performance depends holistically on six components: context, level of knowledge, levels of skills, level of identity, personal factors, and fixed factors. Three axioms are proposed for effective performance improvements. These involve a performer's mindset, immersion in an enriching environment, and engagement in reflective practice. The theory of performance is a challenge to educators: by improving our own performance, we empower ourselves to help others learn and grow. As an academic department improves its level of performance, the members of the department are able to produce more effective student learning, more effective research, and a more effective culture. Elger (2007) states that academic performance of a student can be influenced by social media, as a student advances his levels of performance, he is able to produce deeper levels of learning, improved levels of skill development, and more connection with the discipline for larger classes while spending less time doing this always.

Social media is a phenomenon that existed ever since society was formed. (Deshmukh, 2014). Right from the time of our forebear, our forefathers' means of communication were via the use of talking drums, town criers, trumpet, whistle, metal gongs and so on. However, in recent times in a modernized fashion our people found solace in the use of television, radio, computer and mobile phones. Subsequently, the era of social media and internet became the newest and most popular means of communication and our people see it as a way of keeping themselves busy, killing boredom, reaching out to others, engaging in business connections, selling their products as well as showcasing their talents. Social identity theory (SIT) explains relations between large social groups

using psychological processes concerning social identity an individual's sense of belonging to a group and the positive or negative feelings associated with that membership making it an umbrella term for a set of more specific theories of intergroup behavior, (Harwood, 2020).

Ajay and Arvind (2021) conducted a study on the impact of social media on the academic performance of undergraduates among medical students in Kasturba medical college at Manipal, India. Results showed that 41.5% of students used social media for up to 3hours per day, Whatsapp were used by 98.25% and Youtube was contained with 91.75% were the most commonly used social application. There was a significantly higher use of social media among academically low performing medical students compared with high performing medical students. There was a weak negative correlation between academic performance and social media usage and a strong positive correlation between social media usage and social media addiction score.

Apparently, social media is all about applications that enable users to converse and interact with each other; create, edit, and share new forms of textual, visual, and audio content; and categorize, label, and recommend existing forms of content (Selwyn,2019) as well as communication and entertainment, (Habes, Salloum, Alghizzawi, & Mhamdi, 2019).

Social media are utilized by people of all the age groups but the adolescents and youth use it to the fullest for various purposes (mainly communication) (Deshmukh al., 2014). Human beings are social beings that always love interactions and communications with other social beings and so would always sort to live in a social environment. Rahalad and Ramaswamy, (2004), Social media engagement theory however, has to do with the individuals engage with content on social media platforms through active participation and interaction. Another important aspect of social media engagement theory is the role of social influence.

However, as individuals, we are endowed with different characteristics which are God's gift to us and these characteristics depict who we are and what we are capable of doing. Crone & Konijin, (2018) globally see these characteristics as personality traits. In this research therefore, the researcher will adopt the big five personality trait to determine how these characteristics affect social media usage and academic performance. Personality as a matter of fact, are those biological and environmentally determined characteristics within the person that accounts for distinctive and relatively enduring patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting, (Passer & Smith, 2001).

McCrae and Costa (1985), distinguished further in Biological theory, the basic tendency and characteristic adaptation. The characteristic adaptations are, attitude, roles, relationship and goals, and these reflect the interactions between basic tendencies and environmental demands, accumulated over time. They see personality traits as basic tendencies that refer to the abstract potentials of the individual that are stable across the life course. While relational theory tries to explain the Big Five as interpersonal construct. However, personality refers to those biological and environmentally determined characteristics within the person that accounts for distinctive and relatively enduring patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. The five factor model also called high-order factors, consists of several of Cattell's sixteen personality factors which opined that when a person is placed at a specific point at each of those five dimensions by means of a psychological test, behaviour ratings or direct observations of behavior, the essence of his/her personality has been captured (McCrae & John, 1992). According to McCrae and Costa (1997), extraversion – is a person's level of sociability and enthusiasm; agreeableness – refers to how friendly, nurturant and irresponsible, careless and undependable; neuroticism – refers to negative and upsetting emotions and persons who are high in neuroticism tend to be anxious, emotionally sour, irritable and unhappy; openness to experience – persons who have these traits are intelligent and open to new ideas.

Passer and Smith, (2001) states that the Big Five describes the relatively enduring patterns of recurrent interpersonal situations that characterize a human life. It helps people to organize their perceptions in relation with their relationship with one another. Aditya Mishra (2022) conducted a research on impact of personality and academic performance of young adults, this research was carried out in Anand engineering college, Agra, Utter

Pradesh, India. The findings showed that personality is a significant predictor of academic performance which shows a negative relationship between personality and academic performance. The result showed that, personality was a significant predictor of academic performance. Other personality traits (agreeableness, extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness) were significantly impacted by personality.

Five factor model also called Higher-order factors, consists of several of Cattle's sixteen personality factors; McCrae and John, (1992), opined that when a person is placed at a specific point at each of those five dimensions, by means of a psychological test, behaviour ratings or direct observations of behaviour, the essence of his or her personality has been captured. Extraversion - states your level of sociability and enthusiasm. Agreeableness - refers to how friendly, nurturant and caring a person is, as opposed to cold, indifferent, self-centered. Conscientiousness - a person who is conscientious is self-disciplined, responsible and achieving, while people who are low on conscientiousness are irresponsible, careless and undependable. Neuroticism - refers to negative and upsetting emotions, and persons who are high in neuroticism tend to be anxious, emotionally sour, irritable and unhappy. Openness to experience - persons who have this trait are intelligent, open to new ideas, McCrae and Costa, (1997). Invariably, this shows your level of creativity and curiosity as a human. The Big Five personality qualities include openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism and are related to the following characteristics: being dependable, generous, and well-mannered (agreeableness); conscientious, hardworking, well-organized, punctual, and truthful (conscientiousness); sociable, friendly, energetic, and enthusiastic (extraversion); short tempered, whiny, and unstable (neuroticism); and curious, imaginative, original, and unique (neuroticism) (openness to experience) Upadhayay, Vishal.(2018). Openness to experience - The openness to experience component of personality is defined by a propensity to explore new activities. Conscientiousness Conscientious individuals are more conscious of their acts and the implications of their actions than unconscientious persons. Extraversion is defined as gregarious, self-assured behavior. In social circumstances, extroverts are social, outspoken, and frequently assertive. Agreeableness Individuals with high levels of agreeableness are sociable and cooperative. Agreeable individuals are more trusting of others and more generous, prepared to help others in times of need, and are often regarded as more liked by their peers and coworkers (Sabik, et al. 2020). Neuroticism - This personality trait, often known as neuroticism, is scored on a scale ranging from emotional stability to emotional instability. Individuals who have a high level of neuroticism are commonly anxious. They are more apprehensive and frequently worried, over thinking and exaggerating their concerns Fibbins, et al. (2020).

The major problem is that possibly, spending more time on social media may inadvertently lead to poor academic performance, distraction, cyber bullying, social anxiety, depression and exposure to content that may be detrimental to their learning and growth and finally to social media addiction. A'lamElhuda and Dimetry, 2014; Aljabry, Jaafari and Salawi, (2017), in their research observed that social media users were negatively impacted in terms of academic performance. And also scholars observed that individuals with neuroticism, extraversion and agreeable types of personality have tendency to social media addiction, (Indri, Salma, Fanni, & Endah, 2019); invariably, the more conscientiousness and openness to experience an individual is, the less addicted to social media use. So the researcher wants to determine how true is this finding

Hypothesis

This study examined three hypotheses:

- There would be statistically significant predictor of social media on academic performance among undergraduate students.
- There would be statistically significant predictor of personality on academic performance among undergraduate students.
- There would be jointly statistically significant predictor of social media and personality on academic performance among undergraduate students.
- of learners.

Theoretical Framework

Social Media Engagement Theory (Rahalad and Ramaswamy, (2004)

This theory was developed by Rahalad and Ramaswamy, (2004), by applying a socio-technical systems perspective to first address why the user experience influences engagement and subsequently usage. Social media engagement theory however, has to do with the individuals engage with content on social media platforms through active participation and interaction. This can include likes, comments, shares, and other forms of engagement that allow users to express their reactions and opinions about the content they encounter. Another important aspect of social media engagement theory is the role of social influence.

Research Methodology

The target population was 250, while the sample size was one hundred and eighty-seven (187) participants, randomly drawn, using simple random sampling techniques. The participants comprised of 107 female and 80 male, the participants within the age of 20 to 35 years with mean age of 6.67 and standard deviation of (2.75). The method of sampling was simple random sampling.

Instrument

Three sets of instruments were used for data collection, namely: Social Media Scale (SMS) Baym Boyd (1998) Big Five Personality Scale (BFPS) John, Kentle and Tonahue (1991) and Academic Performance Scale (APS) Willams and Johnson (1990)

Social Media Scale (SMS)

The social media scale is design to measure the activities of social media, 9 item scale with 5 point Likert scale such as Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1), the respondents are expected to indicate the extent to which they agree to fill the questionnaire correctly, developed by Baym Boyd (1998) and validated here in Nigeria by Akim (1999), with internal reliability of .87, Omoluabi (2000) for another Nigerian sample was achieved a pilot study conducted yielding a reliability of .74 (Cronbach alpha), For the recent study, the researcher conducted item analysis using the responses of 55 undergraduates students Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu State and obtained and a Cronbach's Alpha of .82.

Big Five Personality Scale (BFPS)

Big Five Personality Scale (BFPS) consist of 44 item inventory developed by John, Kentle and Tonahue (1991) designed to measure five aspects of personality coded as EACNO. E = Extraversion., A = Agreeableness, Conscience., N = Neuroticism, O = Openness. The items are 5 point Likert format, ranging from (Strongly Agree 5), (Agree 4), Neither Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1), Direct scoring is used for all the items add together the values of the clients score in each of the subscales. For example if items 6,7,9,10,11,12, the numbers studied are 3,1,4,3,2,5, respectively the scores. The instrument was validated by John as mean convergent validity of .75, and reliability coefficient of .85 Cronbach Alpha. The instrument was validated here in Nigeria by Umeh (2004) reported .69. For the recent study, the researcher conducted item analysis using the responses of 55 undergraduate students Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu State and obtained and a Cronbach's Alpha of .91.

Academic Performance Scale (APS)

Was design to access academic performance of students, which consists of 15 items is an instrument scored on a scale of Always 5, often 4, sometimes 3, Rarely 2, and Never 1. Developed by Willams and Johnson (1990) and validated here in Nigeria by Obiora (2001), this scale has been found to have internal consistency and test retest reliability, and to correlate with criterion measures of classroom performance, is .78, For the recent study, the researcher conducted item analysis using the responses of 55 undergraduates students Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu State and obtained and a Cronbach's Alpha of .85.

Procedure

A total number of 200 copies of the questionnaire were produced. The participants were visited by the researcher and his assistants to their various departments individually, after introducing ourselves to them administered our questionnaire to them read and fill, giving them interval of two weeks to fill the questionnaire because of their lectures activities. When returning the questionnaire 195 was collected from the participants, when scoring the questionnaire 8 copies were not properly filled and was discarded while the properly filled questionnaire 187 copies were used for the computation and data analysis of the study.

Design /Statistics

The design for the study used was survey design while hierarchical multiple regression was adopted for the statistical analysis because of the two independent variables involved, (Social Media and Personality and one dependent variable (Academic Performance)).

Results

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviation and Correlations among the Study Variable

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	28.89	4.22	1					
2. Gender	1.36	.48	-.020	1				
3. Neuroticism	15.89	3.55	.128	.090	1			
4. Agreeableness	16.39	2.41	-.044	.094	.064	1		
5. Social media	43.09	8.72	.095	-.117	-.006	.055	1	
6. Academicperf	31.37	5.96	-.033	.028	.003	-.060	-.008	1

Result in table 1, indicate that age, and gender as a demographic variable did not correlate with academic performance among undergraduate. The result showed that social media was significant and positively correlate with academic performance among undergraduate. ($r = .055, p < .01$). it was also portrayed that Neuroticism implications positively correlate with academic performance among undergraduate. ($r = .090, p = < .01$). The result equally showed that Agreeableness was significant psychological implications positively correlate with academic performance among undergraduate. ($r = .064, p = < .01$).

Table 2: Social Media usage and personality as a predictor of Academic Performance Among Undergraduate Students.

Variables	Step 1 B	Step 2 B	Step 3 B
<i>Control</i>			
Age	.07	.08	.08
Gender	-.00	-.02	-.02
<i>Predictors</i>			
Agreeableness	.22	.21	.21
Neuroticism		-.05**	-.06*
Adjustment R^2	.01	-.01	-.02
ΔR^2	.08	.00	.00
ΔF^2	1.11	.15**	.18**

Note: * = $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

In table 2, the results of the hierarchical multiple regression in which academic performance was the criterion variable indicated that the demographic variables entered as controls (age, and gender) in step 1 of the equation, collectively accounted for .7% variance in Non of the controls (i.e age, and gender) made significant contribution to the prediction of academic performance. Addition of social media and personality psychological implications in step 2 of the equation as predictor, accounted for additional .7% variance in academic performance that of the control variables. The result showed that social media negatively and significantly predicted academic performance ($\beta = -.05, p < .01$). Therefore Hi was confirmed. When personality was entered in step 3 of the equation as predictor, it accounted for additional 9% variance in academic performance below that of the demographic variables and social media. In effect of the result indicated that personality was positively and significantly predict academic performance ($\beta = -.05, p < .05$). Therefore, Hi was confirmed.

Discussion

This study was aimed at researching if social media usage and personality can predict academic performance of undergraduate students. The first hypothesis stated that ‘social media usage will not predict academic performance,’ the result appear to the hypothesis wrong; by showing that social media is significant negative predictor to academic performance. Ajay, Arvind, and Ramya (2020) were in support of this, they discovered that a negative impact of social media usage on academic performance. They found that there was a significantly higher use of social media among academically low-performing students compared with high-performing students. There was a weak negative correlation between social media usage and social media addiction score. In conclusion social media has more negative impact on the academic performance of 21st century undergraduate students.

The second hypothesis stated that ‘personality will not significantly predict academic performance’. Contrary to this hypothesis, the findings of this study showed that personality is positively significant predictor to academic performance. Chamorro-premuzic and Furnham, (2003) study support this finding, as they show that emotional stability can hinder students learning achievement, while conscientiousness can promote higher learning achievement. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis will not be accepted. The findings also showed that gender was not a significant predictor of academic performance. So as age is not a significant predictor of academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the outcome of this study impact of social media and personality on academic performance among undergraduate students, this study layered emphases on the theoretical and empirical related such as social media engagement theory, Biological Theory, Relational theory. To this end the researcher concluded that there will be a significant impact of social media on academic performance, there will a significant effect of personality academic performance among undergraduate students and there will be, Joint Significant effect of social media and personality on academic performance among undergraduate students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is therefore, recommended that this study should be carried out in other private, state and federal universities and to involve large population Sample size.

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