



SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE OF OFFICE TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT (OTM) STUDENTS IN SOUTH-EASTERN NIGERIA POLYTECHNICS

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Abstract

The study examined social media platforms and academic excellence of Office Technology and Management (OTM) students in South-East Nigeria Polytechnics. Three research questions and three hypotheses were developed to guide the study using descriptive survey research design. Multistage sampling was used to select 168 HND II students of Office Technology and Management from three federal Polytechnics from Anambra, Ebonyi and Imo States. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher, face-validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha reliability technique was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument which yielded a coefficient of 0.937. Data were collected using personal contact approach. Out of the 168 copies of questionnaire administered to the OTM students, 155 were retrieved and used for the study. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics. The results of the study showed that the major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by students are YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, Messenger, Skype and Google+ among others. The study in addition identified 15 items as influences of social media usage on academic excellence and 9 constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities by OTM students. The results of the hypotheses tested showed no significant ($p < 0.05$) differences in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on the three null hypotheses tested. The study therefore recommended that school management should frequently organize conference, symposium and discussion forums for students on further positive engagement of social media platforms for academic gains.

Keywords: Social Media, Academic Excellence, OTM, Polytechnics, South East.

Introduction

Education is the process of acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, moral, beliefs, habits and personal development. The Nigerian tertiary education system is categorized into University, Colleges of Education and Polytechnics. Polytechnics education is designed with the mandate of training and imparting salable skills to produce craftsmen, technicians, technologists, scientists and skilled personnel for self or paid employment opportunities on graduation. Ojetokun and Omale (2010) affirmed that polytechnic education is a form of tertiary education that inculcates marketable vocational and technical skills to its recipients for self-reliant on graduation. The Nigerian polytechnic education system is structured into initial two-year National Diploma (ND) follow by an interlude of one-year Industrial Training (IT) and two year Higher National Diploma (HND) to ensure adequate acquisition of required skills for work. Ibrahim (2017) noted that polytechnics education leads to the awards of certificates, National Diploma (ND), Higher National Diploma (HND) which are relevant to the needs, aspirations and the development of the nation's diverse economy and industries. The Federal Government of Nigeria (2014) in the national policy on education specified the objectives of establishing Polytechnic education in Nigeria to include: (i) production of high level and middle-level manpower as appropriate in areas necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development, (ii) identification and solution of the technological problems and needs of industry and (iii) production of technicians and technologist and similar business related personnel



for direct employment in industry. One of the major areas of discipline in Polytechnics through which the aforementioned objectives can be achieved is Office Technology and Management (OTM).

Office Technology and Management (OTM) is a nomenclature that was developed by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) in 2004 to replace Secretarial Studies Programme in Nigerian Polytechnics. In affirmation, Ifejika (2015) stated that Office Technology and Management (OTM) formerly referred to as Secretarial Studies in Nigeria evolved out of a need to meet the technological and managerial demands of today's workplace. Udo (2008) described Office Technology and Management as a comprehensive activity-based educational programme that is concerned with the acquisition of office technology and management skills, understandings, right attitudes, work habits and competencies that are requisite for success in secretarial and office management occupations. Amoor and Magaji (2015) described Office Technology and Management as educational programme that involves acquisition of skills, knowledge and competencies and makes the recipient proficient in office and managerial profession. In addition, Office Technology and Management focuses on the planning, organizing, directing and controlling of office activities to ensure that various resources (human and materials) are put into optimal utilization, so as to achieve the aim of the organization (Eneche and Audu, 2014). According to Omoniyi and Elemure (2014), Office and Technology Management curriculum is aimed at producing graduates who would be able to effectively manage the electronic driven office, and who would be equipped with secretarial and office skills for employment in various fields of endeavour. The technology-driven nature of Office Technology and Management as an educational programme makes the use of social media platforms and devices essential in contemporary teaching and learning of the subject.

Social media according to Davis (2012) are web-based platforms that allow individuals, industries, institutions, organization among others to create, engage, and share ideas in digital environment through the use of electronic gadgets. According to Mowafy (2018), social media is an internet-based application that allow the creation and exchange of contents which is user generated. In the opinion of Hajirnis (2015), social media is a computer-mediated technology that facilitates the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression through virtual communities and networks. Social media networking such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Snap chat, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Skype, LinkedIn and Messenger among others have become the most important communication means in recent times through which people share relevant information and materials. Obar and Wildman (2015) shared that social media users access social media services through web-based technologies such as desktop, laptops, tablets, IPAD, or internet-enabled mobile phones to download relevant contents and materials.

Social media as widely argued seems to be a two edge sword with both positive and negative sides. For instance, Mowafy (2018) affirmed that the impact of social media on teaching and learning is increasingly considered and debated among higher education scholars, administrators, and stakeholders. Though, Holland and Tiggerman (2016) stated that when engaging in social media platforms, users can create highly interactive communications through which individuals, communities, and organizations can share, create, discuss, and modify user-generated content or pre-made content posted online for educational purposes. The lingering divergent views of scholars, educational administrators and stakeholders on the impact of social media on academic performance of students deserves further investigation in respect to technology-oriented subject such as Office Technology and Management. It is based on this background that this study was carried out to examine social media platforms and academic excellence of Office Technology and Management (OTM) students in South-East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Purpose of Study

The broad purpose of the study was to investigate social media platforms and academic excellence of Office Technology and Management (OTM) students in South-Eastern Nigeria Polytechnics. Specifically, the study sort to identity:

1. Major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in South-East Nigeria Polytechnics.
2. The influence of social media usage on academic excellence of Office Technology and Management students in South East-Nigeria Polytechnics.
3. Constraining factors associated with the use of social media platforms for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in South-East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered by the study;



1. What are the major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in South East-Nigeria Polytechnics?
2. What are the influences of social media usage on academic excellence of Office Technology and Management students in South East-Nigeria Polytechnics?
3. What are the constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in South East-Nigeria Polytechnics?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant

- H0₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female of HND II students of OTM on major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics.
- H0₂:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female of HND II students of OTM on the influences of social media usage on academic excellence of the students in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics.
- H0₃:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female of HND II students of OTM on the constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Rouse (2019) defined descriptive survey research design as that which deals with collection of data by asking individuals questions either in person, on paper, by phone or online using questionnaire through primary research which is the gathering of first-hand data from its source. To achieve the broad purpose of the study, three research questions were answered while three null hypotheses were tested.

The respondents for the study were selected using multistage sampling technique. At the first stage, three out of the five states in South East Nigeria were randomly selected. The states randomly selected are Anambra, Ebonyi and Imo States. At the second stage of the population, one Federal Polytechnics was selected from each of the three states making a total of three Polytechnics. The selected Polytechnics are: (i) Federal Polytechnics, Oko, Anambra State, (ii) Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnics, Uwanna, Ebonyi State and (iii) Federal Polytechnics Nekede, Imo State. The third stage was sampling of all HND II students of Office Technology and Management in the three selected Polytechnics totaling 168 students. The entire 168 HND II students of OTM were involved as respondents for the study.

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was structured into four sections A, B, C and D. The section A was made to collect personal data of the respondents such as their schools, and gender (male or female). Section B was made to collect data on major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by students. Section C was designed to obtain data on influences of social media usage on academic excellence of the students while Section D focused on data collection on constraining factors associated with the use of social media platforms for academic activities by the students. The response options for section B which is "major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by students" are: Highly Utilized (HU), Moderately Utilized (MU), Less Utilized (LU) and Not Utilized (NU) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The response options for Sections C and D are: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The instrument was subjected to face validation in order to ensure its proper wordings as well as to determine its adequacy and appropriateness for the study. Three experts, one each from Technology and Vocational Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University and Ebonyi State university respectively and one from measurement and evaluation of same university, were used for the face validation exercise. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by trial testing 15 copies of the questionnaire to 15 HND II students of OTM in Federal Polytechnics Idah, Kogi State. Data collected from the trial testing were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha reliability technique which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.937. Hamed (2016) stated that reliability coefficients range from 0.00 to 1.00, with higher coefficients indicating higher levels of reliability.

Data were collected using personal contact approach with the help of seven research assistants drawn from the three Polytechnics. Out of the 168 copies of questionnaire administered to the OTM students, 155 were completely filled and returned indicating 92.3% return rate. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the three research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the 4-point rating scale of



the instrument, a criterion reference point of 2.50 was used as benchmark for decision making in answering the research questions. In that case, any item with mean value of 2.50 or above were interpreted as “Utilized” or “Agreed” as the case may be while items with mean values of less than 2.50 were interpreted as “Not Utilized” or “Disagreed” as the case may be. On the hypotheses tested, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted when the t-calculated (t-cal) value is less than the t-critical (t-crit.) value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. On the other hand, the null hypothesis was rejected when the t-calculated (t-cal) value is greater than the t-critical (t-crit.) value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One

What are the major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in South-East, Nigeria Polytechnics?

Table 1: Major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students (n = 155)

SN	Social media platforms mostly utilized are:	\bar{X}	SD	Decisions
1	YouTube	3.61	0.54	Utilized
2	Twitter	2.82	0.74	Utilized
3	Snapchat	2.19	0.82	Not Utilized
4	WhatsApp	3.72	0.48	Utilized
5	Instagram	3.23	0.50	Utilized
6	Hangout	1.63	0.76	Not Utilized
7	Facetime	1.76	0.69	Not Utilized
8	Facebook	3.53	0.66	Utilized
9	Messenger	3.61	0.47	Utilized
10	Skype	3.58	0.70	Utilized
11	MySpace	2.25	0.73	Not Utilized
12	Google+	3.68	0.44	Utilized
13	Pintrest	1.82	0.76	Not Utilized
14	Telegram	3.48	0.62	Utilized
15	Reddit	1.51	0.85	Not Utilized
16	LinkedIn	2.79	0.57	Utilized
17	Flick	2.07	0.85	Not Utilized
18	Wechat	1.85	0.73	Not Utilized
19	Academia.edu	3.24	0.48	Utilized
20	TedEd	1.53	0.77	Not Utilized
	Cluster Mean	2.70	0.54	Utilized

Note: \bar{X} = Mean; SD = Std. Dev; n = No of respondents.

The result in Table 1 identified 11 social media platforms with mean values greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50. The identified social media platforms and their respective mean values are: YouTube (3.61), WhatsApp (3.72) Twitter (2.82), Instagram (3.23), Facebook (3.53), Messenger (3.61), Skype (3.58), Google+ (3.68), Telegram (3.48), LinkedIn (2.79), and Academia.edu (3.24). The mean values are all greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale indicating that the 11 identified social media platforms are “Utilized” in one way or the other for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in south-Eastern Nigeria Polytechnics.

On the other hand, the remaining 9 social media platforms and their respective mean values are: Snapchat (2.19), Hangout (1.63), Facetime (1.76), MySpace (2.25), Pintrest (1.82), Reddit (1.51), Flick (2.07), Wechat (1.85) and TedEd (1.53). The mean value in each case was less than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale indicating that the 9 social media platforms are “Not Utilized” for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics.

Research Question Two

What are the influences of social media usage on academic excellence of Office Technology and Management students in South East Nigeria Polytechnics?



Table 2: Influence of social media usage on academic excellence of Office Technology and Management students (n = 155)

SN	Influence of social media on academic excellence of OTM students:	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Social media platforms help to stimulate interest of students in learning.	3.66	0.69	Agreed
2	Social media has the capacity to increase students' assimilation.	3.73	0.67	Agreed
3	Useful academic materials can be accessed through social media.	3.68	0.40	Agreed
4	The use of social media increase students' access to global online materials.	3.58	0.86	Agreed
5	Academic materials accessed through social media can be of help to students in writing assignments.	3.60	0.82	Agreed
6	The use of social media enhances students' proficiency in computer-based test (CBT).	3.53	0.79	Agreed
7	Social media increase students' knowledge of computer-based classroom instruction.	3.74	0.69	Agreed
8	Students' engagement in social media platforms enhances their knowledge of current affairs and contemporary issues.	3.61	0.72	Agreed
9	Social media helps adaptation of students to technologically-advanced work place.	3.54	0.69	Agreed
10	Psychomotor ability of students can be enhanced through the use of social media.	3.53	0.77	Agreed
11	Social media instruction makes learning more interactive to students.	3.63	0.76	Agreed
12	Social media platform improve efficiency of distance learning.	3.43	0.74	Agreed
13	Social media platforms help students sharing relevant academic materials among peers.	3.45	0.84	Agreed
14	Social media platforms can be of great help in project writing.	3.39	0.80	Agreed
15	Social media gives students access to foreign library	3.63	0.46	Agreed
	Cluster Mean	3.58	0.71	Agreed

Note: \bar{X} = Mean; SD = Std. Dev; n = No of respondents.

The result in Table 2 showed that the mean ratings of the 15 items in the table ranged from 3.39 to 3.74 which are greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on four point rating scale. This indicated that the 15 identified items in the table are influences of social media usage on academic excellence of Office Technology and Management students in South East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Research Question Three

What are the constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in South East Nigeria Polytechnics?

Table 3: Constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students (n = 155)

SN	Constraining factors associated with the use of social media are:	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Increased cost of social media devices and gadgets.	3.74	0.51	Agreed
2	Skyrocketing cost of data subscriptions for internet access.	3.82	0.43	Agreed
3	Unmanaged exposure to social media can be distractive to students	3.44	0.63	Agreed
4	Fragility of social media devices make them require extra care	3.20	0.69	Agreed
5	Unstable power supply is a serious challenge in social media usage.	3.78	0.47	Agreed
6	Excess use of social media devices can trigger health challenges.	2.43	0.77	Disagreed
7	Social media platforms can encourage antisocial behavior in students	3.63	0.52	Agreed
8	There is high risk of theft of social media devices and gadgets.	3.48	0.53	Agreed
9	Weak network signals can be challenging in social media usage.	3.72	0.40	Agreed



10	The risk of hacking of private data is high with social media.	3.49	0.61	Agreed
Cluster Mean		3.47	0.55	Agreed

Note: \bar{X} = Mean; SD = Std. Dev; n = No of respondents.

The result in Table 3 showed that the mean ratings of 9 out of the 10 items in the table ranged from 3.20 to 3.82 which are greater than the cut-off point value of 2.50 on four point rating scale. This indicated that the 9 identified items are constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities by Office Technology and Management students in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics. Item 6 in the table “excess use of social media devices can trigger health challenges” having mean value of 2.43 which is less than the cut-off point showed that the item is not a constraint to the use of social media platforms by students.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities in South East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Table 4: Test of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities in South-East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Std. Error	t- Cal	t- tab	p-value	Decision
Male Students	67	2.72	0.51	153	0.033	0.64	1.96	0.52	NS
Female Students	88	2.68	0.56						

Note: NS = Not Significant at 0.05.

The data presented on t-test statistics in Table 4 showed that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.64 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 1.95 at 153 degree of freedom. This indicated that there was no significant (p<0.05) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of male and female HND II students of OTM on major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant (p<0.05) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the Male and Female Students is accepted on hypothesis one.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on the influences of social media usage on academic excellence of the students in South East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Table 5: Test of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on influence of social media usage on academic excellence of the students in South East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Std. Error	t- Cal	t- tab	p-value	Decision
Male Students	67	3.57	0.70	153	0.021	0.43	1.96	0.71	NS
Female Students	88	3.59	0.67						

Note: NS = Not Significant at 0.05.

The data presented on t-test statistics in Table 5 showed that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.43 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 1.95 at 153 degree of freedom. This implied that there was no significant (p<0.05) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of male and female HND II students of OTM on the influences of social media usage on academic excellence of the students in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics. Consequently, the null hypothesis of no significant (p<0.05) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the Male and Female Students is accepted on hypothesis two.



Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on the constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities in South East Nigeria Polytechnics.

Table 6: Test of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on the constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	DF	Std. Error	t- Cal	t- tab	p-value	Decision
Male Students	67	3.44	0.78						
				153	0.049	0.87	1.96	0.33	NS
Female Students	88	3.50	0.63						

Note: NS = Not Significant at 0.05.

The data presented on t-test statistics in Table 6 revealed that the t-calculated (t-cal) value of 0.87 is less than the t-table (t-tab) value of 1.95 at 153 degree of freedom. This indicated that there was no significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of male and female HND II students of OTM on the constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities in southeastern Nigeria Polytechnics. Hence, the null hypothesis of no significant ($p < 0.05$) difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the Male and Female Students is accepted on hypothesis three.

Discussion

The study identified major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by students to include: YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Messenger, Facebook, Skype, Google+, Telegram, LinkedIn and Academia.edu. The findings of this study corroborated that of Musa (2015) who found that Facebook, WhatsApp, Google and YouTube are the common social media sites mostly visited by students of Kano State Polytechnics. Asemah and Edegoh (2012) in a study found that social media sites commonly visited by students to include: Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), Google talk, Google+ Messenger and so on. Similarly, the findings of this study conformed with that of Papoola (2014) who identified common social media platforms that supports learning among Nigerian students to include Facebook, WhatsApp among others.

The identified influences of social media usage on academic excellence of Office Technology and Management students include that social media platforms help to stimulate interest of students in learning, having the capacity to increase students' assimilation, useful academic materials can be accessed through social media, social media increase students' access to global online materials, academic materials accessed through social media can be of help to students in writing assignments, the use of social media enhances students' proficiency in computer-based test (CBT), social media helps adaptation of students to technologically-advanced work place, social media platform improve efficiency of distance learning and social media platforms can be of great help in project writing. Olaleke, Iroju and Olajide (2015) investigated the use of online social network sites in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo State and found that the use of social media sites enhances academic performance of students by improving their reading skills, grammar and vocabulary usage. Ajike and Nwakoby (2016) in a study found that there is a relationship between the use of social networking sites and academic performance of teenagers.

The study identified some constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms to include increased cost of social media devices and gadgets, unmanaged exposure to social media can be distractive to student, cost of data subscriptions for internet access, unstable power supply is a serious challenge in social media usage, there is high risk of theft of social media devices and gadgets, social media platforms can encourage antisocial behavior in students and the risk of hacking of private data is high with social media. Mukhtar, Javed, Arooi and Sethi (2020) identified some of the challenges of electronic-based learning facilities to include lack of immediate feedback, teachers were unable to assess students' understanding during online lecturing and that learners also reported limited attention span and resource intensive nature of online learning as major limitation and set back. Li and Lalani (2020) reported unreliable internet access to participate in digital learning as part of the challenges in the use of online teaching in developing countries. In agreement with the findings of this study, Basu, Sharma, Sharma and



Sharma (2021) found that majority of students admitted excessive exposure to social media causing impaired self control and poor sleep quality. Asemah, Okpanachi and Edegoh (2013), Okereke and Oghenetega (2014), Anyira and Udem (2020) established negative effects of unregulated access to social on student's academics.

Conclusion

The study examined social media platforms and academic excellence of Office Technology and Management (OTM) students in South East Nigeria Polytechnics. The results of the study showed that the major social media platforms mostly utilized for academic activities by students are YouTube, Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook, Messenger, Skype, Google+, Telegram, LinkedIn and Academia.edu. In addition, the study identified 15 items as influences of social media usage on academic excellence of OTM students and 9 constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms for academic activities by OTM students. The results of the hypotheses tested showed no significant ($p < 0.05$) differences in the mean ratings of male and female HND II students of OTM on major social media platforms mostly utilized by the students, influences of social media usage on academic excellence and constraining factors associated with the use of social platforms. The findings concluded that regulated use of social media by students will help a great deal to stimulate academic excellence of students in tertiary institutions.

Recommendations

The study therefore recommended that:

1. Adequate training of both lecturers and students on productive and academic exploration of various social media platforms for effective instruction and acquisition skills self-employed and teaching and learning.
2. There should be deliberate effort by students to ensure regulated usage of social media platforms in order not to give room for negative addition that may hamper their academic excellence.
3. School management should frequently organize conference, symposium and discussion forums for students on positive engagement of social media platforms for academic gains.

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