

# **SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AMONG CHILDHOOD EDUCATION LEARNERS AND THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECURITY EDUCATION IN CALABAR EDUCATION ZONE OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA**

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## **Abstract**

*The study investigated social media usage among childhood education learners and their academic performance in security education in Calabar education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between Facebook and What Sapp usage and childhood education learners' academic performance in security education. Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at .05 level of significance. The survey research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 289 childhood education learners was used for the study. The sample was selected through the simple random sampling techniques. The instruments titled Social Media Usage Questionnaire (SMUQ) and Security Education Achievement Test (SEAT) were used for data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was the statistical technique employed to test the hypotheses under study. The result of the analysis revealed that, Facebook and What Sapp platforms significantly relate to learners' academic performance in security education in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. It was recommended that, parents should monitor their children on the rate at which they use social media, the parents and teachers should educate the learners on the dangers of over dependence on social media, teachers should not allow learners access to android phones in the school environment.*

**Keywords:** social media, childhood education learners, academic performance and security education.

## **Introduction**

The impact of social media on students' academic performance in school is a matter of concern to educational stakeholders and the general public in recent times. This social media popularity may be as a result of information and communication technology (ICT) gaining public acceptance presently. Interactions among people on social media platform are made possible through the various networking websites using the internet. Social media has become an international phenomenon in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; it has become a social norm and way of life for people from all over the world (Boyd, 2007). Learners have embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, family members and share information, reinvent their personalities and showcase their social lives (Boyd, 2007). With the increase of technology used for communicating with others and the popularity of the Internet, use of social media has become an activity that learners engage in primarily with the help of the Internet, with sites like Facebook, What's App, among others to enhance their academic engagement (Coyle, 2018).

The poor academic performance of learners in security education in primary school is a major challenge facing the education sector in Nigeria. It has become a concern for

researchers, educators and all education stake-holders over the years to find out the factors responsible for the challenge (Afolabi, 2009). This challenge is evidence in the observed progressive decline in secondary school students' academic performance in security education. Poor academic performance, according to Aremu (2003) is a performance that is adjudged by the examinee/testee and some other significant elements as falling below an expected standard. Orim (2019) opined that academic failure is not only frustrating to the students and the parents, its effects are equally grave on the society in terms of the dearth of manpower in all spheres of the economy and politics.

Students' academic performance in every discipline is manifested in examination results after being exposed to teaching and learning processes that has taken place over a stated period of time in an educational setting (Adesemowo, 2005). Igwe (2003) opined that learners are expected to exhibit some level of competence and understanding after being exposed to the school curriculum for a period of time in their various schools.

Social media is a medium through which teachers and students can meet without seeing each other. Presently, students in higher institutions of learning have the privilege of receiving lessons outside the confines of the classroom and the scheduled school hours (Busari, 2001). Although, it is argued that students at primary/secondary school level may have limited access to social media because most of them do not have phones and personal computers and even those who have may not be allowed free hand to use them especially at school. At the primary and secondary school level, pupils and students are not allow to spend much of their time on social media whenever opportunity presents itself to avoid distraction.

Learners' over engagement on social media may have some effects on their academic engagement. Learners who spend more time online chatting than reading educational materials may be doing themselves more harm than good. Social media usage has its positive and negative effects depending on how the users use it. The positive effects of social media include;

1. Social media platform like Facebook helps to improve our moods. One's mood changes as soon as you keep in touch with your love ones friends who are far-off.
2. It helps individuals to overcome shyness in most of the teenagers who find it difficult to communicate with others.
3. It helps to break the barriers created by distance; people keep in touch with other people in different locations, among others.

Social media platforms such as Facebook and What Sapp also have some negative effects on the users. The negative effects include;

1. It exposes the learners to unhealthy discussions which are detrimental to one's image and mental growth.
2. Learners who spend much time looking at the screen are prone to eye problem.
3. Social media users suffer from isolation. They are glued to net without going out to meet with physical people for face-to-face interaction.
4. It distracts one's mind from other activities which includes reading of educational books, among others.

Though, social media platforms such as Facebook and What Sapp help us to interact with friends and family members who are not within our environment. Facebook is a social media networking site that makes it easy for you to connect and share with information with family and friends online. Facebook is one of the most used social networking sites which are so popular, especially among learners that they can dedicate much time chatting with their friends and family members (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Users of the Facebook create personal profile, inviting and adding other users as friends to send and receive messages. Users may also form or join groups which are organized by workplace, school and other characteristics.

Facebook has become so popular especially among students that without Facebook, student life is almost unthinkable (Debatin,2009).

Facebook has become popular especially among learners and is extensively used by colleges and ranked as the most popular social media platform, and seventh most popular sites on the world wide web in terms of number of pages viewed (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007). As at 2011, Facebook offers services in more than 75 languages to its over 850 million active users, and more than 50 percent of them log in daily, and spend over 700 billion minutes per months (Haq& Chand, 2012).

In a study conducted by Tayo, Adebola and Yahya (2019) on social media usage among undergraduates and its influence on their studies, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all undergraduate students of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife Nigeria. Eight hundred and fifty 850 students were sampled using random and convenience sampling techniques. A self-designed instrument titled “Social Media Usage and Influence Questionnaire (SMUI-Q)” was used for data collection. The results showed that social media platforms used by undergraduates, include WhatsApp (97%), Facebook (85%), Instagram (65%), YouTube (62%), Twitter (25%), LinkedIn (21%), Google Plus (15%), Snapchat (10%), and Skype (7%). Further, undergraduates spend an average of 2-3 hours daily on social media, and their perceived purposes of social media usage include: socialisation (83%), information (74%), academic (73%), business (68%), and entertainment (61%). The results highlight Internet addiction (45%), distraction (32%), anti-social behaviour (6%), cyber bullying (4%), and writing and spelling skills deficiency (24%) as the influences of social media on undergraduate studies. The study concludes that the social media platforms mostly used are WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube; which are used mainly for socialisation, information, and academic purposes and may also perhaps suggest the reason for school adjustment.

Hans, Yoshifumi and Tsuyoshi (2016) examined use of Facebook by secondary school students at Nuku'alofa as an Indicator of E-Readiness for E-Learning in the Kingdom of Tonga. The researchers administered survey questionnaire to 186 students randomly selected from five secondary schools in the Kingdom of Tonga to measure Facebook usage as an index of e-readiness for e-learning. The researchers found that a large percentage (81%) of secondary students use Facebook and most (74%) of these students have used Facebook for two or more years. All (100%) students use a computer to access Facebook and most also access Facebook through mobile phones (62%) or tablets (46%). They also found correlations between duration of having a Facebook account and other indicators of e-readiness and academic performance.

Vane, Gon and Rawekar (2017) defined WhatsApp as a free messenger application that works across multiple platforms like computers, smart phones, Ipads and notebooks. Whatsapp is recently used in the educational system by teachers/lecturers and students to pass information using texts, pictures, video and audios among friends and families. It allows users to exchange texts, photos, audios, videos, documents, locations, voice calls, and video calls for free at any time and from anywhere in the world(WhatsApp Inc., 2017).

WhatsApp is an instant messaging application for smart phones that allows users to exchange information like videos, audio, text and images using the internet, as a platform (Barhoumi, 2015). Bouhnik and Deshen (2014) are of the views that WhatsApp is a social network application that affords users with the opportunity of sending and receiving instant messages and feedback. Whatsapp is relatively a new educational tool that supports teacher-students relationship which can be used in sharing information. WhatsApp is a mobile messaging application which helps its users to stay connected with their online contacts. Online exchange of images, PDF files, audio and videos are also possible through WhatsApp. What makes it different and superior among other medium is the connectivity and less cost.

Ease of use and variety of options has made it a favorite to the society and it made a rapid transformation in the way people communicate (Susilo, 2014).

Enaohwo and Awotua-Efebo (2018) investigated students' interest on the usage of whatsapp as a digital learning tool in tertiary institutions in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The population of the study was 5315 students in the faculties of education in the two public universities in Rivers State. The sample size was 372 respondents, drawn through stratified random sampling. The Students' Interest on Whatsapp Usage Questionnaire (SIWUQ) was used for data collection. Face and content validities were ensured by experts. The reliability coefficient of 0.8 was established through Cronbach alpha. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test and one way analysis of variance ANOVA were used to test the null hypotheses. The study revealed that; students were happy and hence learnt faster using whatsapp for assignment while they all showed the same level of interest. It was concluded that, reliance on digital classroom is imperative for the achievement of school goals.

Ayman, Mouez, Shawky&Zeyad (2021) examined how students' whatsapp use can play a role in encouraging their self-efficacy of using ICTs. The qualitative approach was used, using interviews conducted with 36 students. The semi-structured interviews were analyzed following the thematic content analysis method. The interviews were targeted at obtaining University of Ha'il students' opinions to confirm the challenges facing them concerning the usage of whatsapp. The findings show that most of the participants had positive beliefs/self-efficacy toward the implementation of WhatsApp.

### **Statement of the problem**

The problem of childhood education learners' academic performance in security education in Cross River State is a matter of concern to education stakeholders and researchers. The problem has been affecting learners since the subject was introduced in the school system. Some researchers had attributed this problem to social media usage among learners, poor incentives system from the government, lack of effective supervision, while some linked poor academic performance of students to poor teaching resources/instructional materials available to teachers, general conditions of infrastructure among other factors in public schools in Nigeria. Therefore, upon the observed deterioration in the academic performance of childhood learners, one curiously wonders if the high failure rates and the poor performance of the learners is not a reflection of the teaching quality or is it as a result of over dependent on modern technology (social media) usage. This study therefore seeks to investigate the relationship between social media usage among childhood education learners and their academic performance in security education in Ikom education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between social media usage among childhood education learners and their academic performance in security education in Ikom education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to;

1. Determine the relationship between Facebook usage and childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.
2. Ascertain the relationship between What Sapp usage and childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.

### **Research hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

1. There is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.
2. What Sapp usage does not significantly relate with childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.

## Method

The survey research design was adopted for this study. The population consisted of all childhood education learners in the lower basic education level in the study area. A sample of 289 childhood education learners was used for the study. The sample was selected through the simple random sampling techniques. Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at .05 level of significance. The instruments titled Social Media Usage Questionnaire (SMUQ) and Security Education Achievement Test (SEAT) were used for data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was the statistical technique employed to test the hypotheses under study. Based on the findings some recommendations were made.

## Result

### Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.

TABLE 1

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between Facebook usage and academic performance (N=289)

Variables	X	SD	r-value	Sig.
Facebook usage	18.22	2.98	0.480*	.000
Academic performance	37.49	2.87		

\* Significant at .05, critical  $r = .062$ ,  $df = 287$

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 1 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.480 is significant at .05 level of significance with 287 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and childhood education learners' academic performance in security education was rejected. This result implied that, Facebook usage has a significant positive relationship with childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.

### Hypothesis two

What Sapp usage does not significantly relate with childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.

TABLE 2

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between What Sapp usage and academic performance (N=289)

Variables	X	SD	r-value	Sig.
What Sapp usage	17.70	1.64	0.255*	.000
Academic performance	37.49	2.87		

\* Significant at .05, critical  $r = .062$ ,  $df = 287$

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 2 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.255 is significant at .05 level of significance with 287 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that What Sapp usage does not significantly relate with childhood education learners' academic performance in security education was rejected. This

result indicated that, What Sapp usage has a significant positive relationship with childhood education learners' academic performance in security education.

### **Discussion**

The result of the two hypotheses study indicated positive significant relationship between social media usage and academic performance of childhood education learners in security education in Calabar education zone of Cross River State. The finding is in line with the view of Tayo, Adebola and Yahya (2019) who investigated social media usage among undergraduates and its influence on their studies and found that social media platforms used by undergraduates, include WhatsApp (97%), Facebook (85%), Instagram (65%), YouTube (62%), Twitter (25%), LinkedIn (21%), Google Plus (15%), Snapchat (10%), and Skype (7%) and that, undergraduates spend an average of 2-3 hours daily on social media, and their perceived purposes of social media usage include: socialisation (83%), information (74%), academic (73%), business (68%), and entertainment (61%), among others. In the same vein, Hans, Yoshifumi and Tsuyoshi (2016) examined use of Facebook by secondary school students at Nuku'alofa as an Indicator of E-Readiness for E-Learning in the Kingdom of Tonga and found that a large percentage (81%) of secondary students use Facebook and most (74%) of these students have used Facebook for two or more years. They also found correlations between duration of having a Facebook account and academic performance.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, it was recommended that;

1. Parents should monitor their children on the rate at which they use social media.
2. The parents and teachers should educate the learners on the dangers of over dependence on social media.
3. Teachers should not allow learners access to android phones in the school environment.

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