



EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL UNDERGRADUATES IN RIVERS STATE NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the Effect of social media on the Academic Performance of Entrepreneurial Undergraduates in Rivers State Nigeria. The study was instigated because of unparalleled sensitivity of undergraduates in the use of social media applications has not been properly explored especially in learning and communicating abilities, thereby affecting academic performance among entrepreneurial undergraduates in Rivers-State Universities and persistent rise in unemployment among Rivers-State graduates. To achieve the aims of the study, three research questions were raised and three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted the pretest, posttest Quasi-experimental survey design. The study population comprised 200 undergraduates, drawn from a target population of 1,870 undergraduates taking entrepreneurial courses in the 2022/2023 academy session from three public universities in Rivers State University: Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers-State University and University of Port Harcourt, all in Rivers- State, Nigeria. The selection was done through the purposive sampling technique based on functionality and accessibility to smartphones and iPhones on the use of social media (Telegram and WhatsApp) groups while the control group was the discussion method. The instrument used for the data collection was a questionnaire titled: Effect of social media on Academic Performance of Entrepreneurial Undergraduates Questionnaire (ESMAPEUQ), which was developed by the researchers and was validated by experts in Department of Educational Management, University of Calabar and Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations in Faculty of Educational foundation studies, University of Calabar, Calabar. Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 25. The results revealed that undergraduates who are exposed to the Experimental group (Telegram and WhatsApp) performed better than those exposed to the control group while there was gender disproportion on the part of the females, indicating that the males performed better than the females in the three groups. It was recommended among others that the use of social media should be a seal in supplemented lessons while gender disportion should be frowned against to give a boost in academic performance, while females should be guided against marginalization in entrepreneurship to create academic stability.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Academic Performance, Telegram, WhatsApp

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INTRODUCTION

Education has been explained ineptly by Fafunwa (2014) as a 'lifelong learning process that occurs within structures and extends all the way, through life while communication is the nexus of academic excellence, consistently extending over the years. Social media is a learning and communicative tool that appears to be disregarded among entrepreneurial undergraduates, traceable to low academic performance based on consistent failures in the use of learning aids through smartphones. Unemployment has been recorded among graduates, a fragment of the total national redundancy and decline in over half of 500,000 graduates in Nigeria, annually produced, on a continuous pursuit for jobs due to lack of expansive skills. (Akintoye 2008, Temitope & Oluyemi, 2023).

Entrepreneurial undergraduates have been steadily affected, due to low academic performance and inadequacies despite the placement of technology and its use in Nigerian universities. This appropriateness appears gloomy, due to lapses in the use of social media, 'merit of technology; and 'academic enhancers that boost entrepreneurial education in Nigerian universities while the inability to use them might be a hindrance to academic performance. Academic enhancers are magnetized in Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Goggle meet, zoom, Snapchat, Audio Mack, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, TikTok, etc. activated in entrepreneurial skills that continue to up surge wealth growth, economic development, and technological growth (Wonah, Egbula, & Nsan, 2019).

Social media in WhatsApp is a free, multiplatform messaging app that enables undergraduates to make video and voice calls, send text messages, and more, through a Wi-Fi connection in over 2 billion active users, widespread among friends and family who live in different countries and prefer to stay connected. (Grace, 2023) while the Telegram app is mostly used for sending text messages to contacts, connecting with other people in groups, and following Telegram news

channels (Brad, 2024) in the educative aspect, there are laxities in the use of these enhancers

while unemployment is a consequential effect of low academic performance, as over 70% of graduates from Nigerian universities persistently seek for employment. (Osakwe, 2019). Therefore, the nexus in creating a balance between social media, entrepreneurial education, academic performance, and gender disproportions.

Chinelo and Josephine (2017) defined social media as, "forms of electronic communiqué" in websites, where people activate online communities to share information, ideas, and personal messages, towards achieving global standards and optimal goals while Ntaka (2020) affirmed, that social media as a 'global boon', influenced on how one uses, boost, improve or activate the interest of undergraduates to promote intellectual capacity. The use of social media must be reflected in high academic performance towards developmental processes, alongside other chosen careers.

Undergraduates have been enormously distracted as most of them use social media in entertainment- photo sharing, voice, and video calls but hardly see its effect towards achieving their assignments, research, and homework except for a few. Young entrepreneurs must see prospects in content creation, blogs, occupations, business networks, enterprise social networks, microblogs, and the virtual world to permeate the use of technology in pivotal activities in the millennial to achieve global standards (Ngaji, & Wonah, 2019).

Academic performance comes through critical thinking and realistic moves in harnessing economic challenges, while the Nigerian entrepreneurial undergraduates must see it likewise to yield more fruit, especially in the use of social media in a technologically inclined environment that must be commensurate to academic performance (Chinelo and Josephine, 2017). Productive tactics must be employed to excel academically and free oneself from economic hardship, confronting the country, evidenced in extreme high unemployment rate of educated youths. (Ahmad, 2022).

Entrepreneurial education deals with skills acquired and knowledge gained in schools or colleges to create meaningful expansion and productivity.

Habes, Alghizzawi, Khalaf, Salloum and Ghani (2018) revealed that a large number of University students are social media addicts, which in turn has negatively affected their academic performance while Oye (2012) posited that most of the younger scholars use social networking sites mainly for socializing activities, rather than for academic purposes while the proliferation of internet services in most universities have brought about rapid growth and promotion of entrepreneurship skills among undergraduates. Entrepreneurial education is a process of impacting or procuring general knowledge by increasing the power of intellectual capacity in preparing oneself or others soundly for mature lifestyles, among which social media through technological devices are maximized to facilitate social interactions, made possible through collaboration and cooperation in people of the same interest across borders, time and space since most jobs are actuated through online activities. (Hillary, Gift, & Mabel, 2020).

Entrepreneurial undergraduates are also worried about the incapacity of the government to assist entrepreneurs in reducing cybercrimes in fraudsters that encroach into people's personal account and rob people of their personal effects while the researchers on this con, mentioned that every success has its merits and demerits and admonished entrepreneurs to join other nations in the world to spur excellence through the use of social media to galvanize academic excellence. (Grace, Edem, Obi-Anyanwu & Nze, 2024) and ensure that academically sound entrepreneurs work with computer analysts to guide against fraudulent activities.

Entrepreneurial skills assist undergraduates in molding youths to become job and wealth creators in the millennial, presenting technology as a channel through which social media stabilizes technological balance to achieve entrepreneurial success by ensuring that there is a sound relationship between the academic performance of undergraduates and skills targeted at problem-solving. Therefore, the tantamount of entrepreneurial education is to feature employable graduates that will create avenues to employ others, based on established academic excellence, because there is a maxim that, 'one

can only give, what he has'. If this is tangible, a procurement must be established in new business, to offer solutions to the nation in any adverse condition (Nsan, Wonah, Egbula, & Ngaji, 2024).

Nigeria, through technology in social media, must promote the production of goods and services, sold online without involving their movement but ensuring that, productivity is achieved at the end of the day. Understanding the fact that, statistically, in Nigeria, unemployment has gotten to a level that is disturbing and alarming, in the mention of Osakwe (2019) that irrespective of the fact that graduates are recorded in high numbers over the years, gender disproportion is on the increase while a necessary trajectory must be applied to elevate gender status in knowledge, skills, and self-discipline, essential to engage a personal business that boards self-reliance among men and women folks in all works of life. It is on this note that the researchers explored the effect of social media on the academic performance of entrepreneurial undergraduates in Rivers State universities towards curbing the rate of unemployment in Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigeria is faced with many challenges in the educational system, this has diminished academic performance and low input in the quality of education, tantamount to unemployment, especially among entrepreneurial undergraduates. Social media is an epicenter, considering its relevance in academic performance and socializing impact on job and wealth creation. Undergraduates are found doing shameful things with their smartphones, a common sight in society, noticing a student chatting in sensitive and formally organized places and on the highways with earpieces in their ears without even considering the dangers associated with that exercise. This phenomenon has become very worrisome and the effect of this threat has not been given the attention it deserves. It is therefore of great importance to explore some of the trending issues facing undergraduates since among others, academic performance is the most affected, and unemployment is the after-effect. Therefore, a communique exists among entrepreneurial undergraduates on the level of

unemployment, based on poor use of social media to catalyze academic performance. Can social media be activated in an educational stratum? To what extent has this phenomenon affected undergraduate academic performance? Can undergraduates vividly beat their chest toward economic empowerment to boost employment? Many more questions need to be answered to harness the problem of this study in finding out the effect of the use of social media on the academic performance of university undergraduates in Rivers –State, towards curbing unemployment

Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to:

assess the influence of social media on the academic performance of entrepreneurial undergraduates in Rivers State to curb unemployment. The universities are Rivers State University, University of Port Harcourt, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

The following objectives guided the study:

1. To determine the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram?
2. To determine the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and those not exposed to WhatsApp?
3. To determine the difference between male and female undergraduates in the three groups

Research questions

1. What is the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram?
2. What is the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and those not exposed to WhatsApp?
3. What are the mean performance scores of entrepreneurial male and female undergraduates in the three groups?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for testing at a .05 significant difference

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and those not exposed to WhatsApp

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the entrepreneurial male and female undergraduates in the three groups

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the Quasi-experimental survey design, to achieve the objective of the study. Three research questions and three hypotheses formed the study while data were collected from a sample of 200 undergraduates drawn from a target population of 1,870 undergraduates taking entrepreneurial courses in the 2022/2023 academy session of three public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. The Universities were: Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and University of Port Harcourt, while 200 undergraduates were drawn through the purposive sampling technique based on functionality and accessibility to smartphones and iPhones on related research and hypothesis using social media (Telegram and WhatsApp) groups while the control group was the discussion method. The data collected were analyzed, using the SPSS version for descriptive statistics, to interpret the outcome of the study, the research questions were answered using the mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were analyzed, using the ANOVA and 2-way Anova.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the mean performance score of entrepreneurial Undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram?

Mean Scores of Entrepreneurial Undergraduates exposed to Telegram and the Control Group

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD
Telegram	100	65.24	13.0	87.05	8.56
Control	100	54.12	10.52	73.05	13.76

Table 1, shows the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram was, and those not exposed to the telegram in the pretest of (65.24 & 54.12) and their respective standard deviation are (13.0 & 10.52) while the post treatment test on the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram was (87.05 & 73.05) and (8.56 & 13.76) respectively. The result shows that

entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to the use of telegram performed better than those not exposed to the use of telegram, indicating that telegram added value to the academic Performance of entrepreneurial undergraduates in the universities

Research Question 2: What is the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and those not exposed to WhatsApp?

Mean Performance Scores of Entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and the Control Group

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD
WhatsApp	100	57.84	13.27	90.13	8.17
Control	100	54.12	10.52	73.05	13.76

Table 2, shows the mean performance scores of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and those not exposed to the use of WhatsApp in the pretest of (57.84 & 54.12) and their respective standard deviation are (8.17 & 13.76) while the post-treatment test on the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram was (90.13 & 73.05) and (8.17 & 13.76) respectively. The result shows that

entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to the use of WhatsApp performed better than those not exposed to the use of WhatsApp, indicating that WhatsApp added value to the academic performance of entrepreneurial undergraduates.

Research Question 3

What are the mean performance scores of entrepreneurial male and female undergraduates in the three groups?

Mean Performance Scores of Entrepreneurial Male and Female Undergraduates exposed to the Three Groups

Group	Telegram			WhatsApp		Control	
	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
Male	50	89.60	8.77	91.80	7.62	80.48	14.47
Female	50	84.50	7.66	88.46	8.43	65.62	7.79

The mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to the use of social media in: (Telegram and WhatsApp) and the control group are presented in Table 3 in the pretest of (89.60, 91.80, 80.48) and (84.50, 88.46 and 65.62) while their respective standard deviations are (8.77 ,7.62 &, 14.47) and (7.66, 8.43 and 7.79). The result shows that the mean performance score of male entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to the use of WhatsApp

did better than the females exposed to the use of WhatsApp, in the Telegram group, the male entrepreneurial undergraduates did better than the females and in the control group, the male entrepreneurial undergraduates also better than the female. This, indicates that in the three groups, the male performed better than their female counterparts in the three groups

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram

Result on the Mean Performance Scores of Entrepreneurial Undergraduates Exposed to the Telegram and Control Group

Source	Type in sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F	P- Value
Corrected Model	14590.744	2	7298.372	56.685	.600
Intercept	52298.966	1	52298.988	436.431	.666
Pretest	4.424	1	4.424	.634	.852
Groups	14183.887	1	14183.287	110.227	.068
Error	25349.636	197	128.678		
Total	1371326.066	200			
Corrected Total	39940.380	199			

Table 4, shows ANOVA significant difference in the mean performance scores of entrepreneurial postgraduate students exposed with the experimental group (telegram) and control group, at $df = 1$, $F = 110.27$, $p\text{-value} = 0.00 (p < 0.05)$, suggesting a statistically significant difference in

the mean performance scores. This indicated that a statistically significant level is less than the Alpha level ($P < 0.05$) suggesting that a significant difference exists between the postgraduate students exposed to the use of telegram and those not exposed to the use of telegram.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean performance score of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to telegram and those not exposed to telegram?

Source of Variation	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value
Corrected Model	10112.917	2	5056.459	38.783	.000
Intercept	40643.148	1	40643.148	311.732	.000
Pretest	312.917	1	312.917	2.400	.123
Groups	6714.983	1	6714.983	57.504	.000
Error	25684.583	197	130.379		
Total	13173984.000	200			
Corrected Total	35797.500	199			

Table 5 shows the ANCOVA test for significant differences in the mean performance score of entrepreneurial students exposed to the experimental groups (WhatsApp) and Control group, at $df = 1, 197, F=57.504, p \text{ value} = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that, Alpha level ($p < 0.05$). This suggested a statistically significant difference

in the mean performance score of undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and to the control group. Thus, null hypothesis 2 was not retained because there was a difference in the mean performance scores of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to WhatsApp and those not exposed to WhatsApp.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the entrepreneurial male and female undergraduates in the three groups

Summary of 2 –Way Anova for Male and Female Entrepreneurial Undergraduates Performance Scores Exposed to the Experimental and Control Groups

Source of Variation	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value
Corrected Model	23023.390	5	4604.678	51763	.000
Intercept	2087168.430	1	2087168.430	23462.826	.000
posttest	4524.683	1	4524.483	50.857	.000
Gender	16573.760	2	8286.880	93.157	.000
Posttest Gender	1925.547	2	962.773	10.823	.000
Error	26153.180	294	88.956		
Total	2136345.000	304			
Corrected Total	49176.570	297			

Table 6, shows the 2-way Anova test for significant differences in the performance mean scores of entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to the experimental groups (Telegram and WhatsApp) and Control group, at $df = 1, 297$, $F=88.956$, $p \text{ value}= 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that, Alpha level ($p < 0.05$), suggesting a significant difference in the mean performance score of male and female entrepreneurial students exposed to the Telegram, WhatsApp and without Telegram, WhatsApp. Thus, null hypothesis 3 of the three groups was not retained because there was a significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed with telegram and WhatsApp and also without Telegram, WhatsApp.

DISCUSSIONS

Entrepreneurial undergraduates exposed to the use of WhatsApp performed better than those not exposed to the use of WhatsApp, indicating that WhatsApp added value to the academic Performance of entrepreneurial undergraduates. This finding was in line with Levent. (2017) who studied on the Impact of WhatsApp Success in Education Process, mentioned that, WhatsApp was found more effective because it had an effect on student's environment through an increase in success in learning.

The Impact of Whatsapp Use on Success in Education

Prshows that both learning environments have different effects on increasing the success ostudents. The environment in which WhatsApp was used as a supportive technology to traditiona Undergraduates exposed to the use of Telegram performed better than those not exposed to the use of telegram, indicating that Telegram added value to the academic Performance of entrepreneurial undergraduates. This research was in line with the findings of Adesope and Nwaizugbu (2018) who explored on the use of Telegram, as a social media tool for teaching and learning in tertiary institutions, conducted at the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The findings of the study disclosed that students taught using telegram for teaching and learning purposes, did better than their counterparts taught using the discussion method, as telegram was effective in supplemented instruction by offering a valuable extension of classical learning methods. The findings of the study were also in line with Alawadhi & Dashti (2021) who investigated the use of telegram Application, as an information-sharing tool on the sixth-grade Kuwait English Language pupils, it again showed that, Telegram conveyed various information that centred on innovative ideas that improved the effectiveness of the teaching method.

Gender disproportion occurred in this research as the male undergraduates performed better than the female undergraduates. The researchers findings in some areas, contradicted the findings of Shravan (2020) who carried out a research on WhatsApp Usage Differences Amongst Genders: An Exploratory Study , as a visible difference existed in gender in WhatsApp (women agree to the same more than men); and sending pictures of their shopping (merchandise) to friends and family (more women agreed to do that as compared to the male respondents) and also found that in a lot of areas, gender did not make any difference in the study.

CONCLUSION

Social media (Telegram and WhatsApp) has been proven to have a positive effect in achieving a high academic performance as depicted in the research, meaning that entrepreneurial undergraduates should be encouraged in its usage. However, there was a positive difference on the part of males when compared to females, indicating that more female entrepreneurial teachers should be employed in the university to pervert gender disproportions among undergraduate students. Entrepreneurial undergraduates should also be admonished on the ills of social media to avoid getting involved in cybercrimes but taking the right platform to excel through communication by creating jobs for the nation in curbing unemployment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the nimble of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School psychotherapists should be able to educate undergraduates on the negative and positive impact of the use of social media on their educational goals to stir up academic performance and the negative influence that will jeopardize their future.
2. Entrepreneurial undergraduates should be made to engage in counseling intervention programs to enable them to understand themselves better in managing their study time and prevent distractions from the use of social media by expanding social networking sites and creating new pages to boost academic activities and avoid setbacks in undergraduate's academic performance.
3. Gender disportion should be frowned upon, to boost academic performance while females should be guided against marginalization in entrepreneurship to create academic stability.

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