

INFLUENCE OF ACCESSIBILITY TO ICT AND USE OF TWITTER ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN ECONOMICS IN UYO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how the accessibility to ICT and the use of twitter affects the academic performance of economics students in some secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area. Two specific research objectives were formulated to guide the study. The research design was survey study design. The population of the study consisted of all senior secondary schools students in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government area using a stratified sampling technique. The instrument known as "Twitter and Academic Performance Inventory (TAPI)" was used to collect the data. The instrument was subjected to reliability test, using test-retest method and it produced high average reliability coefficient to justify the use of the instrument. The analysis was done using appropriate statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics t-test analysis and two-way analysis of variance. The findings revealed that students in Uyo Local Government Area are so much indulged in the use of twitter as one of the social networks and there is significant influence of school location and use of twitter on the academic performance of students in Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. One of the recommendations was that students should know that overuse of social network including twitter is detrimental to their studies and so should avoid it.

Key words: *Accessibility to ICT, Twitter, academic performance, Economics, Uyo local Government Area*

INTRODUCTION

The internet is a global system of interconnected computers that uses the standard internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) to serve billions of users worldwide. With the development of internet services, various resources, including social network, that make life easy have emerged. The impact of social networking websites have been greatly felt and has expanded rapidly over the last few years and this makes many people see the need of being members of social network. The social network site as a standardized social setting incorporates individuals and/or organizations which can be both profitable and non-profitable. Social media comprises of activities that involve socializing and networking online through words, pictures and videos. Twitter, face book, 2go, whatsapp, baddo, Bbn, E-buddi, U-tube, sky, Imo, etc. are examples of social network and their operations are made possible by internet facilities. That is why Wikipedia (2011), states that the internet carries a vast range of information resources and services to support traditional communication media including telephone, cinema and redefined by the internet, giving birth to new services such as voice over internet protocol (VOIP). Among the services provided by

internet, social network is becoming very popular and get linked to by many, ranging from youths to adults and from applicants to working class.

According to Reuben (2014), social networking websites have expanded rapidly over the last few years and have created new and varied channels of communication via internet, whether through personal computer or mobile phones. Many people are now members of social networking websites. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web2.0, and that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. It depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content.

Twitter is one of the fastest growing social networks in terms of users in the world. According to Shields and Maggie (2011), Twitter is an online social networking service that enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters known as “tweets”. Twitter was created in 2006 by Jack Dorsey and launched in July of that year (Twitter search team, 2011). Also, the Wikipedia (2011) narrates that twitter rapidly gained worldwide popularity, with 200million users as at 2011, generating over 200million tweets and handling over 1.6billion search queries per day. In many ways this social network site (twitter) continually provides social network for people at all ages. Twitter as a social network plays a role in communication throughout the world in the sense of providing online services to share information with others and connect with them by creating a profile that may include a personal web page and a blog. It has been argued by Rosen (2010) that twitter affects students behavior and performance by causing psychological disorder via addiction to the access of the social network. Also twitter affects behavior because the network is open to all. This study is therefore interested in finding out how Accessibility to ICT and the use of twitter affects the academic performance of Economic students in some secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.

Statement of the Problem

Advancement in technology in this era has reshaped all human activities on earth to include communication. The world has become a global village, where the use of computer and internet facilities is indispensable. Social media is among the numerous means which the people interact and communicate on line as more recently millions of people are on twitter, which is one of the social media to exchange views, ideas and other related matters with a good number of them being young ones. Twitter as a social network is not teens friendly but is rather a matured social networking as it is more advanced in terms of language structure and it works differently from other social network on the basis that instead of indicating a mutual relationship, it focuses on only one-way action in receiving informing in the form of tweets from someone with such social service provided by twitter. It is a common sight to see youth twitting in sensitive and highly organized places like church, mosque and even class rooms. Some are so carried away that even as they walk along the highway, they are tweeting. Therefore this research work seeks to explore the accessibility of ICT and use of twitter and how it affects the academic performance of Economics students in Uyo High school in Uyo Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the influence of the use of twitter on the academic performance of students in economics in Uyo Local Government Area.
2. To determine the influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered:

1. What is the influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students in Economics in Uyo Local Government Area?
2. What is the influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be tested:

1. There is no significant influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.
2. There is no significant influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area

LITERATURE REVIEW

Twitter Social Networking Sites and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students

According to Metropolitan school of business and management (2013), it has been proven that students who are actively engaged in social media networking sites like twitter perform more poorly than other students who are not. It is easier to get distracted by the various social media networking sites. Students are more likely to be faced with the temptation of surfing the web, chatting with friends and visiting the various social and media websites rather than focus on getting their school work done on time. For a secondary school student, the negative effects of social media networking sites on academic performance include:

1. Decrease in productivity: David (2014) asserts that social media networking sites decrease productivity as so many students end up spending the better part of their study hours checking those sites. Rather than get their assignments done, they spend the whole time either tweeting or posting messages on face book. There is bound to be a reduction in student's focus attention when they are studying and at the same time trying to get involved in activities on these social sites. This often time causes a drastic reduction in their academic performance.
2. Encourages Poor Grammar usage: Not only does the active involvement in the social sites encourage the poor use of grammar but also spellings, as students mostly use slang or shortened forms of words. Using twitter as an example, twitter limits its users to the use of 140 characters. Therefore users will have no other option than to abbreviate their words as much as they can, just to enable their thoughts fit into the 140 character provision. "There is, after all, only so much information that can be obtained in 140 characters. While the option to dig deeper may be present through embedded links in Tweets, for example, there may be little reward in pursuing

those connections for students.” As a result of the excessive use of abbreviated words and slangs by students on social networks, they start to rely on the computer grammar and spell checkers on their devices. This results in the reduction of their command over English language and also their writing skills (David, 2014).

3. Reduction in research capabilities: Learning and research capabilities have experienced drastic reduction as a result of students relying more on the information accessible easily on these social networking sites and web in general.

Social Networking Sites and its Users

The term social networking sites (SIOS) generally refer to internet-based locations where individuals and groups interact. Social networking sites (SNS) specifically refer to those internet based services that promote online social interactions between two or more persons within a bonded system for the purpose of friendship, meeting people and or exchanging information. It lets users create public or semi public personal profile pages that contain information of their own choice. It serves as a mechanism to communicate with other users, and contains mechanism that allows users to search for other users according to some specific criteria (Zwart et al, 2011; Boyd and Ellison 2007). Sites such as twitters, face book, my space are good examples of SNS that meet the previously stated criteria. The use of social networking sites have grown significantly since 2000 with estimates of nearly 78% of adults using the internet regularly, teenagers at 18 years and above at 65% using social networking sites (Pew, 2009).

In terms of membership and daily usage, more recent estimates show facebook as having over 750 million users worldwide, Linked-in over 100 million members, twitter having over 177 million tweet per day and you-tube having 3 million view between the ages of 18 to 29 (Rainie, 2011). Approximately, 61% of teens of the ages of 12-17 utilize social network sites to send messages to their friends on regular basis (Lenhart, 2009). Overall, it has been found that more women than men use social networking sites to communicate and exchange information (Hampton, 2011).

METHOD

Research Design

The design of this research is a survey study. The design is necessary because it focuses on the examination of the extent and the influence of twitter on academic performance of students. This design is relevant to the study because it will enable the researcher collect data from the large and small number of respondents on the specified variables.

Study Area

The area of study is Uyo local government areas of Akwa Ibom State. Uyo is one of the 31 Local Government Areas in the capital city of Akwa Ibom state. Uyo Local Government lies between latitude 5.05 North and longitude 80 East. This is within the equatorial rain forest belt, which is a tropical zone that houses vegetation of green foliage of trees, shrubs and oil palm trees.

Population of the study

The population of this study consisted of all Senior Secondary schools students in secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area, offering Economics. There are 5728 students offering Economics in Uyo Local Government Area, (Aniefiok, 2014).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study consisted of 286 respondents. They were obtained through stratified random sampling technique, where a certain number of respondents were selected from the selected schools and based on the population of Economics students in those schools.

Research Instrument

Two instruments were used for data collection. One of the instruments used in this study was a research questionnaire tagged “TWITTER AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INVENTORY (TAPI).” The questionnaire was made up of two sections I and II.

Validation of Research Instrument

The instrument was subjected to face validation by the supervisor and one expert from the Department of Test and Measurement in the University of Uyo. They were expected to test for the validity of the instrument by way of proper measurement of all the variables in the instrument. Their inputs were used to modify and streamline the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability study was conducted with the use of thirty (30) respondents from secondary schools who were not a part of the main work. Cronbach’s Alpha technique was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument in order to find out whether it is reliable or not.

Method of Data analysis.

The data was analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. For research questions descriptive statistics was used to answer while independent t-test analysis and two-way analysis of variance were used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level.

RESULTS

Research Question One

What is the influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area?

To answer the research question, descriptive analysis was performed on the data (see table 1)

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of the influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

Use of twitter	N	\bar{X}
Less use	157	70.37**
Much use	129	57.50 *
Total	286	64.56

**Highest mean score

*Least mean score

SOURCE: FIELD SURVEY

The above table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. From the table, it was observed that the students with the less use of twitter were more in number (157) with higher mean value of 70.37 in academic performance than those (129) with much use of twitter with mean value of 57.50 in academic performance. The result therefore means that there is significant influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area, meaning that students who did not devote much time for twitter performed better than their colleagues who devoted much time for twitter performed.

Research Question Two

What is the influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area?

To answer the research question, descriptive analysis was performed on the data (see table 2)

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of the influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

Accessibiliy of ICT									
(factor 1)	Adequate			Inadequate			Total		
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	N	X	SD
	186	69.68	3.22	100	55.05	6.05	286	64.56	8.26
Use of twitter									
(factor 2)	Less Use			Much use			Total		
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	N	X	SD
	157	70.37	2.91	129	57.50	7.07	286	64.56	8.26

****Highest mean score**

***Least mean score**

SOURCE: FIELD SURVEY

The above table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. From the table, it was observed that for factor 1 (accessibility of ICT) students with adequate access to ICT were more in number (186) with mean value of 69.68 in academic performance than those (100) with ineffective use of twitter with mean value of 55.05 in academic performance. For factor 2 (use of twitter), students who use it effectively were more in number (157) with mean value of 70.37 in academic performance than those (129) with ineffective use of twitter with mean value of 57.50 in academic performance. The result therefore means that there is significant influence of school location and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

Hypothesis one

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of the use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. In order to test the hypothesis, two sets of variable were identified as follows:-

1. Use of twitter as the independent variable
2. Academic performance as the dependent variable

Independent t-test analysis was used to analyze the data in order to determine the influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. (See table 3).

TABLE 3
Independent t-test analysis of the influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	t
Less Use	157	70.37	2.91	20.78*
Much Use	129	57.50	7.07	

***Significant at 0.05 level; df = 284; N= 286; critical t-value 1.96**

Table 3 presents the obtained t-test-value as 20.78. This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical t-value (1.96) at 0.05 level with 284 degree of freedom. The obtained t-value (20.78) was greater than the critical t-value (1.96). Hence, the result was significant. The result means that there is significant influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

Hypothesis Two

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. In order to test the hypothesis, two sets of variables were identified as follows:-

1. Accessibility to ICT and use of twitter as independent variables
2. Academic performance as dependent variables.

Two-way analysis of variance was then used to analyze the data, (See table 4).

Table 4
Two-Way Analysis of variance of the influence of accessibility of ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

FACTORS								
Factor one (accessibility to ICT)								
Adequate			Inadequate			Total		
N	X	SD	N	X	SD	N	X	SD
186	69.68	3.22	100	55.05	6.05	286	64.56	8.26
Factor Two (use of twitter)								
Less use			Much use			Total		
N	X	SD	N	X	SD	N	X	SD
157	70.37	2.91	129	57.50	7.07	286	64.56	8.26
Source of variance		SS		Df		Ms		F
Main effects		15872.79 ^a		3		5290.93		416.12
accessibility to ICT		3294.56		1		3294.56		259.11
use of twitter		4690.68		1		4690.68		368.91
Accessibility to ICT x use of twitter		546.75		1		546.75		43.00*
Within group(Error)		3585.58		282		12.72		
Total		19458.37		285				

****Significant at 0.05 level; df =3 & 282, critical F-value = 2.60**

Table 4 shows that the calculated F-value of (43.00) was obtained after testing for significance at 0.05 alpha level with 3 & 282 degrees of freedom. The calculated F-value (43.00) was greater than the table F-value (2.60). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The result of the data analysis in table 1 and 3 were significant due to the fact that the obtained t-value (20.78) was greater than the critical t-value (1.96) at 0.05 level with 284 degree of freedom. The result implies that there is significant influence of use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. The result therefore was in agreement with the newstodayneo.com (2009) that stated that students who spend much of their time in internet usage find it difficult to concentrate in the classroom and not notice what is taught. The website explains that teachers are disappointed to see the students using “Chat language” which is commonly used in social networking sites such as twitter during English

grammar lessons. The website further says, that social networking sites like twitter unconsciously shaped the attitude, behaviours and also academic performance of students. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

The result of the data analysis in table 2 and 4 were significant due to the fact that the calculated F-value (43.00) was greater than the table F-value (2.60) at 0.05 level with 3 & 282 degree of freedom. The result implies that there is significant influence of accessibility to ICT and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area. The result therefore is in agreement with the research findings of many experts in the field of study. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the research work, it was concluded Students in Uyo Local Government Area are so much indulged in the use of twitter as one of the social networks and there is significant influence of school location and use of twitter on the academic performance of students of Economics in Uyo Local Government Area.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are deemed necessary:

1. Student should know that overuse of social Network including twitter is detrimental to their studies and so should avoid it.
2. School authorities should discourage students from excess use of any of the social networks. By so doing our will improve their academic performance not only in Economics but also in other subjects.

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