



BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL NETWORKING TECHNOLOGIES FOR RESEARCH IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to determine business education students' utilization of social networking technologies for research in tertiary institutions in Delta State. One research question guided the study and one hypothesis was tested. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all 1,245 final year business education students from 2017/2018 academic session from the five tertiary institutions offering business education programme in the State. Instrument used for data collection was a validated five point rating scale questionnaire according to the research question guiding the study. The application of Cronbach Alpha on the obtained data yielded a score of 0.89 for internal consistency which was deemed reliable for the study. Arithmetic mean was used to analyze the research question while the standard deviation was used to ascertain the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' ratings. t-test was used to analyze the hypothesis. The findings revealed that business education students rarely utilize social networking technologies for research. The findings further revealed that students in universities and colleges of education did not differ on the extent they utilize social networking technologies for research. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made among others that the administrators of business education programmes should engage in regular orientation and re-orientation on the need to use of social networking technologies for their research work. It was further recommended that network providers should be invited to seminars and workshops geared towards educating students on the need to use social network technologies in their research work.

Key words: Business Education, Students, Utilization, Social Networking Technologies, Research, Tertiary Institutions

Introduction

Education is the engine that pilots the affairs of a nation. It is like the key that triggers the engine and a propeller that put development in motion. The level of a country's industrialization, economic status, development and individual independence is characterized by the level of their education. Ezenwafor (2015) stated that a very important role of education is the preservation and updating of knowledge and skills of students in line with changes in the society. Thus, business education is widely acknowledged as one of the veritable instruments for commercial and business mobilization in any society because it provides the basic training needed for business management and leadership.

The broad aim of business education is to train the youth and unemployed persons for jobs and also to help workers update their job skills. According to Obiete, Nwazor and Vin-Mbah (2015), the goals of business education programmes to include education of persons to be intelligent



consumers of products and services and to have a clear understanding of a nation's economy. Business education is a programme of courses that offer knowledge and competences required for entry into various kinds of business occupations and for advancing in them. It covers a host of learning experiences that prepare individuals for occupations in clerical, distributive business, data processing, accounting, word processing and secretarial fields. A recipient of business education can fit into or be employed in four occupational areas: namely, book-keeping and accounting jobs; clerical and general office jobs, office technology and management jobs, distributive and marketing jobs. Business education is value-oriented education. Every business education student, at the final year of study is expected to carry out a research in an area of interest, issue or problem relating to business education/vocational education.

Research, according to Akanbi (2013) is the process of arriving at dependable solution that solves a specific problem through planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data. Research is the application of scientific method in the study of a problem in order to discover information to fill identified gaps in knowledge. Research has to do with finding a solution to a problem, providing additional knowledge or information and finding the conditions under which a certain phenomenon occurs. The researchers have observed that some of the final year business education students finding it difficult in effectively carrying out research normally called the project at the Bachelor degrees and Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). Some authors (Ilo & Ifijeh, 2011) have blamed the inability of these students in effectively sourcing for materials (information) for their studies on their inability to utilize the social networking technologies.

Social networks are computer-based online community of individuals who exchange messages and share information. According to Hameed, Magbool, Aslam, Hassan and Anwar (2013), social network sites are mostly the common and one of the most educative of Internet services in the society these days . Social network sites like facebook, Orkut, Linkedin and Twitter have involved millions of users, many of whom have involved these social sites into their day-to-day lives. Through social network technologies, researchers can source and obtain viable information, disseminate their work, as well as access the work of others and communicate with one another on scholarly issues. The researchers also establish and maintain contacts with others who use these facilities for conversing, exchanging ideas on research and mutual relations. However, Adeyemi and Oluyemi (2013) opined that some student spend so much time in writing research report before graduation and most of them have blamed this on inadequacy of quality and updated literature in students' research report. This however has not been empirically proven to be the case amongst business education students in Tertiary institutions in Delta State. It is against this background, this study empirically investigated the extent business education students utilize social networking technologies for research in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

The Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) in its national policy on education stated that students at all levels of educational system should utilize ICT (Internet) to enable them complete their education. However, over the years the quality of research work put out by business education graduates in tertiary institutions seem to have been below standard. Even some students have decided



to drop out of school and some have suffered the financial burden of paying additional school fees. Those who have mustered the courage to continue have burdened their supervisors with error filled reports. This failure seems to show that business education students do not make use of the available social networking technologies in carrying out their research studies hence the difficulties encountered. It thus becomes pertinent that this is corrected through an investigation of the utilization of social networking technologies for research by business education students in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

Research Question

To what extent do business education students in tertiary institutions in Delta State utilize social networking technologies for research?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business education students from the University and those from the Colleges of Education in Delta State on the extent they utilize social networking technologies for research.

Method

Descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Delta State. The population of the study consisted of all 1,245 final year business education students from 2017/2018 academic session from the 5 tertiary institutions offering business education programme in the State. Through stratified random sampling, a sample of 374 final year business education students was selected. This sample constituted 30% of the total population of business education undergraduates. Instrument used for data collection was a validated five point rating scale questionnaire according to the research question guiding the study. The application of Cronbach Alpha on the obtained data yielded a score of 0.89 for internal consistency which was deemed reliable for the study.

Arithmetic mean was used to analyze the research question while the standard deviation was used to ascertain the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' ratings. t-test was used to analyze the hypothesis. Any item with mean between 4.50-5.00 was regarded as Very highly Utilized (VHU); an item with mean ratings of 3.50-4.49 was regarded as highly Utilized (HU); and an item with mean ratings of 2.50-3.49 was regarded as Averagely Utilized (AU). Furthermore, an item with mean rating of 1.50-2.49 and 0.50-1.49 was regarded as Rarely Utilized (RU) and Not Utilized (NU) respectively. For the hypotheses testing, where the calculated t value is less than the critical value of t, it means that the variable does not significantly influence respondents' mean ratings and the hypothesis was not rejected. Conversely, where the calculated t value is greater than or equal to the critical t value, it means that the variable has a significant influence on the respondents' mean ratings and the hypothesis was rejected.

Results

Research Question

To what extent do business education students in tertiary institutions in Delta State utilize social networking technologies for research?



Table 1: Respondents Mean Ratings on their Utilization of Social Networking Technologies for research

S/N	Items on Social Networking Technologies	Mean	SD	Remarks
Extent to which facebook is utilized to:				
1.	Obtain information for research purpose through facebook chats	2.40	0.65	Rarely Utilized
2.	Exchange messages between people for research purposes.	2.30	0.64	Rarely Utilized
3.	Communicate and share information with people of like interest for research	2.03	0.58	Rarely Utilized
4.	Create pages and share information with audience for research.	1.70	0.55	Rarely Utilized
5.	Participate in video chat and share information for research.	2.21	0.71	Rarely Utilized
Extent to which Google Plus is utilized to:				
6.	Form circle of friends that can share research information/ideas.	2.34	0.56	Rarely Utilized
7.	Create feedback pages for information sharing for research.	2.00	0.67	Rarely Utilized
8.	Share research contents for public view and criticism.	2.15	0.60	Rarely Utilized
9.	Create profile for public view and obtain information for research purposes.	2.22	0.61	Rarely Utilized
Extent to which YouTube is utilized to:				
10.	Acquire some tutorials for research (watching videos and obtain research information)	2.13	0.59	Rarely Utilized
11.	Gain some basic knowledge for research	2.10	0.67	Rarely Utilized
Extent to which Myspace is utilized to:				
12.	Make new friends and obtain research information for research.	1.90	0.55	Rarely Utilized
13.	Watch videos and obtain research base fans for research forum	1.87	0.57	Rarely Utilized
Extent to which Skype is utilized to:				
14.	Obtain information for research work through video calls.	2.00	0.59	Rarely Utilized
15.	Organize Internet based conference calling to discuss research issues, such as Tele-video	1.95	0.53	Rarely Utilized
Extent to which Academia.edu is utilized to:				
16.	Source for research papers	2.46	0.71	Rarely Utilized
17.	Follow research studies of lecturers	2.05	0.62	Rarely Utilized
Cluster Mean		2.11		Rarely Utilized

Data in Table 1 reveal that the respondents rarely utilized social networking technologies for research as reflected in the items 1-17 with mean ratings ranging from 1.70 to 2.40 and standard

deviations ranging from 0.53 to 0.71. The cluster mean of 2.11 indicates that business education students in tertiary institutions in Delta State rarely utilized social networking technologies for research.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business education students from the University and those from the Colleges of Education in Delta State on the extent they utilize social networking technologies for research.

Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis of Respondents' Mean Ratings on the extent they utilize Social Networking Technologies for Research

Variable	N	X	SD	df	α	t-cal.	T-crit.	Decision
Uni. Students	169	2.05	0.57	372	0.05	1.12	1.960	Not Significant
COE Students	205	2.12	0.59					

Data in Table 2 show that the calculated t-value of 1.12 at 372 degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance is less than the critical value of 1.960. This shows that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of business education students in university and college of education on the extent they utilize social networking technologies for research. Therefore, the hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion

Findings on the research question revealed that business education students in tertiary institutions in Delta State rarely utilized social networking technologies for research. This finding is in line with Ilo and Ifijeh (2011) who decried the inability of students to utilize the opportunities provided by social networks in conducting their school projects. It is against this background that Hameed, Magbool, Aslam, Hassan and Anwar (2013) suggested that students should use properly utilize social network technologies to source and obtain viable information, for their research works. Furthermore, the study revealed that students in the university and colleges of education rarely utilize social networking technologies for research. This is in line with Akanbi (2013) who decried the inability of students to use social networking technologies for research. It therefore becomes imperative that students are made aware of the need to properly channel the time spent on social network to conduct their research study rather than for socialization.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers concludes that business education students in tertiary institutions in Delta State rarely utilized social networking technologies for research. It is therefore imperative that adequate measures are put in place to improve students' awareness of the need to take advantage of the technologies for academic research and other academic purposes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers proffer the following recommendations:
The administrators of business education programmes should engage in regular orientation and re-orientation on the use of social networking technologies for their research work.



Network providers should be invited to seminars and workshops geared towards educating students on the need to use social network technologies in their research work. The tertiary institutions administrators should ensure that there are available internet networks in and around the school premises so as to enable students log into the social networks.

Government should also ensure that there is available power supply in the school and also provide wifi free zones in the schools where students can connect to the network.

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