TIKTOK EFFECT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF RITMAN UNIVERSITY MASS COMMUNICATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of TikTok on academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University. The background which justified the basis for the study was presented, the problem necessitating the need for the study was stated; and three research questions which were in line with the purpose of the study were asked to guide the study from whence the questionnaire was formed. The study touched on important concepts on the subject matter of TikTok and academic performance. Anchored on the Media Systems Dependency, an empirical review of relevant literature on the subject matter was extensively carried out with the gaps in literature adequately identified. None of the studies investigated the influence of TikTok on academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University. This formed the basic gap which necessitated this study. The research design employed for this study is the survey research design using questionnaire as the research instrument. Considering the size of the population, the study adopted a census approach. Using questionnaires as the sole instrument of data collection; data retrieved by the researchers were analyzed using frequencies and percentage. The test of hypotheses was carried out using Spearman correlation technique. Findings of the study discussed indicated a strong negative influence of TikTok on students' academic performance. Hence the study recommended that Students should be enlightened more on how to utilize TikTok for academic activity improvement.

Keywords: Tiktok, academic performance, students, Ritman University

Introduction

The social media today has become a part of everyday life and as a matter of fact, there is hardly anyone today who has not subscribed to at least one of the social media platforms. Especially found amongst young people, the social media has evolved into an integral part of the normal 'social life' and now poses as the center of attraction of most people. The social media has captured the attention of various categories of people including students who use it in a variety of ways. According to Husain and Sani (2022), social media is becoming popular today, and people are more used to exposing and sharing their moments in everyday life. Ezenwafor (2012) observed that since technology is ruling the world in all disciplines and activities, it ranks high in innovation development and in use of the technologies which require adequate

integration of ICT in students' communication. Olubiyi (2012) asserted that the world has been changed rapidly by the evolution of technology; thus, this has resulted into the use of technology as the best medium to explore the wide area of knowledge.

In the words of Stenger (2013), social media exist so as to provide communication among people regardless of the distance and other physical barriers. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of user generated content. In line with this, Salter (2012) stated that social media introduced significant and pervasive challenges to communication between organizations, communities and individuals. The availability of high-speed internet broadband connection with massive use of desktop, computer, laptops, e-readers, text messaging, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube and smart phones enables millions of people to actively engage in media, text messaging, content sharing, online learning and much more (Wordu, Uchendu and Alabo, 2020).

Husain and Sani (2022) assert that one of the popular social media platforms today is TikTok. TikTok has rapidly gained popularity worldwide since its launch in 2017 (Li, Guan, Hammond and Berney, 2021). According to Ngilangil (2022), TikTok is a mobile or computer application used to make and share short videos of 15-seconds long. It is the fastest growing social media application and 'is being promoted as a video-sharing social network" where "users can create a variety of videos ranging from challenges, dance videos, magic tricks, and funny videos" (Geyser, 2021). Ngilangil (2022) posits that tiktok is very popular among the young and has become for many a mode of free and creative self-expression. Dewanta (2020) asserted that TikTok can be processed into learning media interesting and interactive for students. In the view of Ramdani and Hadiapurwa (2021), students can freely express their creativity through TikTok with various features, thus making Tiktok an effective learning medium for creating interactive online learning.

In the view of Constantine (2022), academic excellence or achievement plays an important role in an individual placement, be in the academic institutions or job placement. Because of this, many people are concerned with the ways they can enhance their academic achievement. The emphasis on academic excellence which is also prevalent worldwide has encouraged many studies about the conditions promoting it. According to Mukabaranga, Michael and Bateyo (2022), the role of academic achievement as one of the predictors of one's life success and also in the aspect of academic placement in schools as well as the level of employability in one's career is inevitable.

Statement of the Problem

The educational system in Nigeria is faced with so many challenges which have certainly brought about a rapid decline in the quality of education. A lot of studies on this subject matter have been carried out over the years. The studies of Ugwu (2023) showed a direct relationship between new media usage and the academic performance of students in universities. Bahagia, Wibowo, Muniroh, Al-Wahid, Rizkal, Noor and Karim (2022) found that TikTok is a digital literacy method for students so that they can keep up with the times. Ngilangil (2022) found a significant relationship between TikTok and students. Amadi, Deebom and Iyalla (2018) found a moderate positive relationship between ICT facilities utilized and students' academic performance.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that a lot of findings (although inconclusive) on this subject matter have been made. However, a very critical point which necessitates this study is observed that none of these studies carried out was carried out in Ritman University. A pertinent question to ask at this point is: "what influence does TikTok have on academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University? The absence of a ready answer to this question represents an obvious gap in knowledge in this area. It is therefore the intention of this study to find out the influence of TikTok on academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University.

Research Questions

In line with the purpose of the study, the following research questions were asked:

1. How does TikTok influence the academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University?
2. What is the influence of TikTok on mass communication students passing their exams in Ritman University?
3. Does TikTok aid in improving the academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University?

Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses for this study are stated in the null (H_0) forms only, thus:

H_{01}: TikTok does not have any significant relationship with academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between TikTok and mass communication students passing their exams in Ritman University.

Significance of the Study

This study is of be of great importance to the government as it will enlighten them on the need to provide more educational facilities that can be used to harness TikTok to improve academic performance. The findings of the study will also be of great significance to the school senate board as it will aid them in understanding how TikTok affects students' academic performance and what they can do to ensure more favorable academic outcomes. Also, the findings and recommendations of this study will be of benefit to mass communication students as it will expose to the negative influences of TikTok on their academic performance. Finally, other researchers who may wish to cover more ground on this subject matter will find this study significant as it will serve as a useful reference material to ease their work.

Review of Literature

Social Media Usage and Academic Performance

According to Olutola, Olatoye and Olatoye (2016), social media utilization is supposed to enhance the students study habits and help to attain greater heights in their academic pursuits. There has been a massive awakening towards harnessing the social media platforms for academic and educational purposes. Social networks are now seen as learning platforms or communities that could be utilized to enhance students' engagement (Olutola, Olatoye and Olatoye, 2016). A lot of schools in Nigeria are increasingly embracing media tools as an addition to classroom learning. The internet has been found to be a useful tool by teachers and researchers to support their research and teaching. The internet provides a better learning experience for those who can access it. According to Mohd and Ku (2017), online media used in teaching are efforts to make improvements or to enhance the quality of teaching and learning process. E-learning is internet-based platform set up to reach out to people who may not be able to physically present in a classroom. It is a form of education offered to students who are not available to attend regular day school.

According to Ching (2017), social media can be used as a teacher and student's interaction platform in which they can openly share their study material and other academic works without any appointment or meetings. However, as much as the flexibility of this programming is advantageous, it may not be of much benefit to students who lack personal time management and organizational skills. Also, the absence of a live teacher can make many students complacent as they do not strive to complete tasks assigned to them. Salman, Mohannad and Richard (2018) opined that the provision and accessibility of information inside

the internet can be the reason why students pick to use it in preference to library for their paper paintings. The effectiveness of the social media depends on the use. For academic purposes, they aid in a lot of areas ranging from helping students and teachers or lectures to access assignments and for conducting research related to classroom studies (Ching, 2017). Social media provides information and helps the students to get updated and a lot of news could be gathered through this social media so it improves the knowledge and they get to know what is happening around the world. However, students may be vulnerable to unintended misuse of the social media.

Empirical review

Amadi, Deebom and Iyalla (2018) assessed information and communication technology (ICT) usage and academic performance of business education students in Rivers State Universities. The study adopted a correlation research survey design. The population of the study consists of 738 business Education students of 2017/2018 academic session. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting 456 final year students which was used for the study. Simple regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) methods were employed for data analysis. The results of the study showed that there was a moderate positive relationship between ICT facilities utilized and students' academic performance. This reviewed study has made a lot of insightful contributions to literature; however, a major gap observed is with respect to the subject scope, geographical scope and statistical method of analysis adopted. This current study adopts different measure to bridge this identified gap.

Wordu, Uchendu and Alabo (2020) studied the influence of social media on university students' academic performance in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey design; hence, questionnaire was employed as the research instrument. The population of the study was 1,750 undergraduate students of the department of Business Education in the 2018/2019 academic session. A stratified simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The data collected were analyzed using SPSS version 20 for descriptive statistics and mean score. The findings of the study showed that the use of Facebook and WhatsApp platforms would likely influence the academic performance of the University students in Rivers State. In comparing the reviewed study to this current study, the subject scope and the area of the reviewed study differ significantly from that of this current study. Hence, this is an attempt to bridge the gap in this area.

Hassan, Demong, Salleh, Omar and Alwi (2021) carried out a study on digital addiction and the academic performance among universities' students. Correlational research was adopted as the research design of this study. T-test, One-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation technique were adopted for analysis of data for the study. The findings of the study showed a positive and significant relationship between digital addiction and two other variables – overuse and emotional state. The research gap observed in this reviewed study is with respect to the subject scope, the research design adopted and the method of analysis adopted. The reviewed study focused on digital addiction while this current study focuses on the influence of TikTok. This study therefore aims to bridge this gap.

Theoretical Framework
Media System Dependency Theory

This theory was developed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin Defleur in 1976. The theory is based on the notion that the media, individual audience members, and their personal environments have dependency relationships with one another. The theory postulates that the more a person depends on a particular medium to meet defined needs, the more important that medium will be in such a person's life, and therefore, the more effects and influence the medium will have on that person. This tends to explain the perceived addiction to social media among young people given that students of universities in Nigeria would most likely become more dependent on particular social media platforms if they meet many of their information needs than on other information media that meet a few needs. The more students harness the potentials of

TikTok to meet their communication needs, the more likely it is that if same TikTok platform is explored in their education, learning outcomes would be appreciable.

These assumptions of the 'Media System Dependency Theory' indicate that social media platforms are likely to significantly influence undergraduate students if used for academic purposes if they (students) have developed dependence on them for meeting information needs more than other information media. The more TikTok meets students' information needs, the stronger the dependence, even in the area of academic activities.

Methodology

The following research adopted the quantitative survey design. This design is one in which the primary goal assesses a sample without making inferences or causal statements (Nedarc, 2019). Considering the case study, this study, the population refers to the total number of respondents that are to be surveyed in the course of the study in order to draw conclusions about the study. The population of this study comprises mass communication students of Ritman University. The total population is forty-nine (49) students which are gotten from: 100 level (8 students; 7 female + 1 male), 200 level (23 students; 20 female + 3 male); 300 level (5 students; 4 female + 1 male) and 400 level (13 students; 12 female + 1 male). The sample size for this study consists of 49 respondents which were surveyed from mass communication students at Ritman University. Considering the small population of the study, a census approach was adopted. However, the selection of mass communication students at Ritman University for this study was carried out based on the convenience sampling principle. This was because considering the timeframe allotted for the study, it would be easier to access these mass communication students to gather the requisite data for the study. The research instrument employed for this study is the questionnaire which was coined from the research hypotheses in order to actualize the purpose of the study and properly address the research problem. To ensure the validity of this instrument, a validating questionnaire was designed and submitted to experts in the field of communication for validation. Suggestions and direction given were strictly adhered to in the final draft of this questionnaire before distribution.

Data Presentation and Findings

The data analysis for this study was undertaken in two phases beginning the univariate analysis will be carried out on research questions and other items in the research instrument and the bivariate analysis carried out to test the hypotheses of the study using Spearman's correlation. According to Statistics Solutions (2021), the Spearman correlation is a non-parametric test that is used to measure the degree of association between two variables. The Spearman rank correlation does not carry any assumptions about the distribution of the data and is the appropriate correlation analysis when the variables are measured on a scale that is at least, ordinal.

Table 4.2.1: Responses to the proposition that you can engage in TikTok and still have a good academic performance

Options	Frequency	Percentage
SA	6	12
A	21	43
SD.	15	31
D	7	14
Total	**49**	**100**

Source: Survey Data, 2023.

The table above seeks out to analyze the effect of the respondent engagement on academic performance. From the result generated it was seen that a large proportion of the respondents agreed (55%) with the proposition was more than those who did not (45%). However, the level of difference was minimal. This

implies that while some were of the opinion that you can engage in TikTok and still have good academic performance others were of the perspective that this was not possible. Hence, despite the massive awakening towards harnessing the social media platforms for academic and educational purposes, we can therefore draw inference from studies that of the presence of some external variables aside social media can contribute to the massive growth or failure among students academic learning performance.

Table 4.2.3: Responses to the proposition that TikTok is useful when reading and preparing for exams

Options	Frequency	Percentage
SA	5	10
A	14	29
SD.	7	14
D	23	47
Total	**49**	**100**

Source: Survey Data, 2023.

The given data clearly indicates that proportion of the respondents are of the perspective that usage of social media during exams preparation is a major distraction on students' academic performance. Hence, this implies that TikTok is not useful when reading and preparing for exams. This study contradicts Olutola, Olatoye and Olatoye (2016), research which indicates that social media utilization enhances students study habits and help to attain greater heights in their academic pursuits.

Table 4.2.4: Responses to the proposition that students fail more when they are occupied with TikTok

Options	Frequency	Percentage
SA	19	39
A	22	45
SD.	--	--
D	8	16
Total	**49**	**100**

Source: Survey Data, 2023.

The table above shows that 19 (39%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the proposition that students fail more when they are occupied with TikTok. 22 (45%) of the respondents also agreed to the proposition. However, 8 (16%) of the respondents disagreed. The proportion of the respondents who agreed (84%) with the proposition is more than those who did not (16%). Hence, this implies that students fail more when they are occupied with TikTok.

Table 4.2.5: Responses to the proposition that TikTok helps to increase educational productivity

Options	Frequency	Percentage
SA	7	14
A	14	29
SD.	18	37
D	10	20
Total	**49**	**100**

Source: Survey Data, 2023.

The table above shows that 7 (14%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the proposition that TikTok helps to increase educational productivity. 14 (29%) of the respondents also agreed to the proposition. However, 18 (37%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the proposition; while 10 (20%) of the respondents disagreed. The proportion of the respondents who agreed (43%) with the proposition is less than those who did not (57%). Hence, this implies that TikTok does not help to increase educational productivity.

Table 4.2.6: Responses to the proposition that students who engage in TikTok have better academic performance than those who do not

Options	Frequency	Percentage
SA	13	27
A	10	20
SD.	15	31
D	11	22
Total	49	100

Source: Survey Data, 2023.

The table above shows that 13 (27%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the proposition that students who engage in TikTok have better academic performance than those who do not. 10 (20%) of the respondents also agreed to the proposition. However, 15 (31%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the proposition; while 11 (22%) of the respondents disagreed. The proportion of the respondents who agreed (47%) with the proposition is less than those who did not (53%). Hence, this implies that students who engage in TikTok do not have better academic performance than those who do not.

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study formulated in chapter one is hereby restated and tested using Spearman correlation technique at 5% level of significance. The hypotheses are restated thus:

Hypothesis One: TikTok does not have any significant relationship with academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University.

This hypothesis was tested using responses captured in table 4.2.1 and 4.2.2

Correlation Table One

Correlations

			Engagement on TikTok affects academic performance	TikTok influences whatever academic outcome you will have.
Spearman's rho	Engagement on TikTok affects academic performance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.541[*]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.021
		N	49	49
	Engagement on TikTok affects academic performance.	Correlation Coefficient	.541[*]	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	.
		N	49	49

 *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation table above shows a positive correlation coefficient of **.541** which implies a good correlation. Also, the p-value of **0.021** shows that the result given by this analysis is statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected; while the alternative hypothesis which states that TikTok has a significant relationship with academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University

is accepted and taken to be true. This study therefore concludes that TikTok has a significant positive relationship with academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between TikTok and mass communication students passing their exams in Ritman University.

This hypothesis was tested using responses captured in table 4.2.3 and 4.2.5

Correlation Table Two

Correlations

			TikTok improves your chances of getting better grades.	TikTok influences the rate at which students pass exams.
Spearman's rho	TikTok improves your chances of getting better grades.	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.624*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.057
		N	49	49
	TikTok influences the rate at which students pass exams.	Correlation Coefficient	.624*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.057	.
		N	49	49

 *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation table above shows a positive correlation coefficient of **.624** which implies a strong strength correlation. Also, the p-value of **0.057** show that the result given by this analysis is statistically insignificant. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between TikTok and mass communication students passing their exams in Ritman University is accepted and taken to be true. This study therefore concludes that there is an insignificant positive relationship between TikTok and mass communication students passing their exams in Ritman University.

4.4 Findings

The findings from the analysis are discussed in line with the objectives of the study stated in the beginning part of the work. The correlation analysis took care of the objectives and hypotheses of the study which include objective/hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. Data collected through questionnaires were presented and analyzed in tables using frequencies and percentages.

The test of hypothesis one shows that TikTok has a significant relationship with academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University. This is evidenced by the correlation coefficient of **.541** and p-value of **.021**. This finding is supported by the study of Amin, Iftikhar and Meer (2022). The test of hypothesis two shows that there is no significant relationship between TikTok and mass communication students passing their exams in Ritman University. This is evidenced by the correlation coefficient of **.624** and **.057**. This finding is supported by the study of Wordu, Uchendu and Alabo (2020).

Conclusion

The issue of the engagement of students on social media (especially TikTok) in campuses has raised many concerns about how their academic pursuits are impacted. While considering the potentials of TikTok to contribute favorably to academic advancement, it has not always been the case. From the findings of this study, it has been deduced that the use of social media by students cannot be completely eliminated. Despite being a private university, findings of this study have to a great extent revealed the relationship between TikTok and academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University on the negative side. The results obtained from the analysis carried out in this study shows that TikTok influences the academic performance of students. Thus, in the light of the findings obtained from this study, the conclusion reached is that there is a significant negative effect and influence of TikTok on academic performance of mass communication students in Ritman University. In the light of these empirical findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

Recommendations

1. Students should be enlightened more on how to utilize TikTok for academic activities – to improve in their academics.
2. The school management should endeavor to inculcate healthy social media practices (especially TikTok) into the curriculum.
3. Lecturers should ensure that students do not use their phones during lecture hours.

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