



## The role of social media in communication: A case study of Federal Cooperative College, Oji River Enugu State

Eze H. Chukwu, Asmau J. Abdullahi, Olisanekwu F. Nwandiogo & Blessing P. Ozioma

1, 2, 3, & 4 Federal Cooperative College, Oji River, Enugu State.  
humphrechukwueze@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

*Social media has profoundly impacted various aspects of modern communication, including commerce, advertising, education, and other areas. This study examines the role of social media in communication. The paper adopts a questionnaire method with a sample of 300 respondents. Judgment sampling and simple random sampling (SRS) techniques were applied. Study shows that majority of the respondents use social media on a daily basis, primarily through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok. It also reveals that social media is very important in communication, and the biggest benefits derived from using social media includes "increased connectivity with others," "improved access to information," and "enhanced self-expression and creativity. The result also shows no significant difference between male and female students in the use of social media for communication.*

**Keywords:** WhatsApp, social media, communication, role, random sampling, questionnaire, primary data, percentage, Oji River.

### INTRODUCTION

Social media has influenced many parts of modern life, including commerce, advertising, and education. Its significant influence on communication has made it an essential component of daily life. For example, WhatsApp has transformed the instant messaging scene by providing seamless worldwide connection. Individuals now have the ability to speak with anybody in the world via the internet. Social media has transformed communication by making it faster, more interactive, and widely accessible. While it offers immense benefits in connectivity, business, and activism, it also poses challenges that require responsible usage and regulation

Social media originated in the 1990s with the arrival of the internet and email, which changed the way people interact. SixDegrees.com was the first social networking website to appear in 1997, followed by Friendster, Myspace, and LinkedIn. However, the introduction of Facebook in 2004 marked the beginning of the social media age that we know today. Melissa W. Graham et al. (2015), examines role of social media in local government crisis communications. The findings show that the level of social media use, but not the number of tools employed, is positively linked with local municipal officials' perceptions of their capacity to control a crisis situation, as well as their overall judgments of the strength of their reactions. Implications and significance of the findings are examined.

Sumit Lodhia et al. (2017), examine the potential role of Internet communication technologies, including social media, in the integrated reporting process. The study shows that Internet technologies possess rich features and capabilities that have potentially significant application in enhancing external communications with integrated reporting stakeholders. Since social media continuing to grow at a fast pace, it is important to understand the effects it has on personal communication.

### Challenges of social Media in communication

1. Misinformation and fake news: spread of unverified content
2. Privacy concerns: data security risks and surveillance.
3. Cyberbullying and Toxicity: online harassment and hate speech
4. Addiction and Mental Health issues: Excessive use leading to anxiety or depression

### Objective of the Study

This study aims to explore how social media platforms have transformed the way individuals and students communicate, interact, and share information. The specific objectives of this study are listed below:

1. To identify the benefits of social media in enhancing communication
2. To explore the challenges posed by social media in communication

### Research Questions

The following research questions have been posed to guide this study.

1. What are the key benefits of social media in enhancing communication among students, individuals and organizations?
2. What are the major challenges associated with social media communication?

### Research hypothesis

1.  $H_0$ : There is no significant difference in the frequency of social media usage for academic communication among ND1, ND2, HND1 and HND2 students at Federal Cooperative College Oji-River.
2.  $H_0$ : There is no significant difference between male and female students in the use of social media for communication.

### Significance of the Study

Social media serves as a key tool for educational content sharing, e-learning and public awareness campaigns. This study will provide insights into how students at Federal Cooperative College Oji (FCCO) use social media for communication, shedding light on the role of social media in shaping campus relationships and communities.

### METHODOLOGY

Sample technique apply focus on judgment sampling and simple random sampling, with a sample size of 300 students (respondents) obtained from Federal Cooperative College Oji River Enugu State. The methods of data analysis will be on percentage, One-Way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Two sample T-Test by using the SPSS program.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**TABLE 3.1: BIODATA**

variables	frequency	percentage
Gender		
Male	167	55.7
Female	133	44.3
Age		
18-24	162	54.0
25-34	130	43.3
35-44	8	2.7
Level of Education		

National Diploma	143	47.7
Higher National Diploma	157	52.3

Table 3.1: The table above examines the bio-data of the respondents, which shows that 55.7% of the respondents were male, while 44.3% were female. The majority of respondents fell within the 18-34 year age range. In terms of educational level, 47.7% of the respondents were National Diploma (ND) students, whereas 52.3% were Higher National Diploma (HND) students.

**TABLE 3.2: Social Media Usage**

variables	frequency	percentage
Which social media platforms do you use?		
Facebook	55	18.3
Twitter	88	29.3
Instagram	60	20.0
LinkedIn	66	22.0
YouTube	10	3.3
TikTok	21	7.0
How often do you use social media?		
Daily	163	54.3
Weekly	62	20.7
Monthly	55	18.3
Rarely	20	6.7
What do you primarily use social media for?		
Staying connected with friends and family	79	26.3
Sharing updates about my life	37	12.3
Following news and current events	65	21.7
Entertainment (e.g., watching videos, memes)	71	23.7
Education and learning	48	16.0

Table 3.2: The table above examines Social Media Usage, which reveals that a majority of respondents use social media on a daily basis, primarily through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok. The results also indicate that the primary uses of social media among respondents are 'staying connected with friends and family', entertainment (e.g., watching videos and memes), following news and current events, and education and learning.

**TABLE 3.3: Role of Social Media in Communication**

variables	frequency	percentage
How important is social media in your communication with others?		
Very important	196	65.3
Somewhat important	54	18.0
Not very important	32	10.7
Not at all important	18	6.0

How has social media impacted your relationships with friends and family?		
Very positively	264	88.0
Somewhat positively	23	7.7
No impact	10	3.3
Somewhat negatively	2	.7
Very negatively	1	.3
Do you think social media has improved or worsened communication skills?		
Improved	203	67.7
Worsened	59	19.7
No impact	38	12.7

Table 3.3: The table above examines role of social media in communication, which shows that social media is very important in communication. The result indicates that social media has a very positive impact in relationship with friends and family. It also shows that social media has improved communication skills.

**TABLE 3.4: Challenges and Benefits**

variables	frequency	percentage
What are the biggest challenges you face when using social media for communication?		
Miscommunication or misunderstandings	64	21.3
Information overload	78	26.0
Cyberbullying or harassment	76	25.3
Difficulty in conveying tone or emotions	82	27.3
What are the biggest benefits you derive from using social media for communication?		
Increased connectivity with others	64	21.3
Improved access to information	99	33.0
Enhanced self-expression and creativity	87	29.0
Support and community building	50	16.7

Table 3.4: The table above examines the challenges and benefits associated with using social media for communication. It shows that the biggest challenges faced are 'Information overload', 'Miscommunication or misunderstandings', 'Cyberbullying or harassment', and 'Difficulty in conveying tone or emotions'. The results also indicate that the biggest benefits derived from using social media for communication include 'Increased connectivity with others', 'Improved access to information', and 'Enhanced self-expression and creativity'."

### Hypothesis test

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the frequency of social media usage for academic communication among ND1, ND2, HND1 and HND2 students at Federal Cooperative College Oji-River.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant difference in the frequency of social media usage for academic communication among ND1, ND2, HND1 and HND2 students at Federal Cooperative College Oji-River.

**Test statistic: ANOVA (SPSS Software version 23)**

ANOVA					
observation					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	236.500	3	78.833	.909	.465
Within Groups	1040.500	12	86.708		
Total	1277.000	15			

Using ANOVA test statistic, it shows that the p-value > 0.05. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude there is no significant difference in the frequency of social media usage for academic communication among ND1, ND2, HND1 and HND2 students at Federal Cooperative College Oji-River.

**Hypothesis 2**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between male and female students in the use of social media for communication.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant difference between male and female students in the use of social media for communication

**Test statistic: (SPSS Software version 23)**

Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
observation	Equal variances assumed	2.164	.163	.421	14	.680
	Equal variances not assumed			.421	10.284	.682

Using Two Sample T test statistic, it shows that the p-value > 0.05. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude there is no significant difference between male and female students in the use of social media for communication.

**CONCLUSION**

This study examines the role of social media in communication. Using percentage analysis, the results reveal that a majority of respondents use social media on a daily basis, primarily through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok. The results also show that social media is very important in communication, and the biggest benefits derived from using social media for communication include 'Increased connectivity with others', 'Improved access to information', and 'Enhanced self-expression and creativity'. Furthermore, the biggest challenges faced are 'Information overload', 'Miscommunication or misunderstandings', 'Cyberbullying or harassment'. The result also shows that there is no significant difference in the frequency of social media usage for academic communication among ND1, ND2, HND1 and HND2 students at Federal Cooperative College Oji-River.

## REFERENCES

- Melissa W. Graham and Elizabeth J. Avery (2015): The role of social media in local government crisis communications, *Public Relations Review*, Pages 386-394
- Megan Sponcil and Priscilla Gitimu (2014); Use of social media by college students: Relationship to communication and self-concept. *Journal of Technology Research*
- Sumit Lodhia and Gerard Stone (2017); Integrated Reporting in an Internet and Social Media Communication Environment: Conceptual Insights. *Wiley online library*, 31(3) 9
- Olunlade, S.A. Statistics and National policy Issues' A paper presented at the Nigerian Statistical Association Conference, 2000.
- Fleiss J.L., and Levin, B. (2003). *Statistical Methods for Rate and proportions*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed; John Wiley and sons, New York.
- Draper, N. and Smith H., (1981). *Applied Regression Analysis*, John Wiley and sons, New York
- Duncan, D.B. (1975). T-test and intervals for comparisons suggested by the Data "Biometrics, 31, page 339-359.