



Social Media Utilization Among Christian Religious Studies (CRS) Students in South-East, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study sought to find out social media utilization among secondary school students to promote students use of modern technology in Southeast, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study. Using descriptive survey design, the study made use of the population of twenty-three thousand, four hundred and sixty-six (23,466) SS II students from the different public secondary schools in southeast zone, Nigeria. The sample size of this study was 384 SS II CRS students using the Taro Yamane formula for sample size. The instrument for data collection in this research was researcher-developed rating scale titled, Students on social media and utilization (SOSMAU-Q). The data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The findings of the study based on the data analyzed and discussed revealed that a large number of secondary school students are using WhatsApp, Facebook, and Messenger. This is closely followed by Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. On the contrary, the number of students who use *Myspace, My chat and 2Go* is less. Also, a very few students use LinkedIn, Google scholar, and Research gate. Most secondary school students spent average hours of 5-10 hours and 11-14 hours surfing social media. This shows that secondary school students spent greater hours using social media. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that students should be encouraged to use social media like LinkedIn, google scholar and research gate. Students should minimize the time they spent on social media and try to engage themselves in activities that will bring academic success.

Keywords: Christian Religious Studies (CRS), Social Media Utilization, South-East Nigeria, Students

Introduction

Christian Religious Studies (CRS) is taught in junior secondary schools as one of the core subjects and as an elective in senior secondary schools. The subject gains its root in Nigeria's education system through the European missionaries who introduced the subject as a means of converting Nigerians to the white man's religion (Christianity). Following Nigeria's independence, the government of Nigeria took over school administration from the missionaries. The shift affected the study of CRS such that the name was changed from Bible Knowledge to Christian Religious Knowledge and later Christian Religious Studies. With the government takeover of schools, a review of the Nigerian educational system was requested in 1983, and the study's curriculum was expanded to cover arts, sciences, and technology subjects (Ilechukwu & Usulor, 2019). In the review, many subjects were introduced and among them was the teaching of CRS. The CRS curriculum was also examined by the Federal

Ministry of Education (FME), with a particular emphasis on developing attitudes, morals, and values.

The teaching of Christian religious studies in Nigerian schools could be dated back to the first half of the nineteenth century when the Christian missionaries founded the first school in Badagry in 1842. Early in the 19th century, this form of education spread to the North, where CRS was taught in the schools. In the early period, proprietors of schools were the Christian missionaries namely Methodists, Church Missionary Society and Roman Catholics, who saw CRS as a crucial subject to be taught in schools even up till today. Since that time, Christian religious studies have occupied a prominent position in the Nigerian school curriculum to date (Onovughe, 2008). According to Efido (2022), Christian religious studies help learners to integrate other subjects of the school curriculum into a more mature view of themselves, their relationship to the environment, their fellow human beings and God.



The subject further, provides a powerful motivation for right behavior by blending spiritual, moral, and social values which help in character development. (Gichanga et al, 2003). In recognition of the value attached to the subject, the subject was not only offered in the primary school alone but also in all levels of institution in Nigeria. In acknowledgment of the value attached to the subject, the subject was not only offered in primary school alone but also at all levels of the higher institution in Nigeria with great essence.

The essence of teaching Christian religious studies includes academic, moral, civil and spiritual objectives. The subject teaches students the way of life; instils discipline and obedience in the products. It enables students to learn the tenets of the faith and to live a life that is honoring to both God and society at large. CRS, therefore, is aimed at producing students who will be fit and equipped for both religious and social responsibility. In other words, the aim of CRS in Nigerian schools is to strengthen students' character and moral development. This enables students to have a sound attitude which to a greater extent only good morals and competent teachers could help to realize this laudable objective. Another aim for the inclusion of CRS in the education curriculum was to raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, and appreciate the dignity of labour specified in the broad national aims as good citizens. Hence, at secondary school level the subject is meant to prepare learners for useful living through the inculcation of Christian attitudes and to prepare learners for higher education (Akubue, 2012).

CRS is made to help students accomplish a variety of goals in their lives, ranging from having the knowledge of God to moral values which is geared towards shaping one's human behaviour in general. These behaviours are embedded in the stories and events recorded in the Bible which are drawn from the life of Christians and other mystical beings (Efido, 2023). Following the aims of the CRS curriculum which is all about ensuring adequate positive results in the lives of the learners of the subject, one may now ask if the students who offers the subject are using social media? Hence, Akubue (2012) further noted that CRS aims, and its teaching is closely tied to facing the challenges of 21st-century students in using social media and information communication and technology. To this end, the researcher here is interested in seeing the utilization of social media among CRS students.

The advent of social media and internet has put the Nigerian government on red alert for the need to

promote its integration in education. For the integration of social media in teaching-learning transaction, it is observed that just like other developing countries, Nigeria has been facing problems on this aspect. This is indicated in the study of Wamalwa and Wamalwa (2014) which established that teachers were confined to using only the traditional methods of teaching without concern with the place and role of modern instructional resources in enhancing effective teaching and learning. They urged for a renewed emphasis towards the use of Instructional resources by teachers. With this background, investigation on the utilization of social media by CRS students becomes necessary as revealed by a range of studies. The study of Obegi (2000) on the impact of the use of media resources on students' learning in business subjects, for instance, contended that research of this nature can hardly be exhaustive and that it is necessary to conduct other studies in the related subjects. Onsongo (2002), conducted a similar study and established that inadequate media resources were among the problems encountered by teachers in the use of life approach which is the recommended strategy for effective teaching of Christian religious studies (CRS). Further, the study discovered that teachers lacked teaching-learning resources to support their classroom activities. Apart from recommended Christian religious studies textbooks and the Bible, no other resources existed and even the textbooks were in some cases only for the teachers, while students did not have their own copies. In response to this problem, this study investigated on utilization of social media by CRS students.

Social media utilization is the brainchild of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The evolution has permeated every stratum of society hence, it has thrown students at all levels into the visual space. Students spend hours surfing the net, engaging themselves in chatting and socializing on different social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Mychat, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, YouTube, Pinterest, Google, Tumblr, 2Go, Research gate, Messenger and Instagram. The use of social media is on a very high increase in contemporary society, especially among students. Hence, social media statistics in Nigeria according to Statcounter (2020), reports have it that social media has higher rate users such as Facebook 49.22%; Twitter 26.8%; Pinterest 11.7%; Instagram 10.04%; You Tube 1.86%; LinkedIn 0.22%. From the statistics, it shows that social media has become a prominent part of student's lives as they are more concerned with Facebook friends, videos on YouTube,



posts, tweets, and other online communication than they are with face-to-face friends which is disheartening to note; hence creating a nearby communication gap. This made Singh, Amiri and Sabbarwal (2017), to note that this day, students are the most users of social media. It made available the platform for them to build social networks or social relations among themselves. But are students of CRS inclusive in using social media just like other students?

Based on the foregoing findings, this study aims at finding out social media utilization among Christian religious studies students in Southeast, Nigeria. Thus, the result of the study will contribute to the body of knowledge in CRS and make recommendations that will help to improve student's social media activities and at wider contexts. Specifically, this study addressed the following issues:

1. What is the most widely utilized social media by CRS students?
2. What is the average time spent on social media by CRS students?

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Survey research design is a type of design that seeks to describe an event, situation, or action as it appears. According to Nworgu (2015) survey research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire groups. The design was found appropriate and hence chosen for the study because questionnaires was used to collect data, the findings from which would be used to make generalization about the population.

The area of the study was South-East Nigeria which comprises, Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo state. The population of the study comprised SS II CRS secondary school students in the South-East, Nigeria. The target population was 23, 466 SS II students. The sample size for this study was 384 respondents. To compose this sample size, a Multi-sampling process was employed. Firstly, the simple random sampling technique was used to select three states out of five states in South East, Nigeria, namely Anambra, Enugu and Imo state. Secondly, a simple random sampling technique was used to select two education zones from the three selected states. This gave a total of six education zones namely: Ogidi and Onitsha (Anambra State); Enugu and Nsukka (Enugu

state); Owerri zone I and Orlu zone II (Imo State). Thirdly, a simple random sampling technique was used to select two local government areas (LGA) each from the six selected education zones used for the study. This gave a total of twelve LGA. Fourthly, a simple random sampling technique was used to select four schools from each of the twelve selected LGA. This gave a total of 24 schools. Finally, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 16 students from each schools selected (that is; males - 186, females – 198). This gave total respondents of 384 CRS students as the sample size.

The instrument for data collection in this research is researcher's developed rating scale titled, Students on social media and utilization (SOSMAU-Q). which was used to collect data from the respondents. The rating scale consisted of two clusters of A and B. Cluster A provides information on the most utilized social media by students. Cluster B consists of five rating scale items on time students used in surfing social media. The items in Cluster A were on a Likert rating scale of Very frequently (VF), Frequently (F), Occasionally (O), Seldomly (S), and Never (N) and it is weighted, 5, 4,3,2,1. The second clusters is on a four-point rating scale of time made of six items 6,5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face-validated by three experts. The experts were given drafts of the structured questionnaire which were based on the purpose of the study, and research questions. The experts' comments, as well as suggestions resulted in restructuring the purpose of the study, and research questions. It also resulted in restructuring some of the items and deleting the unnecessary ones which led to the production of the final copy.

The instrument was administered directly to the respondents. The rating scale was distributed manually to all the CRS teachers in the sampled schools with the permission of the principal of the sampled schools. The administration and retrieval of the questionnaire was done by the researcher, and this ensured accurate return of the 384-instrument given out. The data collected with the rating scale were analyzed using, frequency and percentage.

The result on the average time spent on social media revealed that the majority of secondary school students spent average hours of 5-10 hours and 11-14 hours surfing social media. This shows that secondary school students spent greater hours using social media. This revelation means that the average time spent on social media in a day by secondary school students is

high. The data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage.

Results

Table 1: percentage distribution of the most widely utilized social media by CRS students.

SM	VF (%)	F (%)	O (%)	S (%)	N (%)	N (384)
WhatsApp	256 (66.7)	128 (33.3)	-	-	-	
Facebook	231 (60.2)	153 (39.8)	-	-	-	
Instagram	-	51 (13.3)	205 (53.4)	128 (33.3)	-	
YouTube	-	64 (16.7)	179 (46.4)	141 (36.7)	-	
Twitter-		141 (36.7)	128 (33.3)	115 (29.9)	-	
Myspace			51 (13.3)	102 (26.6)	231 (60.2)	
My chat			64 (16.6)	102 (26.6)	218 (56.8)	
2Go			13 (3.4)	153 (39.8)	218 (56.8)	
LinkedIn			10 (02.6)	80 (20.8)	294 (76.5)	
Google Scholar			14 (03.8)	86 (22.3)	284 (73.9)	
Research gate			77 (20.1)	52 (13.5)	255 (66.4)	
Messenger	235 (61.1)	134 (34.8)	15 (03.9)			
N=						384 (100%)

Data in table 1 above shows that 256 students representing 66.7 percent very frequently use *WhatsApp* and 128 (33.3%) frequently use it. 231 students representing 60.2 percent very frequently visit *Facebook* and 153 (39.8%) frequently visit it. 51 students representing 13.3 percent frequently use *Instagram*; 205 (53.4%) occasionally use it while 128 (33.3%) students seldom are using it. 64 students representing 16.7 percent frequently use *YouTube*; 179 (46.4%) occasionally use it while 141 (36.7%) seldom use it. 141 students representing 36.7percent frequently use *Twitter*; 128 (33.3%) are occasionally using it while 115 (29.9%) seldom use it. 51 students representing 13.3 percent occasionally visit *Myspace*; 102 (26.6%) seldomly use *Myspace* while 231 (60.2%) never use it. 64 students representing 16.6 percent occasionally use *Mychat*; 102 (26.6%) seldom use it while 218 (56.8%) never use it. 13 (3.4%) occasionally

use *2Go*, 153 (39.8%) seldomly are using it and 218 (56.8%) students never use it. 10 students representing 02.6 percent occasionally use *LinkedIn*; 80 (20.8%) are using it while 294 (76.5%) never use it. 14 students representing 03.8 percent occasionally use *Googlescholar*; 86 (22.3%) seldom uses it while 284 (73.9%) never use it. 77 students representing 20.1% occasionally use *Research gate*, 52 (13.5%) seldomly are using it and 255 (66.4%) students never use it. 235 students representing 61.1 percent very frequently visit *Messenger*; 134 (34.8%) are using it frequently while 15 students (03.9%) occasionally use it.

The analysis revealed that *WhatsApp*, *Facebook*, and *Messenger* are the most widely utilized social media by secondary school students. They are closely followed by *Instagram*, *YouTube* and *Twitter*. *Myspace*, *Mychat*, *2Go*, *LinkedIn*, *Google scholar* and *Research gate* attracted very low use.

Table 2: Frequency of time spent on social media by CRS Students

Hours Spent	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent
Less than 1hr per day	24	6.3	6.3
btw 1-4hrs per day	36	9.4	90.6
btw 5-10hrs per day	110	28.6	34.9
btw 11-14hrs per day	130	33.9	68.8
btw 15-20hrs per day	48	12.5	81.3
btw 21-24hrs per day	36	9.4	100.0
Total	384	100.0	

Data in table 2 shows the frequency of time spent on social media by CRS students. Based on the analysis, 130 students representing 33.9% are using social media for 11-14 hours daily. 110 students representing 28.6% are using social media between 5-10 hours per day. 48 students representing 12.5% spent 15-20 hours a day on social media. Coincidentally, 36 students (9.4%) are using social media between 1-4 hours and 21-24 hours a day, respectively. Whereas 24 students representing 6.3% are using social media for less than 1 hour per day. The analysis showed that CRS secondary school students spent greater hours surfing social media.

Discussion

Most widely utilized social media by CRS students.

The findings on the most widely utilized social media by secondary school students as sought by research question 1 in table 1, revealed that the widely utilised social media by secondary school students are: *WhatsApp* which has 256 students representing 66.7 percent. This shows that *WhatsApp* is very frequently used by students. Then, 235 students representing 61.1 percent very frequently visit *Messenger*. 231 students representing 60.2 percent very frequently visit *Facebook*. 205 students representing 53.4% occasionally use *Instagram*. 179 (46.4%) occasionally uses *YouTube*. 141 students representing 36.7 percent frequently uses *Twitter*. 231 students representing 60.2% never use *Myspace*. 218 (56.8%) never use *My chat*. 218 (56.8%) students never use *2Go*. 294 students (76.5%) never use *LinkedIn*. 284 students (73.9%) never use *Google scholar*. 255 students (66.4%) students never use the *Research gate*. This means that secondary school students more widely

utilize *WhatsApp*, *Messenger* and *Facebook*. This was closely followed by *Instagram*, *YouTube* and *Twitter*. Whereas, *Google scholar*, *LinkedIn* and *Research gate* have the lowest patronage. This finding corresponds with the focus discussion of this study; the students selected for the focus group discussion also agreed that they were using *WhatsApp*, *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Twitter* and *Messenger* more frequently. Although *WhatsApp*, *Messenger*, *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *YouTube* and *Twitter* had the highest number of users, the number of *Myspace*, *My chat* and *2Go* users followed it significantly. These findings agree with the earlier findings of Eze (2015), that majority of secondary school students in Nigeria are using *WhatsApp*, *Facebook*, *Instagram* and *Messenger* more than other social media. The finding of the study is also in line with the report of *Facebook.com* (2017), statistics which revealed that Nigeria is the 3rd highest user of *Facebook* in Africa. In addition, it buttressed the findings of Mubarach and Bello (2016) which revealed that *WhatsApp* is the favourite social media among undergraduates in Nigeria.

Moreover, the findings that secondary school students more frequently navigate *WhatsApp*, *Messenger*, *Facebook*, *Instagram* and *Twitter* were not surprising to the researcher who had observed the prevalent use of these social media among some secondary school students around him. However, what was surprising to the researcher in the findings was that the number of students who use *LinkedIn*, *Google scholar*, and *Research gate* is very few as the researcher had thought the emergence of smartphones will make secondary school students visit *LinkedIn*, *Google scholar*, and *Research gate* at the comfort of their zone



and possibly use them in doing their assignment and other academic activities.

Average of time spent on social media by students.

The findings on the average time spent on social media by the secondary school students in Southeast, Nigeria as sought by research question 2, indicated that 130 students representing 33.9% are using social media for 11-14 hours daily. 110 students representing 28.6% are using social media between 5-10 hours per day. 48 students representing 12.5% spent 15-20 hours a day on social media. Coincidentally, 36 students (9.4%) are using social media between 1-4 hours and 21-24 hours a day, respectively. Whereas 24 students representing 6.3% are using social media for less than 1 hour per day. The findings from the focus discussion also corroborated the findings of the survey. In focus discussion, on question 2 which was based on the time students spent surfing social media each day, out of the 100 students that agrees to widely used social media, 5 persons agreed that they use social media less than one hour per day, 10 persons uses social media 1-4 hours a day, 50 persons agreed that they use social media between 5-10 hours a day, 20 persons agreed that they use social media 11-14 hours a day, 10 persons agreed that they use social media between 15-20 hours a day whereas, 5 persons agreed that they use social media between 21-24 hours. In other words, social media has become a major single electronic chat room for secondary school students in Southeast, Nigeria. The analysis showed that school students spent greater hours utilizing social media. These findings correspond with the studies carried out by Ajike and Nwakoby (2016) that 91.57% of secondary school students are using social media in Enugu State.

Moreover, the findings that secondary school students spent time on social media were not surprising to the researcher who had observed that students spent time on social media. What was however surprising to the researcher in the findings was that the average of time students spent on social media is alarming. The researcher thought that the emergence of technological devices like smartphones will make teachers and parents be at alert and regulate the time students spend on social media.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that Christian Religious Studies in secondary schools in southeast Nigeria are utilizing social media. The major problems of 284 students (73.9%) never use *Google scholar*. 255 students (66.4%) students never use the Research gate

should be discouraged. Having a very low percentage of CRS students using Google scholar and Research gate have been identified and intervention strategies suggested. From the recommended strategies, it is hoped that if all the stakeholders implement the recommendations of this study, CRS students will improve in surfing social media like Google scholar and Research gate.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and subsequent discussion, this study recommends the following:

1. Students should use social media like google scholar and research gate in other to enhance academic success.
2. It was recommended that students should limit the use of social media and minimize the time they spent on social media and try to engage themselves in activities that will bring academic success.

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