

**Frequency of Social Media Engagement as Correlates of University
Undergraduates Academic Procrastination in Anambra State.**

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between undergraduates' frequency of social media engagement and their tendency to exhibit academic procrastination. The proliferation of digital devices and the social media revolution has thrown up interesting trends amongst university undergraduates. While their social media engagement has been at an all time high, there are worrying signs that this may be taking a toll on their academic engagement, possibly leading to postponing important academic tasks in pursuit of immediate gratification gotten from social media engagement. This correlational study focused on 589 undergraduates from NAU Awka and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam sampled using Convenience Sampling Technique. Two instruments were employed for data collection; a researcher-made instrument titled "Social Media Engagement Frequency Questionnaire (SMEFQ)", and an Academic Procrastination Scale. Face and content validity were done by 3 experts from the Department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, while reliability was computed using the Cronbach Alpha technique which yielded .80 and .75 for the SMEFQ and APS, respectively. Data collected were analysed with SPSS version 26. Frequency (percentages) and PPMC were used to answer the research questions, while linear regression was used to test the hypotheses. Results revealed a high frequency of social media engagement among the respondents. Also, strong positive associations were found between frequency of social media use and academic procrastination. Recommendations were made that policy and pedagogical measures are needed to help undergraduates imbibe more scholarly use of social media to help them manage their time better.

Keywords: Social media, Social-media engagement, Academic procrastination, Undergraduates.

INTRODUCTION

Procrastination, a tendency deeply ingrained in human behavior, affects individuals across all ages, genders, and cultures. It manifests in various facets of life, including education, work, finances, interpersonal relationships, creativity, and self-care. As a complex phenomenon, procrastination arises from an interplay of individual psychological factors, personality traits, and environmental triggers. Among students, a particularly prevalent and concerning form is academic procrastination, which involves the intentional delay of academic tasks such as studying, completing assignments, or preparing for exams (Ezeonwumelu *et al.*, 2024a; Ezeonwumelu *et al.*, 2022; Anierobi *et al.*, 2021). Despite being aware of the potential negative consequences, students often procrastinate due to factors such as perfectionism, fear of failure, lack of motivation, and difficulties with time management (Ferari, 2014).

Academic procrastination poses a significant challenge in educational settings, often undermining students' ability to achieve their academic goals. The phenomenon has been extensively studied, with research linking it to various psychological and behavioral factors. Low self-regulation, for example, has been identified as a key contributor, making it difficult for students to follow through on their academic plans and commitments (Pychyl & Flett, 2016). Additionally, negative emotions such as frustration, boredom, and anxiety can exacerbate procrastination tendencies, creating a cycle of avoidance and delayed action (Steel & Kingsieck, 2016). Specific forms of academic anxiety, such as fear of tests or evaluations, have also been shown to hinder students' motivation and exacerbate procrastination behaviors (Wang & Xu, 2019). To address these challenges, researchers have proposed metacognitive interventions, such as improving self-regulation strategies and setting realistic, attainable goals, as effective tools to counteract procrastination (Wade & Steel, 2012).

Despite the growing understanding of academic procrastination and its underlying mechanisms, it continues to be a prevalent problem, particularly among university students. Procrastination not only impacts academic performance but also contributes to increased stress levels, incomplete tasks, and compromised emotional well-being (Pychyl *et al.*, 2019). The persistence of academic procrastination as a widespread issue highlights the need for further exploration of its causes and contributing factors in specific contexts.

Concurrently, social media has become an integral part of modern student life, influencing how young adults interact, communicate, and access information. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are immensely popular among Nigerian youths, with Facebook alone recording an 88% penetration rate in the country, followed by Instagram at 69.4% and TikTok at 57.4% (Statista, 2023). Social media offers numerous advantages, including opportunities for collaboration, information sharing, and enhanced learning experiences. However, its excessive use has raised concerns about its impact on academic performance and other related behaviors. Frequent engagement with social media, particularly for entertainment purposes, has been associated with decreased academic productivity, distractions, and a decline in learning outcomes (Junco, 2012; Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010).

The relationship between social media use and academic behaviors is nuanced, with studies suggesting both positive and negative effects. On one hand, social media platforms can serve as tools for educational communication and collaboration, helping students connect with peers and educators. On the other hand, excessive use of these platforms, particularly for non-academic purposes, has been linked to maladaptive behaviors, including reduced study time and lower academic performance (Ezeonwumelu *et al.*, 2024b; Paul *et al.*, 2012). Notifications, social interactions, and the immersive nature of social media can divert students' attention away from academic responsibilities, leading to procrastination and delays in completing academic tasks (Junco, 2012).

Furthermore, time spent on social media platforms such as Facebook has been negatively correlated with academic performance, as measured by GPA (Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010).

Despite these findings, there is still a lack of clarity regarding the specific role of social media engagement in shaping procrastination behaviors among university students. Most existing studies have focused on the general impact of social media use on academic performance, often overlooking procrastination as a distinct and critical outcome. Additionally, limited research has been conducted in the Nigerian context, where the dynamics of social media use and its influence on academic behaviors may differ due to cultural, social, and technological factors. This gap in the literature underscores the need to examine how the frequency of social media engagement affects academic procrastination among Nigerian university students.

This study seeks to address these gaps by investigating the extent to which frequent social media engagement influences academic procrastination among undergraduates in Anambra State. By focusing on the frequency of engagement rather than general usage, the research aims to provide a more insightful understanding of how specific social media behaviours intersect with procrastination tendencies.

Statement of The Problem

Procrastination, particularly academic procrastination, has emerged as a pervasive issue among university students, significantly impacting their academic performance, emotional well-being, and ability to meet academic goals. The intentional delay of academic tasks, despite awareness of the adverse consequences, is influenced by psychological factors such as low self-regulation, fear of failure, and negative emotions like frustration and anxiety. Similarly, the rapid integration of social media into students' daily lives has reshaped the way they engage with academic tasks. While social media offers potential educational

benefits, its excessive use has been increasingly associated with distractions and maladaptive behaviors, contributing to procrastination tendencies.

Existing research has identified general correlations between social media use and poor academic performance, yet the specific role of frequency of social media engagement in shaping procrastination behaviors remains unclear, particularly within the Nigerian context. Furthermore, there is a lack of focused studies examining how frequent social media participation may exacerbate or mitigate tendencies toward academic procrastination among university undergraduates. This gap in knowledge necessitated this study.

Purpose of The Study

The broad objective of this study is to gain deeper understanding of the influence of social media on academic procrastination among English Education students at Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The specific objectives are to:

- i. identify the frequency of social media engagement among Nnamdi Azikiwe University students.
- ii. ascertain extent of influence of Facebook engagement among Nnamdi Azikiwe University students the frequency of TikTok use and academic procrastination among English Education students.
- iii. determine the extent of influence of Tiktok engagement on academic procrastination of Nnamdi Azikiwe University students.
- iv. ascertain the extent of influence of Instagram engagement on Academic procrastination of Nnamdi Azikiwe University students

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. What is the frequency of social media engagement among Nnamdi Azikiwe University students?
2. To what extent does frequent Facebook engagement influence the levels of academic procrastination among Nnamdi Azikiwe University?

3. To what extent does frequent Tiktok engagement influence academic procrastination among Nnamdi Azikiwe University students?
4. To what extent does Instagram engagement influence academic procrastination among English Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University students?
5. To what extent does Instagram engagement influence academic procrastination among Nnamdi Azikiwe University students?

Research Hypotheses

This study is guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Frequency of Facebook engagement has no significant influence on academic procrastination of Nnamdi Azikiwe students.
2. Frequency of Tiktok engagements has no significant influence on academic procrastination of Nnamdi Azikiwe students.
3. Frequency of Instagram engagement has no significant influence on academic procrastination of Nnamdi Azikiwe University student

METHODS

This study adopted the correlation research design. According to Wubante, (2020), correlational research design is a type of non-experimental research method, in which a researcher measures two or more variables, understands and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence from any extraneous variables. The population of the study comprised all the 75,358 university undergraduates enrolled in Nnamdi Azikiwe University and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University during the 2023/2024 academic session. A sample of 589 students were selected using Convenience Sampling Technique. Two instruments were used for data collection. To measure the frequency of social media engagement a researcher made questionnaire titled "Social Media Engagement Frequency Questionnaire (SMEFQ)". This instrument consists of 24 items on Facebook, Tiktok and Instagram engagement. The questionnaire was scored thus; 10 hours and above (4), 5-10 hours (3), 1-5

hours (2), 1hour and below (1): representing the intensity of social media engagement of the selected students. To measure academic procrastination, an adapted version of McCloskey & Scielzo (2015) Academic Procrastination Scale was used. The adapted APS consists of 15 items scored on a scale of Always (4), Most times (3), Rarely (2), Never (1).

Three experts from the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, were presented with the title, purpose of the study, research questions, and copies of the questionnaire by the researchers for face and content validation. The items' contents, relevance, applicability, clarity, and coverage of the study's aspects were carefully examined and scrutinised by the experts. The specialists fixed a number of things, including deleting and rearranging some of the instrument's parts.

A trial test was conducted in order to determine the instrument's reliability. 80 copies of the questionnaires were distributed and collected from participants outside the study area. Cronbach alpha was used to compute the collected data. The co-efficients for clusters I, II, and III of SMEFQ were 0.89, 0.72, and 0.80 (.80). While (APS) was 0.75. Thus, the researchers considered the instruments reliable for the study. Data collected were analysed using percentages, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), and simple regression. Descriptive statistics was used to answer research question 1, while PPMC was used for research questions 2,3, and 4. The hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression

Result

Research Question One: What is the frequency of social media engagement among university undergraduates in Anambra State?

Table 1: The Frequency of Social media Engagement among Nnamdi Azikiwe University Students.

Hours	Facebook	TikTok	Instagram
10 hours and above	45%	21%	41%
5 – 10 hours	33%	28%	18%
1 – 5 hours	14%	22%	11%
1 hour below	8%	29%	20%

Table 1 reveals that 45% of the respondents reported Facebook usage of above 10 hours per days with 8% of the users reporting less than 9 hours. 21% of the respondents reported using Tiktok for above 10 hours a day while 29% of the respondents used the social media platform for less than 1 hour per day. Instagram engagement recorded a high intensity of usage at above 10 hours a day (41%) while 20% of the respondents reported using Instagram for less than 1 hour per day. Thus, it could be said that there is a high frequency of social media engagement among university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does frequent Facebook engagement influence academic procrastination among university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Table 2: The relationship between frequency of Facebook engagement and academic procrastination

	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig. Value
Level of Facebook Engagement – Academic Procrastination	.818**	.669	.665	.000

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Table 2 revealed that the correlation coefficient between frequency of Facebook engagement and academic procrastination is 0.818. This implies that there is a strong and positive relationship between Facebook engagement and academic procrastination among university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Research Question Three: To what extent does frequent TikTok engagement influence academic procrastination among university undergraduates in Anambra State?

Table 3: The Relationship between frequency of TikTok Engagement and Academic Procrastination

				R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig. Value
TikTok Engagement	–	Academic Procrastination		.617**	.450	.439	.000

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Data in Table 3 revealed the relationship between frequency of TikTok engagement and academic procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State. A correlation coefficient of .671 implied a strong and positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Thus, it could be argued that Facebook engagement has a significant relationship with academic procrastination tendencies of university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Research Question Four: To what extent does frequent Instagram engagement influence academic procrastination among university undergraduates in Anambra State?

Table 4: The Relationship between frequency of Instagram Engagement and Academic Procrastination of university undergraduates.

				R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Sig. Value
Instagram Engagement	–	Academic Procrastination		.732**	.536	.532	.000

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Table 4 revealed that the correlation coefficient between frequency of Instagram engagement and academic procrastination is 0.732. this implies a strong and positive relationship between Instagram engagement and academic procrastination. As a result, it could be surmised that the more a student engaged in Instagram, the more likely that the said student would defer academic tasks for a later time.

Hypothesis One: Frequency of Facebook engagement does not significantly predict academic procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Table 5: Regression Analysis on the predictive Influence of Frequency of Facebook Engagement of university undergraduates.

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	Sig.	F	Sig.
	B	Std. Error					
(Constant)	.718	.218					
1 Facebook Engagement	.811	.134	.818	.818 ^a	.000	98.35	.000 ^b

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Procrastination

b. Predictors: (Constant), Frequent Facebook Engagement

The predictive influence of frequency of Facebook engagement on academic procrastination is university students as revealed in Table 5 yielded a Beta value, $B = 0.818$ ($p < 0.05$) and the p – value (0.00) is less than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. As a result, it could be stated that frequent Facebook engagement has significant predictive influence on academic procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two: Frequency of TikTok Engagement does not significantly predict Academic Procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Table 6: Regression Analysis on the predictive ability of Frequency of TikTok Engagement on Academic Procrastination.

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R	Sig.	F	Sig.
	B	Std. Error					
(Constant)	.548	.189					
1 TikTok Engagement	.610	.145	.671	.671 ^a	.000	30.78	.000 ^b

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Procrastination

b. Predictors: (Constant), Frequent TikTok Engagement

The predictive influence of frequency of TikTok engagement on Academic Procrastination yielded a B value of 0.671 ($p < 0.05$), with the p – value (0.00) less than 0.05. thus implies that there is significant prediction of frequency of TikTok engagement on academic procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Three: Frequency of Instagram Engagement does not significantly predict on Academic Procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State.

Table 7: Regression Analysis on the prediction of Frequency of Instagram Engagement on Academic Procrastination

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		R	Sig.	F
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	.771	.237					
1 Instagram Engagement	.801	.219	.732	.732 ^a	.000	49.61	.000 ^b

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Procrastination

b. Predictors: (Constant), Frequent Instagram Engagement

Table 7 revealed the predictive power of frequency of Instagram engagement on academic procrastination which yielded a Beta value, $B = 0.732$ ($p < 0.05$). The p-value (0.00) is lower than 0.05. as a result, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate hypothesis restated that frequency of Instagram engagement significantly predicts on academic procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State..

Discussion of Findings

The Frequency of Social Media Use

The findings of Table 1 revealed that a majority of the students spent considerate time on social media platforms, with Facebook and Instagram recording most traffic. This is in consonance with the findings of Ezeonwumelu

et al. (2021) that found Facebook and Instagram to be very popular social media platforms among young learners. These social platforms, in addition to the numerous social networking opportunities they provide also offers an avenue for young users to learn and acquire several skills. Ezeonwumelu and Okoro (2020), however highlighted that most users in the adolescent / early adulthood stage are more interested in using social media platforms for fun and recreational purposes.

The Influence of Frequency of Facebook engagement on Academic Procrastination

Findings in Table 2 and 5 revealed that there is a high extent of influence of frequency of Facebook engagement on academic procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State. This implies that when students spend a significant amount of time on Facebook, they tend to defer important academic tasks for a later time. This augurs well with the findings of Okereke and Oghenetega (2014) that found that excessive social media use had a negative relationship with the students' academic performance. This implies that students that spend a lot of time on social media may struggle to meet up with their other academic tasks which does not bode well with their academic performance. Also, Anierobi *et al.* (2021) found that varying degrees of academic procrastination existed among university students that had correspondingly varying rates of exposure to social media use.

The Influence of Frequency of TikTok Engagement on Academic Procrastination

Findings in Table 3 and 6 revealed a strong and positive relationship between frequency of TikTok engagement and academic procrastination of university undergraduates in Anambra State. TikTok is a very popular social media platform among young people and has been found to take up a significant amount of the young learners' time. Ezeonwumelu *et al* (2021) reported that excessive social media engagement is a kind of addictive behaviour that erodes the learners' time management ability. When students do not manage their time as well as they

should, they tend to misallocate time to unimportant things while they put more important academic tasks on hold. Hakan (2015) concurred that academic procrastination is strongly correlated with poor academic performance.

The Influence of Frequency of Instagram Engagement on Academic Procrastination

Findings in Table 4 and 7 indicated a high extent of association between frequency of Instagram engagement and academic procrastination among university undergraduates in Anambra State. This implies that excessive engagement in Instagram hinders focus and concentration, which may cause academic procrastination. This is in agreement with the findings of Olayinka *et al* (2020) that excessive usage of social media networks led to several distractions that could falter a student's focus Ezeonwumelu and Okoro (2019) also found that most adolescent users of social networking sites see social media as an escape route from the harsh realities of their day to day lives. Thus, goal-oriented tasks may be sacrificed from time to time in a bid to engage in social media activities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was inferred that social media engagement has a significant extent of influence on academic procrastination among university undergraduates in Anambra State, as high levels of social media engagement were associated with academic procrastination among the target population.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made

1. Students should be introduced to productive applications that help manage time, enhance focus and reduce time spent on social media.
2. Students should take occasional breaks from social media to allow them concentrate on other productive ventures.

3. There is need for students to be encouraged to make use of schedule for study and other academic tasks to enhance time management.
4. School management should ensure stringent measures are enforced to ensure that deadlines, associated with academic-related tasks are met.

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