



Full Research Paper

University Teachers' Use of Twitter as an Instructional Tool and Effective Curriculum Content Implementation in Three Institutions of Higher Learning in Cross River State Nigeria.

Aglazor Genevieve Ph.D
Omoogun Modupe Remi

¹Dept of Curriculum & Teaching
Dept of Environmental Education
University of Calabar
Calabar-Nigeria



E-maila

aglazorunical@yahoo.com
remiomoogun@gmail.com

Phone

+2348037071236
+2348159556184

ABSTRACT

This study examined University teachers' use of twitter as an instructional tool and effective curriculum content implementation in three higher institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. One purpose of the study was stated and converted into one research question and statement of hypothesis. Literature review was carried out based on the variable understudy and the survey research design was used in the study.-The stratified random, purposive and accidental sampling techniques were used in the study. The method of data collection was a 20 items four point rating scale questionnaire. A sample of 373 respondents was used in the study and the reliability index of the instrument was .82 using the Cronbach Alpha Reliability method. The statistical tool for data analysis was the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at .05 level of significance. The result of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between University Teachers' use of Twitter as an instructional tool and effective Curriculum implementation in Universities of Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended that teachers should change the methods and strategies of teaching from traditional methods of chalk and board to communicative strategies like the use of social media like Twitter that are based on the students' real engagement in the teaching-learning process for effective curriculum implementation.

Keywords: Teachers, Twitter, Curriculum implementation, University, Social media

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent times technology has permeated every facet of life even the classroom is not left out. The use of whatsapp, facebook, Twitter Telegram, Instagram is on the increase. This generation that is deeply involved in social media usage as a means of communication, interaction, entertainment and collaboration and even for business purposes. The Teacher also must adopt this media that has so engaged these students to reach out to them, create educational content and help implement curriculum. Twitter is a social media networking site that offers micro blogging services within the internet and enables users to tweet and retweet messages and information that are currently within 140 words. Devi, Gouthami & Lakshmi (2019), stated that Twitter offers a quick way to post real time information instructional content, provide up to date information and eliminate the need for extensive research.

There are diverse opinions on the use of Twitter as a tool for instruction, that it encourages collaborative learning, academic help seeking and real time information. Many educators believe that social media can be used as effective teaching tools in higher education because of its ease of use, ready availability and individual affordability (Devi, 2019). There has been a lot of research on the challenges of effective curriculum content implementation in higher institutions, some schools of thought have opined that it is due to the dearth of textbooks and obsolete instructional materials in our higher institutions that challenges of effective implementation of curriculum contents keep persisting. Several efforts have been made by the government at all levels over time.

These efforts include the introduction of the Tertiary Education (TETFUND) Intervention programmes with the objective to carry out staff training and development, provision of infrastructures, reading and writing materials, conference attendance and so on. Government has encouraged in-service training and retraining for teachers. Workshops, seminars and other training have also been encouraged. Payments of adequate salaries and so on. But in spite of all these enormous efforts made by the government, there has been no serious improvement as it concerns the effective implementation of curriculum contents in Public tertiary institutions of Cross River State, Nigeria. It is based on these problems that the researchers sought to find answer to whether University Teachers' use of Twitter has any relationship with the effective implementation of curriculum contents in Public tertiary institutions of Cross River State, Nigeria.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between University Teachers' use of Twitter as an instructional tool and effective Curriculum implementation in three higher institutions of Cross River State, Nigeria.

1.2 Research questions

What is the relationship between University Teachers' use of Twitter as an instructional tool and effective Curriculum implementation in three higher institutions of Cross River State, Nigeria?



1.3 Statement of hypothesis

The hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between University Teachers' use of Twitter as an instructional tool and effective Curriculum implementation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Twitter is a powerful social media tool for educators. As more educators contribute, the stronger this community becomes since the users will build a nest of a thriving community of practice. The use of social media has taken over every sector by storm and the educational sector is not left out. This is why Cherwinga (2017), conducted a study on incorporating twitter and blogs into two undergraduate courses offered in the Department of Library Science at Mzuzu University. The study used a sample of 64 students. These students were randomly selected, questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Again, Mutekwe (2015), conducted a study on higher education and social media technology.

The study was carried out in four higher institutions in South Africa. The study sought to establish the receptive levels of higher education lecturers in using social media technology and also their perceptions towards integrating it in the classroom. The data for the study were collected through individual interviews with 20 purposively sampled higher institution lecturers from four South African Universities, the analysis the data followed a thematic approach and the study revealed that while quite a good number of the younger higher institution lecturers have embraced social media as part of their modern day social and professional life, that it also enhance the classroom delivery and enhances knowledge creation.

Another study was also conducted by Ross, Mannger, Lapraur and Sallivan (2015) on the use of twitter in the creation of educational professional learning opportunities, the study was carried out using a population of 160 educators – 105 females and 55 males between the ages of 22 and 65 using education related hashtags on twitter. Thirty two educators from the survey population elected to participate in an interview. The study discovered that educators frequently used twitter professionally to collaborate, network and engage in professional and that the integration of technology into life communication, and learning has shifted the ways meaning – making and knowledge occur.

Going forward, Dievi, Gouthami and Lakshmi (2019), stated that social media tools created a platform for the improvement of the educational process, they stated that social media sites offer value in teaching. The researchers noted that the use of twitter and other social media platforms by teachers' in higher institutions offers new opportunities for innovating and modernizing education institutions and for preparing learners for the 21st century. The researchers stated that twitter in higher education creates a social community of learners who share knowledge, values and goals and that twitter brings about "connectedness" which refers to students' feelings of cohesion, spirit, trust and interdependence and also "learning" which refers to the students feeling of the extent to which their learning goals and expectation are satisfied.



A related study was carried out by Edinyang, Effiom, Effiom and Ushie (2020), on teachers' implementation of Social Studies curriculum for effective citizenship in Cross River State, Nigeria. Two research questions were formulated and transformed to statements of hypotheses to guide the study. Literature review was carried out based on the variables under study. Survey research design was utilized. A stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting the 250 respondents sampled for the study. A validated 20 items four point likert scale questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Data was analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistical tool. The result of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between availability of instructional materials and curriculum implementation for effective citizenship, and teachers' attitude has a significant relationship with the implementation of Social Studies curriculum for effective citizenship. It was recommended that teachers need to be acquainted with new Social Studies, civic and citizenship developments and how these can be incorporated into diverse aspects of classroom social studies curriculum implementation.

Malik, Hayman-sehrum and Zohri (2019), reviewed literature of 103 peer reviewed scientific studies published from (2009 – 2017) that addressed the use of twitter for educational purposes across formal and informal settings. Most studies used or the literature are descriptive and they are case studies carried out in North American and European Higher Education settings. They found out that based on the literature review and the analysis of the studies, twitter is a useful tool of communication due to high accessibility, novelty and real time formats. The researchers also noted that students, teachers, and other stakeholders use it as a pedagogical tool to gain information.

Chawinger (2016), also conducted a study on the use of twitter in university classrooms in a developing country; the researcher used two university courses offered in the Department of Library and Information Science at Mzuzu University in Malawi. Findings showed that twitter if properly deployed can improve the learning and bring about effective curriculum implementation since twitter is learner centred, that content can be discussed with lecturer anytime anywhere, it was possible for students to have out of class discussion that originally initiated by their lectures, they learn from each other, they were able to generate and share content through creating knowledge and collaborating, however the major challenge posed by the researcher was the limited access to internet and exorbitant internet bundles.

Yarkin and Unmaz (2013), further conducted another study on the use of twitter as an instructional tool. In carrying out the study, 48 students were monitored as they use twitter with their lectures in class, 26 students were females which represent 54% and 24 were male which represent 46%. The lecturers provided instruction with twitter for 14 weeks. The data sources for the study were surveys developed by the researchers. The quantitative survey was administered three times during the course. The questionnaire data for each phase were analyzed using descriptive statistics while the questionnaire items were measured using ANOVA. The result revealed that students' perceived competency level increased in learning and that as they participated, their confidence level increased because they were allowed to share their contribution via twitter and hashtags, they were able to gather more information, collaborate, generate content on their own, the instructor was more of a facilitator.



A related study by Diverniero and Hosek (2013), was carried out on the ways in which instructors used twitter in the classroom and to identify the benefits and downfalls of using twitter as a classroom tool. To carry out the study, the researchers used 44 college instructors within ages 22 – 60 years ($M = 41.7$, $SD = 11.01$). The teaching experience of the instructors ranged from 3 to 33 years. The participants represented in the study were a cross-section of teaching job statuses including 18 associate/assistant professors, one full professor, two lecturers and other graduate teaching assistants. Also, a total of 40 college students from ages 18 and above participated in the research.

The research sought to find the importance of twitter for content engagement and for skill development. For content engagement, the researcher found out that instructors used twitter when they believed it would help students and instructors meaningfully engage with course content. On skill development, some instructors used twitter as a medium for skill practice. Most instructors used twitter because it allowed students to engage and augment in-class and out-class discussion, engage students in critical analysis, reflection and application of course content. Both students and instructors agreed that twitter was beneficial for giving shy students a voice in the class and twitter helps form a connection with their professors and instructors.

Researchers contend that relevance can come from effective teaching and increase students' motivation to learn and sense of empowerment towards their own learning. These notions suggest connecting students' perception of its relevance but also promoted perception of effective teaching and empowerment. This finding echoes that of Bista (2015) which states that the careful and creative use of twitter can strengthen the educational interest and academic success of students. Twitter is rich in engaging students and teachers across different educational content.

3. METHODOLOGY

The area of the study is Cross River State. Cross River State is located in South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. It comprises of eighteen Local Government Areas. Cross River lies between latitudes $8^{\circ} 42^{\prime} 23^{\prime} 39^{\prime}$ East of the Greenwich Meridian and longitudes $5^{\circ} 57^{\prime}$ and $23^{\circ} 99^{\prime}$ North of the Equator. The state covers the land mass of approximately 20, 156km² square kilometers.

The state has seven public tertiary education institutions. They are University of Calabar in Calabar municipality, Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH) in Calabar South Local Government Area. College of Health Technology in Calabar Municipality, Cross River College of Education, Awi, in Akamkpa Local Government Area, Institute of Technology and Management in Yakurr Local Government Area, School of Nursing, Itigidi in Abi Local Government Area, Federal College of Education, Obudu. The private tertiary education institutions are Arthur Jarvis University, Akpabuyo, Nogak Polytechnic Ikom and Owoche College of Education, Bekwarra etc. The population of the study is made up of 7,461 university teachers. The sampling techniques utilized in this study were the stratified random sampling technique, purposive sampling technique and off course the accidental sampling technique. Only three Universities were purposively selected for the study. They are the University of Calabar, University of Cross River and Arthur Jarvis University all in Cross River State.



A sample of 373 respondents representing five percent of the entire population was used in the study with the aid of accidental sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled; Use of twitter and curriculum implementation Questionnaire (UTCIQ). The reliability estimate of the instrument was .82 using the split half reliability method. The statistical tool for data analysis was the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at .05 level of significance with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The result of the study is as displayed thus;

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

The hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between University Teachers' use of Twitter as an instructional tool and effective Curriculum implementation. The independent variable in this study is use of twitter while the dependent variable for this study is the effective implementation of curriculum contents. Pearson's product moment correlation was used for data analysis. The result is presented in Table 1. The items used in measuring this hypothesis were derived from questionnaire items 1-10 of Section B and items 11-20 of section C of the instrument.

The result of the analysis shown in the table below revealed that use of Twitter produced a mean score of 9.09 with a standard deviation of 2.56 while effective curriculum implementation produced a mean score of 12.47 with a standard deviation of 3.01. The result further revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .028 obtained with a p-value of .000 at 371 degrees of freedom met the condition required for significance at .05 level. Based on this, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between University Teachers' use of Twitter as an instructional tool and effective Curriculum implementation was rejected indicating that there is a significant relationship between University Teachers' use of Twitter as an instructional tool and effective Curriculum implementation in the study area.

The finding of the study is in line with Dievi, Gouthami and Lakshmi (2019) that social media tools created a platform for the improvement of educational process, they stated that social media site offer value in teaching. Furthermore, the use of twitter and other social media platforms by teachers' in higher institutions offers new opportunities for innovating and modernizing education institutions and for preparing learners for the 21st century. Twitter in higher education creates a social community of learners who share knowledge, values and goals and that twitter brings about "connectedness" which refers to students' feelings of cohesion, spirit, trust and interdependence and also "learning" which refers to the students feeling of the extent to which their learning goals and expectation are satisfied.



Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of the relationship between University teachers use of Twitter and effective curriculum content implementation (N=373)

Variables:	x	S.D	r	P-value
Use of Twitter (x):	9.09	2.56	028	.000
Effective curriculum Content implementation (y):	12.47	3.01		

*significant at 0.05 level; df= 371

5. CONCLUSION

As technology pervades the global village, the school must be prepared to take the lead. The implementation of the curriculum is the core activity of teaching and learning and its implementation can become more effective with the deployment of Social media. Students are more engaged in learning when they are taught with and use social media.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended that teachers should change the methods and strategies of teaching from traditional methods of chalk and board to communicative strategies like the use of social media like Twitter that are based on the students’ real involvement in the teaching-learning process for effective curriculum implementation.



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