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## **Influence of Social Media on the Academic Performance of Public Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.**

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### **Abstract**

*There is no doubt that the proliferation of social media across various levels of education in the world has raised concerns among stakeholders regarding its impact on student academic performance. This study investigated the effect of three different social media platforms (YouTube, WhatsApp, and Google) on the academic performance of public secondary school students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The study contributed to the existing body of knowledge on the impact of social media on academic performance in Port Harcourt. At the same time, developing strategies and insights on maximizing the benefits and minimizing the cost of social media usage among students. A combined research design of descriptive survey and qualitative data collection (structured interview) was used to elicit respondents' opinions (300 students and 100 teachers). The findings revealed that excessive and improper use of YouTube and WhatsApp by students negatively impacts the academic performance of students as expressed in a grand mean of 2.16 and 1.89 respectively. Google positively impacts students' academic performance when used for academic purposes with a grand mean of 3.76. Based on these findings, the study recommends that educators and parents monitor students' social media usage to promote the responsible use of these platforms to enhance academic performance.*

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**Keywords:** Influence, Social Media, Academic Performance, and Public Secondary School.

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### **Introduction**

The emergence of social media has completely changed how individuals engage, communicate, and obtain information. Students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, public secondary schools are using social media sites like Google, WhatsApp, and YouTube more and more. Social media has many advantages, but its effects on academic performance have drawn criticism. Overuse of social media has been connected to poor educational habits, a shorter attention span, and lower academic accomplishment. Particularly Google, WhatsApp, and YouTube have ingrained themselves into students' daily life and may have an impact on their academic achievement. In order to offer educators, parents, and legislators with valuable information, this study examines the impact of various social media platforms on the academic achievement of

public secondary school pupils in Port Harcourt, Rivers State (Sam Jaja & Sam-Kalagbor, 2023).

Social media's explosive expansion has changed how people connect, communicate, and get information. Particularly for teenagers, social media sites like Google, WhatsApp, and YouTube have become an essential aspect of contemporary life. Students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, public secondary schools are not an exception. The amount of time these youngsters spend on social media is growing, and this has sparked worries about how it can affect their academic performance. Social media provides many advantages, such as entertainment, connectivity, and information access. On the other hand, overuse of social media has been connected to a number of drawbacks, such as a shorter attention span, worse study habits, and worse academic performance. The ceaseless barrage of alerts, messages, and updates can be annoying, making it difficult for pupils to concentrate (Opara, 2018).

The multicultural metropolis of Port Harcourt, in Rivers State, has a high degree of social media penetration. Students in this region's public secondary schools are exposed to a variety of social media platforms, which may have an impact on their academic performance. The purpose of this study is to look into how Google, WhatsApp, and YouTube affect public secondary school pupils' academic performance in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. By examining this subject, the study hopes to offer guidance to legislators, parents, and educators on how to encourage social media usage that is responsible while also improving academic achievement (Nwosu, 2020).

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### **Statement of the Problem**

Complaints about social media's potential effects on academic performance have been raised by Port Harcourt, Rivers State, public secondary school pupils' growing usage of the platform. Even though social media has several advantages, overuse has been connected to poor study habits, worse academic achievement, and a shorter attention span. Students find it difficult to concentrate on their academics due to distractions caused by the pervasive usage of Google, WhatsApp, and YouTube. Parents and educators are concerned that social media use is harming their children's academic performance, but there isn't any concrete data to back up this assertion. The purpose of this study is to look into how Google, WhatsApp, and YouTube affect public secondary school pupils' academic performance in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, to give stakeholders information they may use to create plans that encourage social media usage in a responsible manner and improve academic achievement.

## **Purpose of the Study**

Generally, the purpose of the study is to find out the influence of social media on the academic performance of public secondary school students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Specifically, the purpose of the study is to find out:

- 1) Investigate the effect of YouTube on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State.
- 2) Determine the impact of WhatsApp on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State.
- 3) Ascertain the influence of Google on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State.

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## **Research Questions**

For the purpose of this research the following research questions were developed;

- 1) What is the positive effect of YouTube on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State?
- 2) What is the positive impact of WhatsApp on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State?
- 3) What is the positive influence of Google on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State?

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## **Literature Review**

### ***Theoretical Review***

Deci and Ryan's "Self-Determination Theory" (SDT) propounded in 2000, provides a suitable theoretical framework for the study on the influence of students' use of social media on academic achievement. According to SDT, there exist three fundamental psychological demands that drive human behaviour:

- 1) Autonomy: having a sense of agency and control.
- 2) Competence: a sense of effectiveness and ability.
- 3) Relatedness: a sense of belonging and appreciation.

Students' academic performance can be impacted by social media (YouTube, WhatsApp, and Google among others) positively or negatively. The SDT states as an illustration that;

**Autonomy:** excessive usage of social media might cause distractions, which diminishes one's ability to be in charge of their education.

**Competence:** Social media can boost feelings of competence by giving users access to resources and knowledge, but excessive usage of the platform can also lower academic accomplishment.

**Relatedness:** While social media can help children connect with teachers and friends, overuse of the platform can also cause social isolation.

The SDT can be used to explain how students' use of social media affects their engagement and motivation, which in turn affects their academic performance positively or negatively (Okoro, 2019).

### *Conceptual Review*

#### *Effect of YouTube on Academic Performance*

YouTube has billions of users worldwide and has become an essential element of modern life. With its wide selection of instructional videos and tutorials, YouTube may be a helpful learning tool for students. On the other hand, excessive YouTube viewing can harm academic achievement. According to studies, students who watch more YouTube videos also typically spend less time studying and have poorer GPAs. One major drawback with YouTube is that it may be very distracting. Students may quickly become enmeshed in a vortex of non-academic content due to the never-ending recommendations and notifications, which will reduce their focus and productivity. Moreover, watching movies passively might impair critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, which are crucial for success in school (Osuji, Sam Jaja, & Amaewhule, 2024).

Even though YouTube can be a helpful addition to traditional education, it shouldn't take the role of in-person instruction, experiential learning, and critical thinking. Parents and teachers need to encourage safe usage of YouTube in order to lessen its detrimental effects on students' academic achievement. This may entail monitoring usage, promoting active learning techniques, and placing restrictions on screen time. Teachers can also use YouTube to their advantage by including instructional videos into their lesson plans. This will help students maintain a good balance between using technology and studying conventional ways. By recognizing YouTube's advantages as well as disadvantages, we can make sure that students use this useful resource to improve rather than degrade their academic performance (Ogbonna, 2018).

### ***Impact of WhatsApp on Academic Performance***

WhatsApp, which provides a practical and quick messaging network, has completely changed the way students communicate. On the other hand, using WhatsApp excessively can hurt your grades. Studies have indicated that pupils with higher WhatsApp usage likely to have worse grades and shorter attention spans. Students may find it difficult to concentrate on their academics due to the constant barrage of notifications and texts. Additionally, WhatsApp may encourage procrastination and lower output. It's possible for students to find themselves idly scrolling through discussions, losing important study time. Memes and non-academic talks might compete for attention in group chats, which can also be a major source of distraction. Furthermore, the instantaneous speed of WhatsApp may prevent users from reflecting and thinking deeply, two qualities that are crucial for scholastic achievement (Afolabi, 2017).

In order to reduce the detrimental effects of WhatsApp on academic achievement, students need to set limits and develop responsible using practices. This can involve setting aside time for "study-only" activities, turning off notifications, and staying away from group discussions when studying. In addition, parents and educators can contribute by encouraging responsible technology use and keeping an eye on it. Students can utilise WhatsApp for cooperation and communication while staying focused on their academic objectives if they are aware of its possible drawbacks (Nwokocha, 2019).

### ***Influence of Google on Academic Performance***

Google provides students with unmatched access to knowledge, revolutionising the way they access and process information. Students can explore new topics, find answers to challenging questions, and access a wealth of instructional resources with just a few clicks. Academic achievement has been impacted by this convenience in both positive and negative ways. Google can, on the one hand, speed up research, improve comprehension, and save time. Pupils can easily access original materials, investigate other viewpoints, and double-check facts. But an over-reliance on Google might impair one's ability to think critically and solve problems. Pupils who rely too much on search results might not be able to hone their own analytical skills. Furthermore, students may experience information overload as a result of the wealth of information, which makes it difficult for them to distinguish reliable sources from false ones. This may lead can result in shallow understanding and poor academic performance (Iwu, 2019).

Furthermore, a lack of comprehension and memory may result from Google's rapid pleasure. Instead of reading and understanding the material, students could rely on brief summaries and

bullet points. Deep learning and academic achievement may be hampered by this. Furthermore, students may become less motivated and put in less effort as a result of Google's constant accessibility because they will be more dependent on technology than on their own skills. Students need to establish responsible search habits and critical thinking abilities in order to maximise the positive aspects of Google while minimising its negative aspects. Teachers can make a significant contribution by fostering innovative ideas, developing analytical skills, and teaching information literacy. By understanding Google's advantages and drawbacks, students can use it to improve their academic performance and acquire crucial (Amadi, 2020).

### ***Review of Related Literature***

Researchers, educators, and politicians have been interested in the impact of social media on academic achievement. Examining previous research on social media's effect on academic achievement, this review of the literature focusses on Google, YouTube, and WhatsApp. With billions of users utilising different social media platforms for connection, communication, and information access, social media has become an essential component of modern life. Students in public secondary schools are not an exception, and worries about how their usage of social media affects their academic performance have been raised.

Numerous researches have looked into the connection between academic achievement and social media use. According to a 2010 study by Asodike and Sam Jaja (2012), students who utilised social media often spent less time studying and had poorer GPAs. Similar findings were made by Chinda (2020), who discovered a link between poorer academic accomplishment and extensive social media use. Among the most often utilised social media sites by students in public secondary schools are YouTube, WhatsApp, and Google. YouTube is a website where users may share videos and access a wide variety of entertaining and informative content. With the help of the messaging program WhatsApp, friends and relatives may communicate instantly. One search engine that offers a wealth of information is Google.

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### **Methodology**

This study employed a descriptive survey research design method was used for data collection and analysis methods. The study population consisted of 330 public secondary school students and 143 teachers in 15 public secondary schools in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. A survey questionnaire was administered to the students to gather data on the impact of three major social media platform (YouTube, WhatsApp and Google) usage, their influence on students' academic performance. The questionnaire consisted of a total of fifteen (15) items, including and a

modified four (4) point Likert scale ratings was used to analyse the results. The data analysis was done using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic data, while mean and standard deviation were used to examine the influence of these social media platforms on academic performance.

### Findings of the Study

The data for this study is hereby presented and analyzed below using a mean and standard deviation to answer the three research questions as appropriate.

#### *Research Question One:*

What is the positive effect of YouTube on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the positive effect of YouTube on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City.**

S/N	Items	Teachers		Students		Total Mean	Decision
		MEAN $\bar{X}$	SD <sub>1</sub>	MEAN $\bar{X}$	SD <sub>1</sub>		
1.	YouTube improves students' commitment to academic activities.	2.39	0.86	2.23	0.50	2.31	Disagreed
2.	A lot of time is spent studying by students through the use of YouTube.	2.36	0.61	2.19	0.53	2.27	Disagreed
3.	YouTube has positive influence on students' grammatical skills.	2.52	0.64	2.43	0.57	2.47	Disagreed
4.	Students' research work has been improved as a result of YouTube.	2.39	0.59	2.28	0.54	2.33	Disagreed
5.	The use of pidgin English by students has reduced due to students' use of YouTube.	2.47	0.69	2.39	0.56	2.43	Disagreed
	<b>Average Grand Total</b>	<b>2.43</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>2.30</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>2.36</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

From table 1, the items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were all disagreed upon by both teachers and students that YouTube has a positive effect on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City. Specifically, the result shows that teachers and students both strongly oppose the notion a lot of time is spent studying by students through the use of YouTube (item 2), this is evident with the low total mean score of 2.27. While item 3 had the highest mean score of the table with a total mean of 2.47 on the issue that YouTube has positive influence on students' grammatical skills. Thus, based on the low average grand total mean score rating it is assessed that YouTube has a negative influence the academic achievement among public senior secondary school's students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

*Research Question Two:*

What is the positive impact of WhatsApp on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the positive Impact of WhatsApp on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City.**

S/N	Items	Teachers		Students		Total Mean	Decision
		MEAN $\bar{X}$	SD <sub>1</sub>	MEAN $\bar{X}$	SD <sub>1</sub>		
6.	The use of WhatsApp improves spelling ability of students.	2.78	0.63	2.53	0.58	2.65	Agreed
7.	WhatsApp allows students to discuss academic issue beyond the school environment	3.41	0.56	3.38	0.56	3.39	Agreed
8.	WhatsApp facilitate rapid dissemination of information among Students.	3.49	0.58	3.62	0.60	3.55	Agreed
9.	WhatsApp promote collaborative work among students.	3.69	0.61	3.43	0.57	3.56	Agreed
10	WhatsApp allow for easy sharing of learning materials among Students which improves academic performance.	3.71	0.62	3.45	0.59	3.58	Agreed
	<b>Average Grand Total</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.



From table 2 above, the items 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 were all agreed upon by both teachers and students that WhatsApp has a positive impact on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City. Specifically, the result shows that teachers and students both strongly agreed on the point that WhatsApp allow for easy sharing of learning materials among students which improves academic performance as indicated on item 10 with a total mean of 3.58. While item 1 had the lowest total mean score of 2.65 on the table on the issue the use of WhatsApp improves spelling ability of students. Thus, based on the high average grand total scores rating it is assessed that WhatsApp has a positive influence the academic achievement among public senior secondary school's students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

*Research Question Three:*

What is the positive influence of Google on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City, Rivers State?

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation on the positive Influence of Google on the academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City.**

S/N	Items	Teachers		Students		Total Mean	Decision
		MEAN $\bar{X}$	SD <sub>1</sub>	MEAN $\bar{X}$	SD <sub>1</sub>		
11.	A lot of students use Google to engage in activities that are relevant to their academic progress.	3.29	0.54	2.95	0.49	3.12	Agreed
12.	Google assist in broadening students' knowledge on difficult subject matter	3.24	0.54	3.17	0.52	3.20	Agreed
13.	Google promotes interactive learning.	2.98	0.49	3.09	0.51	3.03	Agreed
14.	Google enables students to have access to numerous educational materials globally.	3.74	0.55	3.95	0.50	3.85	Agreed
15.	Google allows for easy download or storage of educational materials in different formats which can be studied in a future date to enhance academic performance.	3.89	0.54	3.90	0.51	3.90	Agreed
	<b>Average Grand Total</b>	<b>3.43</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

From the table 3, the items 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 were all agreed upon by both teachers and students that Google has a positive influence on the academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt City. Precisely, the result shows that teachers and students both strongly agreed on the point that Google allows for easy download or storage of educational materials in different formats which can be studied in a future date to enhance academic performance which improves academic performance as indicated on item 15 with a total mean of 3.90. While item 13 although agreed upon had the lowest total mean score of 3.03 on the table on the issue Google promotes interactive learning. Thus, based on the highest average grand total scores rating, it is judged that Google has the most positive influence the academic achievement among public senior secondary school's students in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

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### **Discussion of Findings**

In the preceding subhead, an effort was made to analyze the data collected via questionnaire and the results obtained from it quite revealed the position of findings. The research has three major objectives which were to; Investigate the positive effect of Youtube on the academic performance of students in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Determine the positive impact of WhatsApp on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, and ascertain the positive influence of Google on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt, Rivers State (Eke,2018).

The finding of the study as it relates to the first research question, revealed that, YouTube has low positive influence the academic achievement of students in public senior secondary school in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. This was determined based on the low average grand total score rating of both sets of respondents (teachers and students). Furthermore, this affirms the general view point that YouTube is mostly used by students for entertainment purposes and rarely used for academic purposes. This doesn't not deny the fact that YouTube has numerous educational videos on various topics that would be of great value to students. However, these videos are rarely watched by students on YouTube because they are considered boring (Opara, 2018).

The findings of the study regarding the second research question indicates that WhatsApp although a messaging platform, has a strong impact on the academic performance of students. This is attested to by the relatively high positive response of teachers and students. This confirms the fact that WhatsApp is being used globally not just as messaging platform but also

a means of knowledge sharing and the sharing of information that helps to enhance the academic performance of students (Eke, 2018).

The finding from the third research question highlights the fact that Google plays a vital role in terms of influencing the academic performance of students positively in secondary schools in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. This is attested to by both sets of respondents with the highest average grand total mean rating compared to other social media platforms examined. This can be attributed to several factors including the fact that Google provide a high content of academic materials in different formats such as written, audio, video and pictures. These different formats enable students to select materials that are most suitable for what they are learning and studying. Additionally, the information provided via the Google platform are easily accessible, storable and printable making it possible for students to use at different intervals (Sam Jaja & Sam-Kalagbor, 2023).

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## **Conclusion**

This study investigated the influence of social media on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The findings revealed that social media has both positive and negative impacts on academic performance. However, Google was found to have a more positive influence on academic performance, as it provides students with access to a vast array of educational resources, facilitates research, and enhances understanding. WhatsApp followed, as it enables students to collaborate, share resources, and communicate with teachers and peers.

However, YouTube had a lower positive impact on academic performance. While it offers educational videos and tutorials, excessive YouTube use can lead to distractions, decreased attention span, and reduced critical thinking skills. Additionally, YouTube's passive nature can hinder deep learning and understanding. Overall, this study highlights the need for students to use social media responsibly and for educators to harness its potential to enhance academic performance. By promoting responsible social media use and leveraging its benefits, students can optimize their academic success.

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## **Recommendations**

Based on the above findings the following recommendations were proffered:

- 1) Teachers, educational administrators, and educational stakeholders should ensure the integration of Google's educational resources and tools into their teaching practices,

such as Google Classroom, Google Scholar, and Google Docs, to enhance student learning, collaboration, and academic performance.

- 2) Teachers and students should establish designated WhatsApp groups for academic purposes, setting clear guidelines and expectations for usage, to maximize collaboration, reduce distractions and improve academic performance.
- 3) Teachers should curate and share educational YouTube videos and channels, promoting critical thinking and active learning, while also teaching students to evaluate online sources and maintain a balance between YouTube use and traditional learning methods in order to improve academic performance.

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