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Prevalence of Social Media Usage among Teachers in Ghana

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to assess the prevalence of social media usage with emphasis on WhatsApp uses among Senior High School (SHS) Teachers in the Kumasi metropolis. The population of this study comprised of Teachers from Public SHS in the Kumasi Metropolis. The specific objectives included frequency of use, purpose of use and the challenges. Structured questionnaire was employed in this study. Respondents were duly informed about the objective of the study. Participatory was purely voluntary. Primary data were analyzed with the aid of Predictive Analytic Software (PASW) for window. The study revealed that the frequency of social media use among teachers was high, 46.7% of teachers use WhatsApp more than ten times every day, 26.7% use WhatsApp seven times daily whilst 14% others use WhatsApp maximum of three times daily. Technical reasons for WhatsApp uses were; Simplicity 45.3%, free charge 60.7%, Availability and immediacy 60.7%, Privacy and minimal exposure 20%, Teachers already use it 46.7%. Professional reasons include: Deeper acquaintance with students 60.7%, Pleasant atmosphere 52.7%, Sense of belonging to the group 38.7%, Quality of expression among student 46.7%, Students help one another and share materials 72.7% Accessibility to learning materials 53.3%, Teacher availability, 50.2% Learning any time anywhere 64.0% challenges of WhatsApp use: Students with no smartphones 53.3% Message flooding, time consuming 60.5%, Group maintenance 56.7%, Expectation for high availability of teachers 50.0%, Students' usage of inappropriate language 60.7%, Overexposure to students' personal life 52.7%, it is concluded that WhatsApp can be employed as learning platform if judiciously use or regulated. Some schools do not permit the use of mobile phones among students in schools. Meanwhile, our covert observation during the preliminary stages revealed that most sophisticated smartphones were used by students.

Keywords: Social Media, Whatsapp, Teachers, Prevalence Usage, Ghana

1. Introduction

The inception of internet, its pool of applications and usage has influenced human life in diverse ways. It has gradually sublimed into the normal course of everyday life. The advancement of the web to Web 2.0 has particularly increased the usage of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Tango, Line, Imo, Twitter, and among others by the current generation. The internet has also presented flexibility to businesses and individuals in the form of Internet Banking, E-Marketing, Emails, and Accessing E-Journal, E-Newspapers, shearing and receiving large volumes of documents, audios, videos, telecommuting, conference calling, online news rooms and a host of others. Internet and social media has lured the attention of billions of people (Appiah, 2015; Askov & Bixler, 1998; Beldarrain, 2006; Tuurosong & Faisal, 2014).

Tuurosong & Faisal, (2014) as cited in Appiah (2015), Facebook alone has over 800 million active users who share over 30 billion contents in the shape of pictures, posts, notes, stories, videos, audios, documents, and among others with a space of one month. This implies that there is a fraction of partial users who are not ardent users of Facebook but do visit there from time to time. Annually, twitter welcomes over 460, 600 users who share tweets with friends and other colleagues.

According to Appiah (2015), social media networks specifically WhatsApp has contributed positively in promoting students studies such that students use it for group discussion on subjects they do not understand, send and receive study materials among others. In furtherance he postulated that Presidents Barak Obama, Nigerian former President Good-Luck Jonathan and others confirmed they use social media to disseminate their campaign messages and other welfare messages.

Similarly, Willemsse (2015) discovered that health care personnel use social media networks specifically WhatsApp to solicit idea from an expert in time of emergencies and complex issues. She further found among nurses that they use these platforms to learn emerging Health Care Modules. Falvo and Johnson (2007) also commented that advancement in technologies has changes learning from the traditional method of classroom lecturing to a more student centered way of teaching where students have the opportunity to link-up with their course tutors to inquire further explanation even after normal school hours. This allows students to become more

responsible in applying theories in a more mature way because they have found a way to personalize modalities' and theories and use them accordingly.

Economically, the use of social media in shearing information is less expensive and cost effective. Sending and receiving of messages, texts, documents, videos, audios, pictures etcetera has become cheap compared to the formal ways of undertaking the same actions. It also provides users the flexibility to send what they want with friends without the fear of being charged beyond expectation and as well their privacy is assured. The understanding of the cost benefits of these platforms has caused businesses to also adopt it in their business dealings (Appiah 2015; Bouhnik, & Deshen 2014).

In spite of the numerous benefits associated with social media usage Appiah (2015), discovered some negative effect of social media among ardent users. Health wise, users complained of wrist and shoulder pains, headaches, nausea and eye irritation. Also most people have become emotionally attached the use of social media which is affecting their studies. Financially, users spend more than budgeted on social media which is affecting their net earnings. This paper focused on prevalence of social media usage among Ghanaian Teachers.

2. Literature Review

Appiah (2016) explored the effect of WhatsApp on study habit of university students in Ghana and discovered that 46.7% of students visit their WhatsApp page ten or more times a day. 40% reported that they spend 15-30 minutes during their visit and 20% also said they spend 30-45 minutes at each visit. 40% of the students said they use WhatsApp on campus as well as in the lecture hall while tuition is going on with 33.3% who only use it at their hostels.

Yeboah and Ewur (2014) assessed the impact of WhatsApp usage on students' performance in tertiary institutions in Ghana. The study revealed that contrary to WhatsApp facilitating the free flow of information among students, WhatsApp is rather having a negative impact on students' performance in Ghana. Lauricella & Kay (2013), investigated the use of instant text messages in higher education classrooms and found out that instant text messaging enhances the flow of communication among students.

Jisha & Jebakumar (2014) assessed WhatsApp as a pace setter in mobile communiqué among Chennai Youth. The study revealed that all the sampled respondents were using WhatsApp and asserted that they use a minimum of 8 hours on WhatsApp per day and also stay online for 16 hours. Langat (2015) explored the effect of social media on study habits of undergraduate students in Kenyan universities and it was found that Facebook, WhatsApp and twitter are the preferred social media among Kenyan students and they spend undue amount of time which affects their study behaviour and in his recommendation, he commented that students should use time-off applications to control the incidence of WhatsApp usage.

Shambare (2014) assessed the adoption of WhatsApp as breaking the vicious cycle of poverty related to technology in South Africa. The results supported four hypotheses and concluded that perceiving WhatsApp as efficient directly enhances its usefulness. Bouhnik & Deshen (2014) also explored the use of WhatsApp messaging between students and their teachers. The researcher discovered that WhatsApp has fostered acceptance and the tendency to work as a team and tolerate the views of others which the past generation did not experience. Also constant dialogue and discussion about a course work produces brilliant result through a collaborated effort.

Alsanie (2015) assessed the use of social media and its relationship on university students' contact with their families in Saudi Arabia. The researcher concluded that the effect of social media should be incorporated in academic curricula to give people the prior knowledge of its effects and adopt measures to check its usage.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this study was to assess the prevalence of social media usage among Senior Higher School Teachers in the Kumasi metropolis. The population of this study comprised of teachers in the Kumasi metropolis. Structured questionnaire was employed in this study. Respondents were duly informed about the objective of the study. Participatory was purely voluntary. Primary data were analyzed with the aid of predictive analytic software (PASW) for window. The respondent's demographics were also explored in this study. These included age, gender, educational qualification and working experience.

4. Findings and Findings

4.1. Demographics

This study is premised to assess the impact of using WhatsApp on academic performance among Senior High Students in Ghana. Employing face-to-face approach 150 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The average age of the respondents was obtained as 27.5 which fall within the majority (52.7%) age bracket, 27.3% were aged below age 25, 20% were aged between 31-35 and finally 10% were aged between 36-45. Regarding respondents gender, majority (60%) were males and 40% were females. Religiously, 66.7% were Christians, 20% were Muslims, and 13.3% were other believers. Education wise, 20% had Bachelor Degree, 34% had Bachelor Degree in Education, and 12.7% had both Bachelor Degree and Post Diploma Education in teaching. Moreover, 6.7% had obtained their Masters in Education, 14% had also obtained master in different fields either than pedagogy finally 12.7% of the respondents were in possession of other professional qualifications which were not disclosed. The Table 1, illustrate respondent's demographics further

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Age			
Below 25	41	27.3	27.3
25-30	79	52.7	80.0
31-35	20	13.3	93.3
36-45	10	6.7	100.0
Gender			
Male	90	60	40.0
Female	60	40	100.0
Religion			
Christian	100	66.7	66.7
Muslim	30	20.0	86.7
Other	20	13.3	100.0
Academic qualification			
Bachelor	30	20.0	20.0
B. education	51	34.0	54.0
Bachelor + post diploma	19	12.7	66.7
Master in education	10	6.7	73.3
Master's degree in other field	21	14.0	87.3
Other professional qualification	19	12.7	100.0

Table 1: Demographics
Source: Field survey, 2016

The Figure 1 provides the indication that, 46.7% of the second cycle school teachers use whatsApp more than ten times every day, 26.7% of the Teachers use whatsApp seven times daily whilst 14% others use whatsApp maximum of three times daily, at least, 12.7% of the teachers use whatsApp four to six times every day. This implies that the frequency of whatsApp use among second cycle instructional teachers is very high as exercised by majority of the respondents

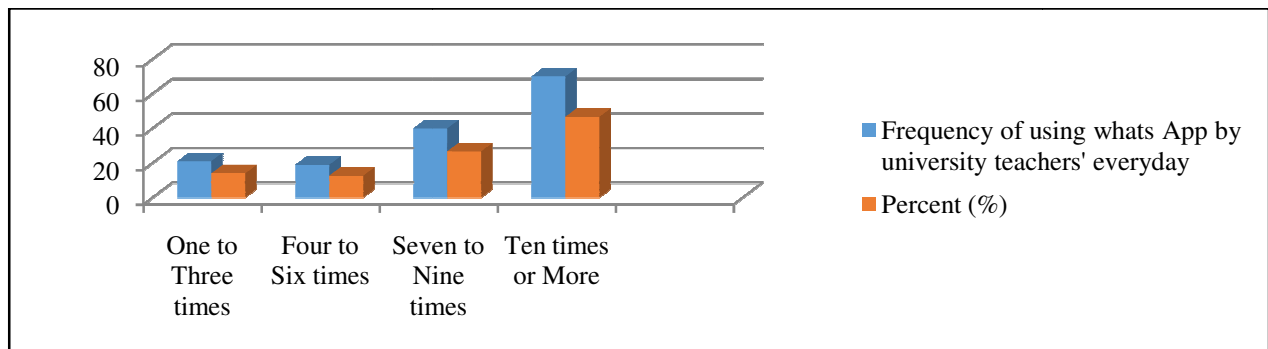


Figure 1: Frequency of whatsApp use by teachers per a day
Source: Field survey, 2016

From Figure 2 the respondents were examined on the length of every visit to whatsApp. It was established that 38.7% spend between 15 to 30 minutes per each visit, 26.7% of the teachers spend between 1 to 10 minutes on each visit to their WhatsApp messages. Moreover, some teachers will spend between 30 to 45 minutes per each visit to their whatsApp messages constituting 20.7% of the total respondents. Finally, 14% of the teachers can spend as much as 45 to 60 minutes on each visit to their whatsApp messages. This implies that the length of time teachers spends on their whatsApp message in quite immense. In implication if these engagements are not used in pedagogics it may reduce the teacher's supply of labor hence poor performance become inevitable.

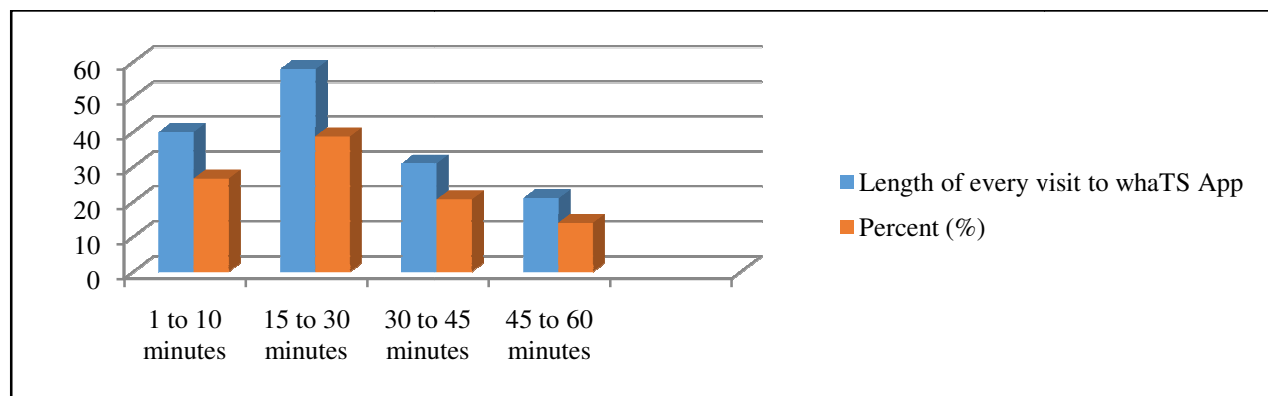


Figure 2: Length of every visit to WhatsApp

Source: Field survey, 2016

Items	Scale		
	Yes	No	Not sure
Technical			
Simplicity	45.3%	13.3%	41.3%
Free charge	60.7%	12.7%	26.7%
Availability and immediacy	60.7%	12.7%	26.7%
Privacy and minimal exposure	20.0%	52.7%	27.3%
Students already use it	34.0%	38.7%	27.3%
Teachers already use it	46.7%	0%	53.3%
Compared to email	72.7%	0%	27.3%
Compared to SMS	26.7%	46.7%	26.7%
Compared to Facebook group	50.0%	9.3%	40.7%
Educational			
Deeper acquaintance with students	60.7%	13.3%	26.0%
Pleasant atmosphere	52.7%	20.0%	27.3%
Sense of belonging to the group	38.7%	34.0%	27.3%
Quality of expression among students	46.7%	0%	53.3%
Students help one another and share materials	72.7%	5%	22.3%
Personal relationship with teacher	46.7%	26.7%	26.7%
Contact with graduates	60.3%	9%	30.7%
Instructional			
Accessibility to learning materials	53.3%	23.7%	26.0%
Teacher availability	50.2%	22.5%	27.3%
Learning any time any where	64.0%	8.7%	27.3%
Possibility to correct mistakes immediately	46.7%	23%	30.3%
Provide secure environment	60.7%	12%	27.3%

Table 2: Purposes of using WhatsApp by Teachers

Source: Field survey, 2016

Regarding the Technical purposes of using WhatsApp, it was revealed that, 45.3% said they use WhatsApp because of its simplicity, 13.3% not of its simplicity and 41.3% not sure of its simplicity. 60.7% use WhatsApp because of its free charge, 12.7% not because of it charge, however, 26.7 not sure of its free charge. Majority 60.7% of the people use WhatsApp for availability and immediacy, 12.7% not for availability and immediacy and 26.7% not sure for the purpose of use. 20% of the people use WhatsApp for purposes of privacy and minimization of exposure, 52.7% use not because of privacy and minimization of exposure, however, 27.3 are not sure for purpose of using WhatsApp. The study further shown that, 34% of the people use WhatsApp because students already use it, 38.7% not because student already use it and 27.3% were not sure either students already use it or not. 46.7% use WhatsApp because teachers already use it and majority not sure either teachers already use it or not.

Majority 72.7% of the people use WhatsApp because it is faster and reliable as compared to Mail while as 27.3% don't use because it is faster and reliable as compared to Mail. Other, 27.3% of the people use WhatsApp because it faster and reliable when they compared to SMS. 26.7% of the people use WhatsApp because it faster and reliable as compared to SMS, 46.7% don't use WhatsApp because it is faster and reliable as compared to SMS. However, Only 26.7% of the people were not sure either or not WhatsApp is faster and reliable compared to SMS. Majority 50% of the people use WhatsApp because it useful as compared to Facebook group. Other, 9.3%

of the people doesn't know either it useful as compared to Facebook group or not. Meanwhile 40.7% of the people are not sure either or not WhatsApp is useful as compared to Facebook group.

Education wise, majority 60.7% of the teachers use WhatsApp to get deeper acquaintance with students, 13.3% use it not because of getting acquaintance with students, moreover, 26% of the teachers were not sure. Majority 50.2% of the teachers use WhatsApp because of its pleasant atmosphere, 20% uses it not because of its atmosphere; however, 27.3% were not sure of it. 38.7% of the teachers use WhatsApp because of the sense of belonging to a group, other, 34% use WhatsApp not because the sense of belonging to the group, however, 27.3 were not sure of it.

Furthermore, it was shown that, 46.7% of the teachers use WhatsApp because of quality of expression among students, other, 53.3% were not sure either or not they use WhatsApp because of the quality of expression among students. Majority 72.7% of the teachers use WhatsApp because students help one another and share materials, 5% were not using what app because, and students help one another and share materials, moreover, 23.3% of the teachers were not sure of it. Majority 46.7% of the students use what app because of the personal relationship with teachers, 26.7% of the students use what app not because of the personal relationship with teachers, and however, 26.7 were not sure. Majority 60.75 of the teachers use WhatsApp for the purposes of contact with the graduates, 9% use WhatsApp not for the purposes of contact with the graduate, meanwhile, 30.7% were not sure.

With regards to the instructional, majority 53.3% of the students use WhatsApp for accessibility to leaning materials, 23.7% of the students use not for this purpose, however, 26% are not sure for the purpose. Majority 50.2% of the students use WhatsApp for availability of teachers, 22.5% use it not for availability of teachers, and meanwhile 27.3% are not sure. 64% of the students use WhatsApp to learn anytime and anywhere, 8.7% don't use it anytime and anywhere, however, 27.3% are not sure. Some 46.7% of the students use WhatsApp as a possibility of correcting mistakes immediately, 23% use WhatsApp not as a possibility of correcting mistakes immediately, meanwhile 30.3% are not sure. Finally, 60.7% of the students use WhatsApp as a secure environment, 12% do not use WhatsApp as a secure environment, notwithstanding, 12.7% are not sure.

Items	Scale		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
Students with no smartphones	53.3%	0%	46.7%
Message flooding, time consuming	60.5%	12.2%	27.3%
Group maintenance	56.7%	16.6%	26.7%
Expectation for high availability of teachers	50.0%	9.3%	40.7%
Students' usage of inappropriate language	60.7%	3.3%	36.0%
Overexposure to students' personal life	52.7%	20.0%	27.3%
Use of incorrect language	58.7%	14.0%	27.3%
Students do not make an effort	53.3%	20.0%	33.3%

Table 3: Challenges of using WhatsApp

Source: Field survey, 2016

The study revealed that, majority 53.3% of the teachers had challenges using WhatsApp at the point where students were without smartphones, 46.7% of the teachers sometimes have challenges using WhatsApp at the point where students were without smartphones. Majority 60.5% of the teachers have challenges on message flooding and time consuming, 12.2% did not have such challenges meanwhile, and 27.3% sometimes experience such challenges.

Majority 56.7 of the teachers have challenges on group maintenance, 16.6% did not experience challenges on group maintenance, and however, 26.7% of the teachers sometimes have challenges on group maintenance. Furthermore, majority of the teachers have challenge of high teacher's availability expectation, 40.7% of the teachers sometimes have the challenge of high teacher's availability expectation, meanwhile, only 9.3% did not have challenge of high teacher's availability expectation.

60.7% of the teachers have challenge of Students' usage of inappropriate language, 36% of the teachers sometimes have the challenge of Students' usage of inappropriate language, and only 3.3% of the teachers do not have the challenge of Students' usage of inappropriate language. Majority 52.7% of the teachers have the challenge of Overexposure to students' personal life, other 20% do not have the challenge of Overexposure to students' personal life, and moreover, 27.3% of the teachers have challenge of Overexposure to students' personal life.

Yet again majority 58.7% of the teachers has the challenge of Usage of incorrect language, 14% of the teachers do not have such challenge and other 27.3% of the teachers sometimes have the challenge of Usage of incorrect language. Finally, majority of the teachers have the challenge of Students not making effort, 20% of the teachers do not have the challenge of students not making effort notwithstanding, 33.3% of the teachers sometimes have the challenge of students not making effort.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study revealed that the frequency of social media use among teachers was high, 46.7% of teachers use WhatsApp more than ten times every day, 26.7% use WhatsApp seven times daily whilst 14% others use WhatsApp maximum of three times daily. Technical reasons for social WhatsApp use were; Simplicity 45.3%, free charge 60.7%, Availability and immediacy 60.7%, Privacy and minimal exposure 20%, Teachers already use it 46.7%. Educational reasons include: Deeper acquaintance with students 60.7%, Pleasant atmosphere 52.7%, Sense of belonging to the group 38.7%, Quality of expression among student 46.7%, Students help one another and share materials 72.7% Accessibility to learning materials 53.3%, Teacher availability, 50.2% Learning any time anywhere 64.0%

challenges of WhatsApp use: Students with no smartphones 53.3% Message flooding, time consuming 60.5%, Group maintenance 56.7%, Expectation for high availability of teachers 50.0%, Students' usage of inappropriate language 60.7%, Overexposure to students' personal life 52.7%. It is concluded that WhatsApp can be employed as learning platform as judiciously use or regulated. However, some schools do not permit the use of mobile phones in schools.

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