
MASS MEDIA AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION: A LOOK AT WHATSAPP USAGE IN CRUTECH

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ABSTRACT

Using data collected from Cross River University of Technology, Calabar Campus, this study investigates how the use of WhatsApp as a mass media is a tool for information dissemination in tertiary institutions. It examines specifically, how and what WhatsApp is used for. The study is anchored on the Uses and Gratification Theory as well as the Cultivation Theory. To achieve a conclusive study, 10 members of CRUTECH community, Calabar campus were interviewed. The survey method used was the simple random sampling method where 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed to staff and students in all the seven faculties of the institution and also the different directorates that make up the Calabar campus. A total of 194 copies of questionnaire were retrieved. The study revealed that a great percentage of students and staff (both academic and non-academic) use WhatsApp for information dissemination. The study also revealed that the use of WhatsApp offers them a cheap, good and positive means of communication, though negatively, it affects their academic performance, as it takes up much of their study time. Be that as it may, the positive impact of WhatsApp outweighs its negative impact. The study also shows that WhatsApp is a veritable tool of socialization amongst staff and students of the university campus. It is a tool that bridges the gap between the lectures and their students, as well as other members who share views, suggestions and opinions through this social network. The study concludes that it is a very good tool for effective communication, a bridge for building good and cordial relationship amongst equal and unequal in the social realm, and also an effective learning tool especially for maximum users of the network. Therefore, the study finally concludes that WhatsApp is necessary for information dissemination in tertiary institution, so therefore WI-FI should be provided and made available to all students and staff within certain hours by the University authorities

Keywords: Mass media, Information Dissemination, WhatsApp Messenger, Usage, CRUTECH

INTRODUCTION

The world we live in has become a global village due to the advancement recorded by science and technology. Yeboah and Ewur (2014) write that technology is evolving at a fast rate, and what most people did not even think could be real a few years ago, is now becoming a reality. Mass media as defined by Imuoh (2013), are channels which can be used to communicate and interact with a large number of audience simultaneously. It includes pictorial message or the high- technology media available today, and is an effective medium of communication. Using the mass-media, one can disseminate information, advertise, market, express, and share views, and lastly give opinions and ideas. There are three main types of mass media which include; the print media, the Electronic media and the new-age media. The print media includes newspapers, magazines, brochures, newsletters,

books, leaflets, pamphlets and visual mediums such as photography which communicates via visual representation. When one considers the electronic media, one immediately rotates towards, the radio, television, movies, CDs, DVDs, and all electronic gadgets available in this day. The new age media which according to Imuoh (2013), which he says can on the other hand be referred to as electronic media include; mobile phones, computers, tablets and internet. The internet has opened up several instant communications for mass communication. They include; email, websites, blogging, vlogging, internet tv, WhatsApp, Instagram, snapchat e.t.c. Yeboah and Ewur, quoting Howe (2012), write that, the internet continues to grow day by day at an incredible speed and about 32.7% of the world's population has access to the internet. In summary, one can refer to the mass media as a collective of all media technologies which include the internet, television, newspapers films, radio and all the organisations that control these technologies. Chowdhury (2000, p.23), defines Information communication technology (ICT) as, "all technologies that can process different kinds of information such as voice, video, audio, text and data." ICTs facilitate different forms of communications. They also capture, store, process, share, display, protect and manage information. To further expatiate on this, we look at Duncombe and Heeks (1999, p.128), who simply describes ICTs as "electronic means of capturing, processing, storing and disseminating information." With the advent of the 21st century, WhatsApp messenger came with a bang and has continued to be a medium of mass communication used by Cross River University community. This research examines the usage of the WhatsApp messenger and its invasion through the use of computers and smart phones on the behaviour of students, their academic performances and dissemination of information amongst the different groups that exist in CRUTECH.

Yeboah and Ewur (2014), write that "WhatsApp messenger has been around for a while but that recent updates have improved the functionality of the application since its release date." The WhatsApp messenger was created by Brian Acton and Jan Koum (2009) to make communication the distribution of multimedia messaging without problems or difficulty and faster. Imuoh (2013, p.9) writes that the purpose of mass media are various amongst which include; advocacy, business, and social concerns of which include advertising, marketing, propaganda, public relations and political communications, entertainment for performances of acting, music, sports combined with video and computer games and lastly, for public service announcements. WhatsApp messenger is available for iPhone, android, windows phone, Nokia symbian60 and S40 and blackberry phones. This application is popular in the Cross River University family because, there is no cost to message friends, classmates, group mates, workmates and family. All that one need is the internet data plans that users already have on their phones. Adults and youth alike in CRUTECH hook up to the social media

WhatsApp. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), refers to social media as “the means of interaction among people in which they create, share and or exchange information and ideas in the virtual communities and network.” Social media create opportunities to network with other members who share similar or common interest, dreams and goals. One can also initiate and build strong business partnership in any part of the world without meeting that individual on person. Yeboah and Ewur (2014, p.158) write that “with WhatsApp messenger, communication through mobile phones has become easier, faster and cheaper.” It is less expensive as compared to the normal phone messaging. An individual can chat with friends, and family oversees through WhatsApp, without having to incur global SMS charges. When there is provision and access to learning materials in various formats all the time, the potential to enhance the student learning capabilities is enhanced. In CRUTECH, WhatsApp is used to further increase and improve student learning capabilities. Mrs Edang Yolanda Bassey in her examination on MAC2208, Video Field Production Techniques administered to the BSc year 2 students of Mass Communication; CRUTECH on the 11th of December 2017 employed the use of the social media (WhatsApp) through the BSC 2 class WhatsApp platform. In an interview with her, Mrs Bassey affirms the usefulness of WhatsApp in testing her students on Video Field Production Techniques, encouraging her colleagues to follow suit. Yalcinalp and Gulbahar (2010), write that, the value of these application are as follows; encourages learners, make collaborative learning efficient and affective, build a relationship that stimulates learner- to- learner, for consistent and progressive learning. The main aim therefore is to determine the advantages of the use of WhatsApp by CRUTECH community in the enhancement of education amongst the different groups.

OBJECTIVES

For this study which has been delimited to the use of WhatsApp messenger and information dissemination in CRUTECH the main objectives are;

- To evaluate the intensity of the usage of WhatsApp by CRUTECH community.
- To ascertain the negative and positive impact of the use of WhatsApp in learning in CRUTECH
- To make recommendations for the free access of WI-FI to all in CRUTECH community.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the frequency and intensity of usage of WhatsApp by CRUTECH community?
- Who and who Use WhatsApp for communication in CRUTECH?

- What are the negative and positive impacts of using WhatsApp messenger in learning and communication in CRUTECH?

LITERATURE REVIEW

To effectively determine the use of WhatsApp in information dissemination by CRUTECH community, one must examine other studies done in the areas of social media and its impact on the society. Nicholson (2011), considers social networking as, “any activities where people share stories and influence others.” It is a social forum where mutual topics of interest, meetings and renewed acquaintances with others are made. Greenwald (2009), agrees with Deloitte (2009) that, 55% of employees visit a social media site at least once in a week.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS EVOLUTION

Smith (2010), defines social media sites as, “virtual platforms for interactivity and information exchange.” Kaplan and Haenlein, (2010, p.61), also define social media as, “a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content”. Cox and Rethman, (2011), in their definition define social media as,

‘Forms of electronic communication through which users interact among people in which they create, freely share, exchange and discuss information, ideas, personal messages and other content about each other and their lives using a multimedia mix of personal words, pictures, videos and audio, utilising online platforms while they are connected to the internet.’

When one considers social media, the thought of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Myspace, YouTube etc. are available for all. Social networking has existed from the beginning of human existence. People communicated by diverse means which include; smokes, fire signals, drums, bells etc. as early as 550BC, regular postal system was established where horse riders and horse drawn wagons carried mail which consisted of governmental dispatches. Edosonwan et al (2011), cited by Yeboah and Ewur (2014, p.159), write that the concept of social networking has evolved, much like other innovations, and is becoming increasingly sophisticated with advancements in technology. Yeboah and Ewur (2014), write that there are hundreds of social networking sites (SNSs) that can draw millions of people, with diverse technological affordances. If we follow Boyd and Ellison, (2007), in Yeboah and Ewur (2014), one will agree that

‘Social network sites are web based services that enable individuals to construct a semi-profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share connection with, views and go through their list of

connections and those made by others within the system, although the nature and nomenclature of these connections has variation.'

Therefore, one can deduce that social networking sites such as WhatsApp which is our focus, is not to meet new friends but to socialise with those already known, but the relationship of individuals that have not met each other is possible. Social network sites members are not online with the intention of discovering new acquaintances but to interact with old friends which already exist on their list. According to William et al. (2009), cited by Yeboah and Ewur (2014), it is an important coordinating property. According to Anderson and Garrison (1999, p.2), "development in communication technology are having a profound effect on both distance and higher education....." Anderson and Garrison cite Solomon (1981), that, "education depends upon acts of communication". They further go on to write (p.9) in support of Turkle (1995), that, "development and growth of stable and sustaining virtual communities based upon network technologies supports the notion that communities can develop and thrive without physical proximity." Anderson and Garrison intone that learning communities are being developed using computer-mediated communication systems. Harasim et al. (1995), believe that computer-mediated communications system support collaborative learning in which he cites the characteristics inclusive as capacity for active learning, interaction, access to group knowledge and Support convenience and motivation to complete tasks. Harasim et al (1995), note that collaborative experiences which are synchronous can also be asynchronous, in which case messages or other content is left by participants when they next log-on to the network

The Use of Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites are sources of communication Roblyer et al (2010), writes that they are sources of communication among students and lecturers in their different departments. These SNSs have become increasingly popular. According to the general advice given to students of Aberystwyth University, "the use of technology for educational purpose is an important part of the work of students, lecturers and trainee teachers. Margret Rouse in a post on "What is Techtargert" on the definition of social media writes that, "Social Media is the collective online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, content-sharing and collaboration". Yeboah and Ewur (2014), write that, "social networking site is a communication tool for members." This therefore means that, it is a platform designed for people who know or do not know themselves to interact, discuss or be in contact with each other. Dowdall (2009) quoted that by Yeboah and Ewur (2014), add that students are increasingly using social networks for friends, news feeds, updates, events, activities, notes and messages. He refers to a study in the united kingdom carried out by the office of communications

(Ofcom), united kingdom which study shows that almost half (49%) of children aged 8-17, set up their own profiles on a social networking site of Ofcom (2008), (Dowdall 2009). A recent data obtained from Facebook through their spokesperson, showed that approximately 297,000 users are university faculty members (Yeboah and Ewur, 2014). Social media such as WhatsApp is a form of communication between a person or a group of persons. Most people, specifically youths, are hooked on to WhatsApp, to keep in contact with their peers. Kim (2010, p.99), lists an important advantage as online sharing of knowledge and information among different groups of people. This he says promotes an increase in communication skills among people especially amongst learners and students of educational institutes. Boyd and Ellison (2007, p.65), write that "social media sites have attended millions of users especially youths worldwide." They possess a contagious and outreaching influence which the conventional media lack. This Osahenye (2012, p.8) refers to as unstoppable power of the social media".

Social Media Use amongst Youths

A lot of scholars have done researches into the use of social media amongst youths both in the tertiary institutions and outside. When one talks about social media, one refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies which turns communication into an interactive dialogue. The term social media is seen in different forms which include magazines, internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro-blogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, videos, rating and social book-marking. The world being in a midst of the social media revolution, social Medias like WhatsApp, Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Myspace etc. are now used extensively for communications. Social media communication can be with one person or a group of persons. Zafar et al (2014), write that, 'It has been observed that, social media are increasingly popular nowadays.' He further adds that, Social networking sites (SNS) developers like Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, Whatsapp and others are competing to give the best features in terms of socialisation, interaction, privacy and even entertainment. Zafar et al. (2014), further writes that, 'It is not surprising that many people are addicted on with these sites, since it is free and easily accessible with the use of a computer connected to the internet and even with the use of a mobile phone that enables SNS applications or internet browsing. Yeboah and Ewur (2014, p.159) quoting Mazer et al, (2010), write that, "social networking sites allow students to express themselves, communicate and collect profiles that highlights their talents and experiences." They further write that positive perceptions obtained from users of social networking sites i.e. effective learning which they say has resulted in easy learning climate among students. In a study by Keenan and Shirir (2009), still in Yeboah and Ewur (2014), the study concludes that numerous approaches can be used to encourage amiability among students leading to a positive effect from SNSs user point of view. All these lead to the conclusion in the study by Mazer

et al (2007), that students and faculty members use the social networking sites Facebook frequently. Ajewole, Olowu and Fashola,(2012), conducting a study on social network addiction among Nigeria students, concludes that majority of the respondents spend more time on social networking sites to the detriment of the productivity. Asogwa and Obiorah (2013), on youths' use of social media, reveal that "youths view social media for the purpose of leisurely entertainment and discussions of national issues like politics, economy and religious matters." Its mass appeal for the internet is a cause for concern when one considers the gradual increase in the amount of time spent online. Idankwo (2011, p.242), writes that "youths spend more time on social media using their smart phones, which are owned in great numbers amongst them, and can hardly go without checking and updating profiles at the detriment of other activities including the educational studies." There is a lot of the use of social media amongst students and the general population of CRUTECH community.

Classes of Social Media

There is a communication evolution through technological advances and increased use of the internet in recent times. Moaqbel (2012). This therefore has changed the way people communicate and connect with each other. Of note this revolution is the trend of social networking sites. This takes us back to Boyd and Ellison (2007), definition of social networking sites seen as web-based services that allow individuals construct public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection with, views and transverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The categories which the social media can be classified into include the following:

- **Social Networking Sites:** This is a web-based platform for building social networks or social relations amongst people of shared interest and activities. Igbokwe (2011) list popular websites currently offering social networking as Myspace started in 2003, LinkedIn 2003, Facebook 2004, and twitter 2006. Social networking sites allow users to create a profile page which becomes the user personalised webpage and contains profile information such as gender, religion, orientation, interests, place of birth, current location, marital status e.t.c. the user can customize the page to include videos clips, music files, or photos. The page also includes the users list of friends which are actual friends, acquaintances or even strangers accepted through friend requests. This forms the user's network. The site helps archive communication efficiency amongst its users.
- **Blogs:** This is an online journal that allows an individual, group or corporation present a record of activities, thoughts or belief, Bittner (2005,

p.10), identifies many free websites that allows users to create blogs such as wordpress.com, Blogspot.com and Blogger.com. To access such blogs any one can type the web address URL (Uniform Resource Locator) and is immediately logged on. Others include micro blogging sites which limits the number of words published in a message. A good example is Twitter.com. Blogging is an effective way of achieving communication efficiency amongst bloggers as it motivates consistent writing which tends to enhance learning.

- **Content Generating and Sharing Sites:** These are free content for all users of internet. They serve as sources of information for various topics. They include photo sharing sites like Flickr.com, Picasaweb.google.com; video sharing sites such as Youtube.com; slide sharing sites like Slideshare.com and document sharing sites like Docstoc.com. Iscan (2013) write that, these sites contents are available without a fee and can be downloaded and used at will. The user generated content is known as crowd sourcing. Video and power point presentation can be shared and uploaded in Youtube and Slide share, and is advantageous to users who are unable to get access to educational resource material but allows for the learning of communication skills.
- **User Appraisal Sites:** These serve as platform for appraisal of various products and services. These sites are mainly used for reviews. They serve as a starting point of consumer's decision making model for gathering information about products or services they need. They include www.mouthshut.com, Pagalguy.com e.t.c

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on two theoretical frameworks which are, The Uses and Gratifications theory and The Cultivation theory.

Uses and Gratification Theory: This was propounded by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler and Micheal Gurevitch in 1974. Mcquail (2010, p.423) writes that the central question posed is why do people use media and what do they use them for? He views the media as a functionalist sociology in serving the various needs of the society. This he views the media as used for cohesion, cultural continuity, social control and a large circulation of public information of all kinds. The various needs of the audience prompt the exposure to media and its contents. Any media which therefore doesn't satisfy their (consumers) purposes, needs or benefits expected is discarded with. Zafar (2010, p. 515) agrees with this theory that media uses play an active role in choosing and using the media. This takes one to Folatin (2002, p.72), who agrees that focus is therefore shifted from media

production and transmission functions to media consumption functions. Therefore the main thrust rest on, who uses what, and under what conditions, and for what reasons instead of what effects occur under what conditions. One can therefore say that the relation of this theory to the study is made clear. CRUTECH community use WhatsApp to communicate, entertain and for social interactions, which makes it effective and efficient. The choice they make depends on their needs.

Cultivation Theory: The second theory known as the cultivation theory was originally propounded by George Gerbner and Expanded by Gerbner and Griss in 1976 (Derners, Saliven, Potter and Hobert 2001). This theory was used in the study on whether and how media may affect audiences' ideas of what the everyday world is like. It looks at the mass media as a socializing agent and investigates the audience belief of the media as a version of reality to be watched. This is to say that, the more they spend on media, the more their view of the world is akin to that spread by the media. To sum this theory up, it propagates that heavy media users tend to take social reality portrayed by the media as being the real life. CRUTECH users of WhatsApp will over a long period of exposure to its messages provided are likely to believe the reality of its contents. Its effects are measured in proportion to the usage by the individuals. Therefore, they tend to speak and write in a certain way when they interact on WhatsApp.

METHODOLOGY

This section is a systematic plan of how data is collected and analysed. The method used in this research to investigate Mass Media and Information Dissemination through the use of WhatsApp in CRUTECH is the survey method. Okoro (2001), writes that, this method selects and studies samples drawn from the population to discover the relative incidence, distribution and inter-relations of sociological and psychological variables. The researchers made use of primary and secondary data gathered from diverse sources which include, textbooks, journals, articles (published and unpublished) and internet sites.

PRIMARY RESEARCH

The study area is the Cross River University of Technology which is located at EkpoAbasi Street in Calabar South local government of Cross River State. It is a university of technology with different campuses located in Calabar, Ogoja, Okuku, and Obubra. The Calabar campus is the main campus and has a total of 7 faculties and 25 departments. The school was established in 2002 from the Polytechnic Calabar. The population in this study involves students, academic staff, non-academic staff, technologists, all who are users of social media. The primary research is tailored to suit the needs of the research. This is the collection of raw data which forms the main bases for achieving the research objectives.

Primary data was collected and analysed to validate the findings and conclusions of the research. Patton and Appelbaum (2003), observed that, “the use of multiple data collection method such as observation, interviews, documents analysis and questionnaires are very important.” Therefore, two primary sources of evidence used, which are questionnaires and interviews, which Saunders et al (2007) writes that the method of collecting research data is linked to research approaches. The survey method used according to Leedy and Omrod (2005, p.183) involves the acquisition of information about one or more groups of people perhaps about their characteristics, opinions, attitudes or previous experiences by asking them questions and tabulating their answers. The survey copies of questionnaire were administered by the researcher. A well designed questionnaire properly worded in simple English was prepared to avoid problems of unclear questions. The validity and reliability was ensured to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning and concept under consideration, while the reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same result, a pilot test was carried out on some students of the mass communication department, to know if the questions chosen were relevant to the study, and to make sure the structure, layout and instructions to be followed were clear. Prepared close ended questions were prepared and administered to the selected public.

Sample Size: this is a process of selecting an appropriate amount of units from the population interest to provide accurate information about the entire population. The sample size of 200 respondents was drawn from students of 7 faculties and 27 departments, the 5 unions that exist on campus and also randomly across the entire Calabar Campus. An interview of each course representative of courses in year 1-5 of every available department.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the data collected as well as analysis and discussion of findings. The data were analysed and interpreted with the use of simple percentage and statistical description. A total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed to selected respondent within CRUTECH, Calabar campus community, out of which 194 copies were returned. The analysis of the data is therefore going to be based on the 194 copies of the questionnaire returned. The collected data are presented and analysed below with the use of tables

Table 4.1 Gender Distribution

SEX	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	104	53.6
Female	90	46.4
Total	194	100

Source: field survey, 2018

From the table above 104 respondents representing 53.6% were male, while 90 respondents representing, 46.4% were female.

Table 4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

AGE	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
18-24	38	19.6
25-30	52	26.8
31-35	28	14.4
36-40	31	16.0
41-45	23	11.9
46 and above	22	11.3
Total	194	100

Source: field survey 2018.

The table above shows that 38 respondents representing 19.6% were between the age bracket of 18-24, 52 respondents representing 26.8 fall within the age bracket of 25-30, 28 respondents representing 14.4% were between the age of 31-35, 31 respondents representing 16.0% were between the age bracket of 36-40, 23 respondents representing 11.9% fall within the age limit of 41-45 and 22 respondents representing 11.3% were within the age bracket of 46 and above.

Table 4.3 Educational Qualification of Respondents

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
B.Sc.	54	27.8
MSc	68	35.1
PhD	30	15.5
Undergraduate	42	21.6
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

From the table above, holders of B.Sc. were 54 (27.8%), M.Sc holders were 68 (35%) while Ph.D holders were 30 (15.5%) and undergraduate 42 (21.6%)

Table 4.4 Academic Status of Respondents

STAFF	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Teaching Staff	51	26.3
Non -Teaching Staff	54	27.8
Students	89	45.9
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

Table 4.4 shows that 51 (26.3%) respondents were teaching staff, 54 (27.8%) of them were non-teaching staff and 89 (45.9%) were students.

Table 4.5 Year of Respondents (Students Only)

YEAR OF STUDY	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE%
B.sc 1	35	18.0
B.sc 2	42	21.6
B.sc 3	45	23.2
B.sc 4	40	20.6
B.sc5	32	16.5
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

As shown on the table above, 35 (18.0 %) respondents were B.sc 1 students, 42 (21.6%) of them were B.sc 2, 45 (23.2%) of the respondents were B.sc 3 students, 40 (20.6%) of them were B.sc 4 and 32 (16.5%) of them were B.sc 5 students.

Table 4.6 Users of WhatsApp

USERS OF WHATSAPP	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE%
Yes	168	86.6
No	28	14.4
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

The table above shows that 168 respondents representing 86.6% were users of WhatsApp while 26 of them representing 13.4% were not users of WhatsApp.

Table 4.7 Length of Usage of WhatsApp

LENGTH OF USAGE	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Recently	11	5.7
One year	27	13.9
Two years	34	17.5
Three years	50	25.8
Four years and above	72	37.1
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

As shown on this table, 11 respondents representing 5.7% were recent users of WhatsApp, 27 of them representing 13.9% were those have used it for one year, 34 respondents (17.5%) have used it for two years now, 50 respondents were those that have used WhatsApp for three years while 72 of them representing 37.1% have used it for four years and above.

Table 4.8 Frequency of Usage

FREQUENCY	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE%
Often	138	71.1
Rarely	27	13.9
Once in a while	29	14.9
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

Table 4.8 indicated that 138 respondents representing 71.1% used WhatsApp often, 27 of those, representing 13.9% used it rarely and 29 respondents representing 14.9% used it once in a while.

Table 4.9 Information through WhatsApp

INFORMATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE%
Yes	163	84.0
No	31	15.9
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

The table above showed that 163 respondents (84.0%) received information through WhatsApp and 31 respondents representing 15.9% do not get information through WhatsApp.

Table 4.10 Dissemination of Information through WhatsApp

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Yes	162	83.5
No	32	16.5
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

From the table above 162 respondents representing 83.5% disseminated information through WhatsApp, and 32 of them represent 16.5% do not disseminate information through WhatsApp

Table 4.11 Usefulness of WhatsApp for Receiving Disseminated Information

USEFULNESS OF WHATSAPP	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Yes	170	87.6
No	24	12.4
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

As indicated on the above table, 170 respondents (87.6%) find WhatsApp as a useful medium of receiving and disseminating information, 24 of them; representing 12.4% do not find it as a useful medium for receiving and disseminating information

Table 4.12 WhatsApp Effectiveness for Communication

EFFECTIVENESS OF WHATSAPP	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE%
Yes	173	89.2
No	21	10.8
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

From the table above, 173 respondents representing 89.2% were of the views that WhatsApp is an effective medium of communication. 21 of them representing 10.8% were of the view that WhatsApp is not an effective medium of communication.

Table 4.13 How WhatsApp Has Helped to Receive Communication Information

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE%
Positively	156	80.4
Negatively	26	13.4
Indifference	12	6.2
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

Table 4.13 indicated that 156 respondents representing 80.4% were of the opinion that WhatsApp helps in receiving and communicating information to people positively, 26 respondents representing 13.4% viewed it negatively and 12 of them representing 6.2 were indifferent

Table 4.14 Influence of WhatsApp on Academic Performance

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Yes	145	74.7
No	49	25.2
Total	194	100

Source: Field survey 2018

From the table, 145 respondents representing 74.7% accepted that WhatsApp influenced their academic performance and 49 respondents representing 25.3% held contrary views about the influence of WhatsApp on their academic performance.

Table 4.15 Influence on Social Life

SOCIAL LIFE	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE %
Yes	179	92.3
No	15	7.7
Total	194	100

Source: Field Survey 2018

The table above showed that 179 respondents (92.3%) affirmed that WhatsApp has influenced on their social lives, while 15 respondents (7.7%) were of the views that it does not influence their lives.

ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section answers the questions posed in this research work.

Question 1: What is the frequency and intensity of the usage of WhatsApp by CRUTECH community?

In answering the above research question, table 4.8 provides the answer. The 138 respondents, representing 71.11% of the studied population use WhatsApp frequently or often. While 27 respondents, representing 13.9% use it rarely, and 29 respondents, representing 14.9% use it once in a while. This shows that a greater percentage of WhatsApp users, use the network frequently. The frequency of its usage may not be far from the views of Yeboah and Ewur (2014, p.148), that “with WhatsApp messenger, communication through mobile phones has become easier, faster and cheaper”.

Question 2: who and who use WhatsApp for communication in CRUTECH?

The analysis in table 4.4 and 4.6 serves in giving answers to the above question. In table 4.4, the categories of the users of this network, which is tagged “Academic status of respondents”, 51 respondents, re-presenting 26.3% are teaching staff, 54 respondents, representing 27.8% are non-teaching staff, and 89 respondents, representing 45.9% are students. In table 4.6, 168 respondents, representing 86.6% use WhatsApp and 28 respondents, representing 14.4% do not use the network. It therefore means that the users of this network in CRUTECH community include; the teaching and non-teaching staff and students.

The answer to this question can be supported with the view of Mazer et al (2007), who said that, “students and faculty members use the social networking site”.

Question 3: what are the negative and positive impacts of using WhatsApp messenger in learning and communication in CRUTECH?

Tables 4.13 and 4.14 form the analysis or answers to the third question of this work. In table 4.13, 156 respondents, representing 80.4% admit that WhatsApp offers them positive communication, 26 respondents, representing 13.4% reply in the negative and 12 respondents, representing 6.2% indicate an opinion of indifference. In table 4.14, 145 respondents, representing 74.7% indicate that WhatsApp has positive impact on their academic performance and 49 of them, representing 25.2% say that, its impact on their academic performance is negative. This is in line with Idankwo (2011, p.242) who agrees that the negative impact on the academic performance of students is because, "youths spend more time on social media using their smart phones, which are owned in great numbers amongst them and can hardly go without checking and updating profilesto the detriment of other activities including the educational studies" From the analysis on the afore-mentioned tables the positive impact of using WhatsApp messenger in learning and communication in CRUTECH far outweighs its negative impact. Therefore, the research concludes that WhatsApp network has positive impact to learning and communication in CRUTECH. This is supported by these scholars: Yeboah and Ewur (2014, p.158), "with WhatsApp messenger, communication through mobile phones has become easier, faster and cheaper". Yalcinalp and Gulghar (2010) "the values of these applications are as follows: encourages learners, make collaborative learning efficient and effective".

CONCLUSION

This paper attempts to study the usage of WhatsApp in Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH) main campus in Calabar, based on the findings, it is concluded that WhatsApp is an effective communication tool among the staff and students of the University campus. It is a network that is widely used by most members of CRUTECH to receive information and in communicating same. It is also a good learning tool for majority of the students, as it helps to boost their academic performance. The study also shows that WhatsApp is a veritable tool of socialization amongst staff and students of the university campus. It is a tool that bridges the gap between the lectures and their students, as well as other members who share views, suggestions and opinions through this social network. The study concludes that it is a very good tool for effective communication, a bridge for building good and cordial relationship amongst equal and unequal in the social realm, and also, an effective learning tool especially for maximum users of the network.

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