

## PERSONALITY TRAITS, SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE AS PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG STUDENTS OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GOMBE STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

The study examined the influence of personality traits, social media usage and substance abuse as predictors of academic procrastination among students of Colleges of Education in Gombe State. Seven research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. Using survey research design on a population of 7422 students (n= 3787 female, n=3635 male), the study used a sample of 366 Colleges of Education students (n =187 female, n= 179 male) through multistage sampling technique. Data were collected using the Personal Information Questionnaire (PIQ), Procrastination Assessment Scale-Students (PASS), the Big Five Inventory–2 (BFI-2), the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) and Substance Use Risk Profile Scale (SURPS). The study found out that personality traits ( $F = 5.365, p < .001$ ) significantly predict academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State with ‘Openness to Experience’ ( $f = 82, 22.90\%$ ) dominating students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State. It further found out that, the combined influence of personality traits ( $B = -.042, \beta = -.069, t = -1.879, p < .061$ ), social media use ( $B = .067, \beta = -.072, t = 1.990, p = .047$ ), and risk of substance abuse ( $B = 1.147, \beta = .874, t = 32.734, p < .001$ ) significantly predicts academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State. The study recommended personalized interventions for students, creating awareness on how personality traits impact academic procrastination, educating students on responsible social media use as well as integrating mental health and substance abuse prevention programmes into school curricula to reduce the risk of substance abuse among students of Colleges of Education in Gombe State

**Keywords:** Personality traits, social media usage substance abuse, academic procrastination

### Introduction

Procrastination that dominates all educational setting is regarded as academic procrastination. It is about the inability of a student to complete one or more academic tasks at a particular time. Academic procrastination is a common feature in college life and affects 80-90% of the students’ population and is becoming a real concern (Musa, 2018). It is the deliberate delay of tasks and assignments, which can cause a negative impact on performance and quality of life (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). It is widespread and troubling, affecting up to 90% of the students’ population, which can adversely affect academic performance (Tice & Baumeister, 2017).

Several factors contribute to academic procrastination which includes fear of failure, lack of motivation, task aversion, perfectionism and poor time management (Solomon, 2021). Hussain (2022) investigated the factors influencing academic procrastination and the effect of procrastination among university students. The result from the study showed that academic procrastination is influenced by personality attributes of the students and other social problems such as social media and substance abuse.

Aminu (2021) defined personality as stable individual characteristics explaining an individual’s disposition to particular patterns of behavior, cognitions, and emotion. It plays a prominent role in spelling out educational attainment and academic achievement. Researchers

defined personality traits, in terms of the big five-factor model, because it is assumed to be the best way to measure personality dimension of an individual. The traits includes the Openness to experience, Contentiousness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. Each trait provides specific qualities and dimension in which people differ. Extraversion involves social positioning, highly active in external world with positive emotion. Agreeableness consists of reliance, selflessness, friendly compliance and attention. Conscientiousness is characterized by persistence, self-control, and reliability. Neuroticism is characterized by negative emotions, disposition, isolation, worry, anger and frustration, etc. On the other hand, Openness to experience involves new and unique ideas and views, intellectuality, and affection for varied sensations (Ilori, 2020).

Social media has become an integral part of college students' lives, offering various platforms for communication, entertainment, and information sharing. However, excessive social media usage has been linked to distractions, time mismanagement, and reduced academic engagement (Musa, 2018). Thus, the amazing reshaping and transformation of education and the future of learning to a new fashion and unusual platform all over the world via internet cannot be over-emphasized. Subair, Solomon and Deborah (2019) conducted a study on social media: Usage and Influence on undergraduate studies in Nigerian Universities and found that social media platforms used by undergraduates, include WhatsApp (97%), Facebook (85%), Instagram (65%), YouTube (62%), Twitter (25%), LinkedIn (21%), Google Plus (15%), Snapchat (10%), and Skype (7%).

Social media provides all people, irrespective of their age, gender, geographical locations, cultural backgrounds and or religious inclinations with potentially entertaining distracters such as the social media platforms that facilitate dual or group chatting like Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter (now X) and Instagram, as well as access to online games and other forms of music and movies which all have severe consequences on the active participants, most especially students of tertiary institutions (Hussain, 2021).

In Nigeria, students widely use mobile phones to access social media, and social media was extremely popular for education, entertainment, and communication among others. Study conducted by Hussain (2021) revealed that effective social media usage among students enhances their skills including learning.

Solomon (2021) carried out a study on the intensity of social media use among undergraduate students in Jalingo, Nigeria and found that 67 percent of students accessed social media 1–5 times a day, and 88 percent of students accessed them daily. The finding further revealed that over 70.3 percent use social media daily. These findings do not leave students in Colleges of Education in Gombe state whose major forms of communication and interaction depend largely on social media usage.

Both social media and academic procrastination can lead to increased stress, diminished academic achievement, and compromised overall well-being. As a result of these psychological manifestations, procrastinators and social media users often create means of self-control through indulging in various forms risking themselves to substances and drugs without prescription, thus leading to substance abuse.

Substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs. Psychoactive substances use can lead to dependence syndrome - a cluster of behavioural, cognitive, and physiological phenomena that develop after repeated substance use and that typically include a strong desire to take the drug. Difficulties in controlling its use, persisting in its use despite harmful consequences, higher priority given to drug use than

to other activities and obligations, increased tolerance, and sometimes a state of physical withdrawal have been observed among youths (World Health Organization, 2021).

College students are a high-risk population for substance abuse (Hamisu, Ahmad & Liman, 2021). Substance abuse among college students is a global problem that has detrimental consequences for one's health, family, community, and educational and professional life (Musa, 2018). The current trend of substance abuse among youth in Universities and Colleges is a major national concern, as it has been reported to pose derogatory effects on their health, academic performance and behaviours. The rate of drug abuse is considerably high in universities worldwide (Hussaini, 2021). A study conducted by Ilorin (2020) indicated that about 100 drugs/substances were reported to be consumed by college students where 5.71% were traditional drugs, 35.71% were prescription drugs and 58.57% were NPS. The leading drugs in the three drug classes include cannabis (83.7%), cough syrups (30.1%), and solution (45.2%).

According to Solomon (2021) the most widely abused drugs among students are alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, opium and its derivatives, cocaine and heroin. In Africa, the problem of drug abuse among students has been a constant presence for years (Odiase & Ohre, 2020). In Nigeria for instance, abuse of substances such as drugs, alcohol, tobacco, wine and marijuana have been on the increase among college and university students with varying prevalence rates (Asogwa, Ojih & Onoja, 2022). Northern Nigeria is another region that has been badly affected by the menace of drug and substance abuse (Odiase & Ohre, 2020). Factors influencing drugs and substances abuse among university and college students include low awareness, socio-economic, demographic, technological, peer pressure and policy implementation factors (Ilorin, 2020).

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is a growing recognition that individual differences, such as personality traits, play a crucial role in shaping students' behavior. Additionally, the pervasive influence of social media and the rising concern over substance abuse further complicate the academic landscape for students. Several literature indicated that not all students interact constantly on social media platforms for academic purposes which suggest that social media platforms are explored by students for different reasons. It is also observed that College students spend more on social media than such time spent in reading on each academic year.

Furthermore, substance abuse has been a longstanding concern in educational institutions. Investigating the prevalence of substance abuse among students and its association with academic procrastination contributes to a holistic understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing academic outcomes. During an interactive session with the staff of the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in 2022, Gombe State Command at the Counseling Week of the Association of Professional Counselor of Nigeria (APROCON), Gombe State Chapter, and the Command frowned at the rate in which students of tertiary institutions indulged in drugs and substance abuse

In Colleges of Education in Gombe State for instance, the students had been procrastinating when it comes to submission of assignments, projects or even preparations for examinations. It is also observed that the students devote more attention to social media than they do to their studies. Students' addictiveness to social networks and their frequency of exposure to social network are more likely exposing them to put-off their academic tasks while in schools. Indulging in substances when it came to exams had also observed to be a common practice by the students. Could these problems attitudinal or behavioural? Do students' action to procrastinate had relationship with their personality traits? Or could the tendencies be linked to some of the social attributes?

It is against the background that the study seeks to examine the influence personality traits, social media usage and risk of substance abuse to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in colleges of education in Gombe State, Nigeria.

### **Research Objectives**

The following objectives were formulated to guide the study:

1. To investigated the dominant personality trait among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.
2. To explored the extent of social media usage among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.
3. To find out the risk profile of substance use among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.
4. To explored the composite contribution of personality traits, social media usage, and risk of substance abuse to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State

### **Research Questions:**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the dominant personality trait among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State?
2. What is the extent of social media usage among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State?
3. What is the risk profile of substance use among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State?
4. What is the composite contribution of personality traits, social media usage, and risk of substance abuse to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The study tested the following null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and Emotional Stability) to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social media use to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the risks of substance abuse to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

### **Methodology**

The study employed survey research design, and for the purpose of suitability, a cross-sectional survey design involving questionnaire surveys was used in the study. In cross sectional survey design, the researcher collects data at one point in time. This design has the advantage of measuring current attitude or practices of populace. It also provides short amount of time such as the time required for administering the survey and collecting the information (Pontes & Griffiths, 2015).

On a population of this study comprised of all the students in five (5) accredited Colleges of Education in Gombe State during 2023/2024 academic session totaling seven thousand four hundred and twenty-two (7,422), the study employed multistage cluster random sampling in a multi-staged approach to select a sample of 366 Colleges of Education students comprised of 187 female and 179 male students respectively.

Four different instruments were adapted for use during the study alongside the developed Personal Information Questionnaire (PIQ). These instruments are: the Procrastination Assessment Scale-Students (PASS), The Big Five Inventory-2 (BFI-2), The Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) and Substance Use Risk Profile Scale (SURPS). Areas of modifications from the instruments include the removal of items that are not the focus of the study, rearrangement of the items in the Big Five Inventory-2 (BFI-2) to allow for effective response to research question One (1) that investigated the dominant personality trait among the respondents, as well as the phrases used in the Likert scales such as removing option that has to do with ‘Undecided’ which appeared to be weightless in the study.

Onwuegbuzie (2017) examined the psychometric properties of the PASS in a sample of graduate students and found good internal consistency (Cronbach’s Alpha = 0.87) and supported the multidimensional structure of the scale. Fritzsche, Young and Hickson (2020) carried out a study on the Validation of the Substance Use Risk Profile Scale in Lithuanian population and found that the internal consistency of the SURPS sub-scales measured by the Cronbach coefficient alpha ranged from acceptable to good. The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was 0.78 for hopelessness sub-scale, 0.71 for anxiety sensitivity sub-scale, 0.71 for impulsivity sub-scale and 0.70 for sensation seeking sub-scale. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for the total SURPS scale was 0.74. Wolniczak et al., (2023) carried out the primary validation study for the SURPS involved adolescents and young adults from Canada and the results indicated good internal consistency for the four dimensions (Cronbach’s alphas ranging from 0.70 to 0.85)

A pilot study was conducted on a sample of 37 subjects from Federal College of Education (Technical), Gombe that not included in the final study. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of internal consistency of the overall alpha index of 0.785. Descriptive Statistics was used to answer research questions, while Multiple Regressions was used to analyse the null hypotheses using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows to perform the analysis at 0.05 level of significance

## Result

**Research Question One:** What is the dominant personality trait among students of Colleges of Education in Gombe State?

**Table 1:** Frequency and Percentage of the Dominant personality trait among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

Personality Traits	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Openness to Experience	82	22.90
Conscientiousness	77	21.50
Extraversion	69	19.27
Aggreableness	75	20.95
Emotional Stability	55	15.36
Total	358	100

In order to determine the dominant personality trait among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State, descriptive statistics was used to answer the research question. From Table 1,

analysis revealed the frequency and percentage of the Big Five personality traits among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State. The findings indicated that Openness to Experience (f = 82, 22.90%) is the most dominant trait within the sample. Conscientiousness (f = 77, 21.50%) emerged as the second most dominant trait. Agreeableness (f = 75, 20.95%) also appeared the most dominant trait after conscientiousness; extraversion (f = 69, 19.27%) recorded close to the lowest frequency and percentage among the five traits; and Emotional Stability (f = 55, 15.36%) appeared to be the least dominating trait among the students.

**Research Question Three:** What is the extent of social media usage among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State?

**Table 2:** Frequency and Percentage on the extent of social media usage among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

Extent of Usage	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Very Rarely	51	14.2
Rarely	75	20.9
Somewhat Rarely	71	19.8
Often Rarely	70	19.6
Not Often Rarely	91	25.4
Total	358	100

The analysis of frequency and percentage data on the extent of social media usage among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State in Table 2 revealed varied levels of usage. Specifically, 25.4% of the students reported using social media ‘Not Often Rarely’, which implies frequent usage. This was followed by 20.5% who reported rarely, 19.8% ‘Somewhat Rarely’, and 19.6% ‘Often Rarely’. Only 14.2% of students indicated that they used social media ‘Very Rarely’. These results suggest that while minority of students engage with social media at low levels, a significant majority exhibit moderate to high usage patterns.

**Research Question 3:** What is the risk profile of substance use among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State?

**Table 3:** The risk profile of substance use among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

Risk profile of substance Abuse	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
High-risk	115	32.1
Moderate-risk	220	61.5
Low-risk	23	6.4
Total	358	100

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage on the risk profile of substance use among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State. The results showed varied levels of risks of substance abuse. The result indicated respondents having 115 (32.1%) of with a ‘high-risk’ profile for substance use (f = 115, 32.1%), those fell into the low-risk category (f = 23, 6.4) and the moderate-risk users (f = 220, 61.5%).

Question 4: What is the composite contribution of personality traits, social media usage, and risk of substance abuse to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State?

**Table 4:** Multiple regression on the contribution of personality traits, social media usage, and risk of substance abuse to the prediction of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Personality Traits	-.042	.022	-.069	-1.879	.061
Social Media	.067	.034	.072	1.990	.047
Risk of Substance Abuse	1.147	.035	.874	32.734	.000

F (13.061) = 0.092, P = .753 = Significant at  $< 0.05$

The results as shown in Table 4, indicate that the partial correlation coefficient as indicated by the Beta values have contribution to the explanation of the variability of academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State. Risk of Substance Abuse made the strongest unique and statistically significant contribution to the model (B = 1.147,  $\beta = .874$ , t = 32.734, p < .001). This indicates a very strong positive influence: as students' risk of substance abuse increases, so does their tendency to engage in academic procrastination. In the model, the composite contribution of these variables to academic procrastination revealed that personality traits (B = -0.042, Beta = -0.069) have a negative but statistically insignificant effect. The large standardized beta ( $\beta = .874$ ) suggests that this variable accounts for the majority of the explained variance in the model.

Social Media Usage also contributed significantly to the model (B = .067,  $\beta = -.072$ , t = 1.990, p = .047). While the p-value indicates statistical significance at the 0.05 level, the negative beta value is somewhat unexpected given the positive unstandardized B. This discrepancy may suggest complex underlying interactions or multicollinearity with other predictors and should be interpreted with caution. Overall, it suggests a small and possibly inconsistent relationship between social media use and academic procrastination.

### Discussion of Findings

The risk of substance abuse shows the strongest and most statistically significant effect (p = 0.000) on academic procrastination in this analysis. With a Beta value of 0.874, the risk of substance abuse is the strongest predictor of procrastination, suggesting a strong positive relationship: as the risk of substance abuse increases, academic procrastination also increases.

This result is strongly supported by previous studies that have found a robust association between substance use and procrastination. Asogwa, Ojih and Onoja (2022) found that substance abuse can negatively affect cognitive functions, including decision-making, attention, and impulse control, all of which are linked to procrastination behaviors. Additionally, Wolters (2023) identified substance abuse as a significant factor that exacerbates procrastination, as it impairs students' ability to effectively manage time and meet academic deadlines. The high Beta value and the significance of this result highlight the critical role of substance abuse in contributing to procrastination and underscore the importance of addressing this risk factor in interventions designed to reduce procrastination among students.

In the final model, the composite contribution of these variables to academic procrastination suggests that personality traits (B = -0.042, Beta = -0.069) have a negative but statistically insignificant effect. However, social media usage (B = 0.067, Beta = -0.072) showed a positive and significant effect, while risk of substance abuse (B = 1.147, Beta = 0.874) had the strongest and most significant impact.

## Summary of Findings

The findings of the study were summarized as follows:

1. Openness to Experience is the dominant personality trait among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State
2. A substantial proportion of the students are engaged with social media to a moderate or high extent in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.
3. Majority of students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State are between moderate to high risk of substance abuse.
4. The combined influence of personality traits, social media use, and substance abuse is significant, with substance abuse emerging as the dominant predictor among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State.

## Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the predictive influence of personality traits, social media usage, and substance abuse risk on academic procrastination among students in Colleges of Education in Gombe State, Nigeria. The results further indicated that a considerable proportion of the students reported moderate to high engagement with social media. Social media usage significantly predicted academic procrastination, suggesting that frequent interaction with social platforms may lead to distractions and reduced academic focus.

Another critical finding was that the majority of the students were at moderate to high risk of substance abuse. Importantly, substance abuse risk emerged as the strongest individual predictor of academic procrastination, underscoring the influence of maladaptive coping mechanisms on students' academic behaviors.

Furthermore, the joint influence of personality traits, social media usage, and substance abuse was statistically significant in predicting academic procrastination. Among these variables, substance abuse risk had the most dominant effect.

## Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to relevant stakeholders, including educational administrators, College lecturers, parents, guidance counselors, and policy makers:

1. Designing personalized interventions for students, strategies such as time management training, motivation enhancement, and psychological support can help students to regulate and reduce academic procrastination.
2. Creating awareness on how personality traits impact academic procrastination can help students develop self-regulation strategies to manage their study habits effectively.
3. Colleges of Educations in Gombe State and elsewhere may consider policies that encourage mindful social media use, such as designated study hours with reduced digital distractions.
4. Colleges of Education should consider digital wellness programs, productivity workshops, and stricter academic schedules to mitigate the negative effects of excessive social media use on academic performance.

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