THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SELF-PRESENTATION ON THE TERTIARY INSTITUTION STUDENTS' SELF-ESTEEM IN CROSS RIVER STATE

George Bassey AKOR[1], Erungworo Odey BONIFACE[1]

[1]University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria
Corresponding author: George Bassey Akor; e-mail: researchmail@yahoo.com

Abstract

This research study assessed the influence of social media self-presentation on the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State. The following variables were measured: commonly used social media platforms for self-presentation, various ways the social media are employed for self-presentation; images of self they seek to project using social media, how audience feedback affect their self-esteem and their level of satisfaction on positive feedback from deceptive self-presentation. The study was built on the self-presentation theory. The study adopted a mixed method, using quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus group discussion) approaches as its research designs. The work adopted a structured questionnaire and a FGD guide as instruments for data collection. A total of 400 respondents were chosen via a multi-stage sampling procedure while 8 participants were purposively selected for the focus group discussion. Data from the questionnaire were analysed using SPSS and FGD and thematically analysed using the Explanation building method. At the end of the study, it was found that despite tertiary institution students in Cross River State involvement in manipulating their self-presentation by editing and posting information, pictures or video that don't reflect reality in order to attract positive feedback still have this sense of low self-judgement knowing that the self they seek to present doesn't reflect their true identity. It is therefore recommended that there should be an increased media education among students of tertiary institutions as it affects the use of social media; improvement in students' knowledge about the social media; Social media contents to be digested with caution and monitoring, regulation and guidance of the contents consumed by the student users and so on.

Keywords: *Social Media, Self-preservation, Self-esteem, students, Tertiary, Institutions*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media have become a vital part of the modern communication culture (Oduba, 2017; de Vries, 2016) and a major part of people's lives, especially the lives of the youth who engage in social media to build relationships, connect with the world, share and gain knowledge, information, build stronger personalities and have better social lives (Muqaddas et al., 2017; Boyd, 2007).

While most of the content created and distributed on popular social media is self-presentational in nature (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Ellison et al., 2006), many observers and researchers believe that due to increase in the usage of social networking sites, people may have become the victims of lower self-esteem and self-growth (Muqaddas et al., 2017). Several studies have also shown that people tend to present themselves in an idealized, possibly even deceptive way on their online profile (Ellison et al., 2006).

Hence, social media enable self-presentation in an efficient, seemingly seamless manner that could also be in contrast with reality, as a result of features that allow a user to post photographs, videos, audios, and texts for others to see, read or listen to and are able to send out feedback (de Vries, 2016). These social media platforms also help people to make social comparisons which increase the psychological distress of individuals and as a result, could lower the overall level of self-esteem (Chen & Lee, 2013).

For instance, one major feature of Facebook is to make the personal profiles of users available for public or friends to view and scrutinise and allow them to pass on their judgments and give feedback through comments to make sure the user understands their opinion on his personal life (Muise et al., 2009; Boyd & Ellison, 2007). These opinions of other people, either friends or public, and the feedback from them have a very strong effect on people's self-esteems (Muqaddas

et al., 2017). While negative feedback lowers the self-esteem of individuals, positive feedback increases the self-esteem to a very high degree (Valkenburg et al., 2006). Therefore, these social media users over time have preconceived view of themselves and could evaluate themselves in a variety of ways based on peoples' feedback and dispositions.

This suggests that high usage of social media could affect the user's self-esteem and could possibly lead to increased depression and anxiety or increased self-confidence. According to Pantic (2014), anxiety, depression, psychotic disorders and low self-esteem are all the likely results of social networking sites, especially Facebook. This is with recognition that an important motivation to engage in self-presentation is not only to influence how others see the self but also to shape one's own view of the self.

While looking at Adolescents' Social Network Site Use, Appearance Training, and Body Dissatisfaction, deVries, (2016) had found that the social network site uses increased body dissatisfaction and also predicted increased appearance training. The concept of body dissatisfaction also falls within the context of self-esteem which this study intends to explore. de Vries (2016) further investigated how mode of anticipated interaction affects idealized self-presentation using ninety-two heterosexual women who constructed a dating profile while anticipating meeting a date either face-to-face or through text-based chat. The study found that when they anticipated computer-mediated (as opposed to face-to-face) interaction, they experienced greater self-presentational efficacy, that is, the degree to which they expected their profile would make a positive impression on a potential date, and they presented themselves more positively in their profiles.

These can demonstrate that self-presentation and self-esteem remain two critical elements of human interaction. While self-presentation is an ubiquitous phenomenon manifesting continuously as humans engage each other at all levels and spheres of social life (Goffman, 1959; Isosomppi, 2015; de Vries, 2016), self-esteem represents an attitude towards a specific object, the self and Feedback from others, particularly significant others, its key element (Rosenberg,

1979). Self-esteem is identified by the way we act and behave, by the attitudes and beliefs we hold about ourselves and the way we feel about ourselves and the emotion we experience. It is also described as the evaluation of oneself in either a positive or a negative way which could be measured as the ratio of a person's successes to his or her pretensions (James, 1980).

While studies have started to investigate the processes underlying some effects of different social media platforms on certain self-views (e.g., Tiggemann& Miller, 2010; Valkenburg et al., 2006; Vandenbosch & Eggermont, 2012), the effect of social media on self-esteem has just in recent times found scholarly interests. This present Nigerian based study is an attempt to further explore the influence of online self-presentation on self-view among the Nigerian undergraduates in view of the fact that undergraduates who are youths are known to be the highest users of social media.

Statement of the Problem

The relationship between self-presentation and self-esteem may sometimes be problematic. This is given that self-presentation is often "acted" and may not be a reflection of the genuine personality of a person in question (Goffman, 1959; de Vries, 2016). This consequently raises the concern as to whether self-esteem can follow genuinely when a person projects a deceptive persona to others. Put differently, it is a question of whether one can gain self-esteem when the "self" they try to project is different from the "self" they are convinced they have.

Social media further aggravates the above concern, being that it renders self-presentation even more malleable to manipulation by providing a wide latitude for a user to "edit" the self they may want to present. Thus, self-presentation via social media platforms has been attributed with a high misleading potential (deVries, 2016; Isosomppi, 2015). Therefore, the question of whether and how one may truly gain self-esteem when their self-presentation is based on a misleading image of themselves comes even stronger.

Again, there is also the possibility that low self-esteem may flow from one's knowledge that people's positive impression of them is different

from the "self" they really possess. Hence, even though one may attract social media "likes" and positive "comments," they may actually begin to experience low self-esteem if they are convinced that such feedbacks are based on a deceptive image of themselves (Isosomppi, 2015). Therefore, this research seeks to unravel the influence of social media self-presentation on the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State by investigating whether they get the desired self-esteem, from the "self" they try to project on the social media by way of self-presentation.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the influence of social media self-presentation on the self-esteem of university students in Cross River State. Hence, the objectives of this study will be:

1. To identify the commonly used social media platforms for self-presentation by tertiary institution students in Cross River State,
2. To know the proportion of tertiary institution students that employ social media for self-presentation in Cross River State
3. To know the ways in which tertiary institution students employ social media for self-presentation,
4. To find out what images they seek to project in using social media for self-presentation,
5. To determine the extent to which audiences' feedback on self-presentation affect the self-esteem of tertiary institution Students
6. To ascertain whether they genuinely get high self-esteem from the positive feedback that emanates from the deceptive "self" on social media

Research Questions

Towards the attainment of the above objectives, the following research questions guides this study:

1. What are the commonly used social media platforms for self-presentation by tertiary institution students in Cross River State?
2. What is the proportion of tertiary institution students that employ social media for self-presentation in Cross River State?
3. In what ways do tertiary institution students employ social media for self-presentation in Cross River State?

4. What images do tertiary institution students seek to project in using social media for self-presentation in Cross River State?
5. To what extent does audience feedback on self-presentation affect the self-esteem of tertiary institution Students in Cross River State?
6. What satisfaction do tertiary institutions students get from positive feedback on the deceptive "self" on social media?

Research Hypotheses

i. **H$_1$:** The level of Self-presentation on social media has significant influence on the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.
ii. **H$_2$:** Female students spend more time on social media compared to male students in Cross River State.
iii. **H$_3$:** There is a significant relationship between feedback on self-presentation and the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Vogel et al., (2014) looked at the topic "Social Comparison, Social Media, and Self-Esteem" using a mixed method of correlation and experimental approaches to examine the impact of chronic and temporary exposure to social media-based social comparison information on self-esteem. The study revealed that participants who used Facebook most often had poorer trait self-esteem, and this was mediated by greater exposure to upward social comparisons on social media. The frequent Facebook use is associated with lower trait self-esteem. The study also found that participant's self-esteem and relative self-evaluations were lower when the target person's profile contained upward comparison information (e.g., a high activity social network, healthy habits) than when the target person's profile contained downward comparison information (e.g., a low activity social network, unhealthy habits). This research is relevant to the current study because it looked into the Facebook users' self-esteem, especially the undergraduate students regarding the feedbacks that emanate

from their posts. That notwithstanding, it dwelt only on Facebook usage and its correlation with self-esteem, which is just an aspect of what the current study is about to explore.

The study by Isosomppi (2015) sought to understand the phenomenon of self-presentation in a social media context by exploring how the self is projected through social media site profiles and reflected in the usage behaviour on the sites. The research was qualitative and interpretive in nature. Data were collected via open-ended interviews with eight interviewees discussing social network site use, behaviour and habits. Data analysis process was guided by the Grounded Theory methodology. Findings showed that posting and sharing on social media can be characterized as self-expressive behaviour, where presenting the self is a conscious activity and impression management occurs. It was also found that the online social network (friends & followers), representing the audience on online social network site, has a significant role in setting the behavioural norms regarding what is considered socially acceptable and valued self-expressive behaviour, and that social network site context is dynamic, which means that the networks are ever evolving, meaning that behavioural norms and rules in different social network sites change in time. This is evident in how the use of Facebook has changed over the years, and how newer social media outlets such as Instagram and Twitter have gained foothold from in the social media field, facilitating more specific modes of self-expressive behaviour. Given the deposition of the above study, it can be said to be very much in line with the current study, because it sought to explain self-presentation as a conscious activity which make it more manipulative for positive feedback. However, it differs significantly because it did not address the issue of audience's dissatisfaction associating with deceptive self-presentation which is interconnectedness between self-presentation and self-esteem. This apparently justifies the need for this research.

Yang & Brown (2015) conducted the study on "Online Self-Presentation on Facebook and Self-Development During the College Transition." The study employed survey using the questionnaire to sample 218 college freshmen

(Mage = 18.07; 64 % female, 79 % White) at the beginning and again at the end of their first semester. Findings from their study revealed that participants were experienced Facebook users; 72% of them had used Facebook for more than 3 years at the time of the first survey administration, and the other 28% had used Facebook for as little as less than 6 months to as much as 3 years. The major finding demonstrate that Facebook self-presentation was positively associated with perceived support from the audience, which contributed to higher self-esteem contemporaneously, though not longitudinal while intentional Facebook self-presentation engaged students in self-reflection, which was related to lower self-concept clarity concurrently but higher self-esteem longitudinally. This is relevant here because of the correlation between online self-presentation and self-esteem, given the fact that the researcher tried to explore the influence that positive feedback from the audience could have on the self-esteem of the Facebook users which is a fragment of this current study. However, the researcher only focused on Facebook self-presentation and its positive support or feedback on the users' self-esteem.

Oduba (2017) focused on how the communication behaviours of self-disclosure play out distinctively among Nigerian women. The study specifically examined patterns of social media use, the amount of disclosure, and the factors that influenced the disclosure. Data was analysed within the frameworks of the Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory and Social Penetration theory. Twenty female college-aged students between the ages of 18-26 who live in Nigeria and are active social media users were participants of the study. Focus group sessions were conducted and participants' Facebook posts were analysed. The findings from the study revealed that even though the participants use social media on a daily basis for different purposes, they are mostly motivated to use them to maintain their relationships. They also carefully and strategically choose what intimate information they self-disclose and limit their audience when self-disclosing on social media. It was found that the women are cautious about hiding their posts from their parents, but

they still are motivated to disclose their life experiences for the purpose of helping others. The social media use by Nigerian women and their motivation for sharing certain private information online is supported by the CPM theory. Moreover, the women's decisions to not disclose certain information or to fabricate other information also supported the theory's assumption that individuals have the ownership of their private information. Consequently, the women's deliberate way of disclosing information in a private Facebook group validated the analogy in Social Penetration theory that human beings tend to disclose core private information to people whom they have close intimacy with.

The foregoing studies demonstrate that there is a relationship between social media and self-esteem among social media users, such that they could enhance or improve their self-esteem and so on but none of them captured the feeling of dissatisfaction that accompanies positive feedback emanating from deceptive self-presentation through manipulation on the social media platform that created the vacuum which necessitated the current study. Again, most of the previous studies are mainly foreign based, thereby leaving a gap in the study of such nature, hence there is a need to domesticate the current study in Nigeria. This present study therefore seeks to determine the influence the social media on the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE THEORY OF SELF-PRESENTATION

The theory of self-presentation represents an attempt to explain the processes through which individuals try to project the image of themselves to others with whom they share a social space. The theory has its origin mainly in the 1959 work of sociologist, Erving Goffman, *Self-Presentation in Everyday Life.* Goffman's analysis focuses on the context of human behaviour based on a viewer's impression of the action or behaviour. He studied the roles individuals play, how those roles continually evolve, and the types of masks people wear. The definitions of the roles of the participants and audience are flexible because

people have their own experiences that govern their perceptions of society (Manning, 1992).

Goffman argues that as social beings, people consciously perform identities for self-seeking purposes. He suggests that the behaviour and actions of one person can influence the trajectory of a situation that involves others. For example, an individual may be manipulative in the hopes of presenting himself or herself in a better light than what is authentic. A person can also unintentionally direct a given situation in a desired direction. For example, a fitness enthusiast may post self-portraits (or "selfies") of his flexed body and other fitness-like poses to direct the viewer's attention to the individual's aesthetics. The viewer may judge this posting as egotism, a desire for social approval, or perhaps they appreciate those who are muscular and fit (Golffman, 1959). However, cultural standards influence these actions, and the desired impression is the by-product i.e. the final goal for the individual to successfully project the image he/she desires to project (Goffman, 1959).

On the whole, the self-presentation theory views the social sphere as a dramatic space where social actors are engaged in a continuing drama which involves each person attempting to project a favourable image of him or herself to others. This presentation of the self is governed by a group norm which sets the standard of acceptable and unacceptable self-image (Manning, 1992). Social presentation has an important relationship to social media in view of the fact that social networks, as an important medium of communication in contemporary time, play an important role in today's self-presentation. As a communicative act, self-presentation may rely on certain communication channels to be achieved. Social media arguably stand out as an efficient channel through which self-presentation can occur as users have the advantage of interactivity, reach, flexibility and convergence as offered by social media in projecting an image of themselves (Isosomppi, 2015).

4. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed method, using quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus

group discussion) approaches as its research designs. The work adopted structured questionnaire and the FGD guide as the instrument for data collection.

The population of this study comprised of students in all tertiary institutions cutting across the three senatorial districts of Cross River State, Nigeria which is estimated at 92,440 from the various institution students' affairs units. A total of 400 respondents were chosen via a multi-stage sampling procedure, while 8 participants were purposively selected for the focus group discussion. Data from the questionnaire were analysed using SPSS and FGD and were thematically analysed using the Explanation building method.

Hypothesis 1 was analysed using Simple Linear Regression, Hypothesis 2 was analysed using Independent T-Test and hypothesis 3 was analysed using one sample chi-square.

5. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section contains the report of the quantitative (survey) and qualitative (focus group discussion) data collection and analysis. The survey data were presented and analysed with the aid of statistical tables and charts before the FGD data were treated via the explanation building method. Thereafter, the two sets of data were used to generate the findings. The discussion of findings was then made as a way of giving perspectives to the result.

Respondents' profile

Based on the data of the quantitative aspect of this present research, it was found that 51% of the respondents were male and 49% female. Thus, only about 2.4% difference between the number of male and number of female respondents. 49% of the respondents were below 21 years of age, 41% were aged 21-25, 8% were 26-30 years of age, 1% of them were between the ages of 31-35, while only 0.5% of them were above the age of 35. In their level of study, 33% of the respondents were in 100 level students, 29% of them were in their 200 levels, 19% were in 300 levels, 5% of them were 400 level students, 0.3% of the respondents were in 500 levels and 14% were in other levels.

It was also found that First degree undergraduate Students had the highest with 37%, followed by ND students with 28%. This was followed by students of NCE or equivalent with 24%, 10% of the respondents were HND students, PGD and MSc students both had 0.3% each, while PhD students 0.8%

Table 1. Internet Use by the Respondents

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	263	66%
Agree	122	31%
Disagree	11	2%
Strongly Disagree	4	1%
Total	**400**	**100.0%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Data from Table 1 above shows that 66% of the respondents strongly agreed and that 31% agreed that they use the internet. While 2% disagreed, 1.0% was strongly agreed. The implication is that internet facility is a widespread phenomenon among these students

Table 2. Regular access to the internet using personal data subscription

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	253	63%
Agree	126	32%
Disagree	12	3%
Strongly Disagree	9	2%
Total	**400**	**100.0%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Data from Table 2 above shows that 63% of the respondents strongly agree that they regularly have access to the internet using their personal data subscription, 32% agreed, 3% disagreed while 2% strongly disagreed. This means most tertiary institution students mainly connect to the internet using their personal data subscription.

Table 3. Availability of Free Internet (Hotspot) in Respondents' School

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	65	16%
Agree	85	21%

Disagree	144	36%
Strongly Disagree	106	26%
Total	**400**	**100.0%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Data from Table 3 above shows that 16% of the respondents strongly agreed there is free internet (Hotspot) in their school, 21% of the respondents agreed, 36% disagreed, 26% strongly disagreed. This finding suggests there is no free internet availability, perhaps the students access the social media through data subscription.

Table 4. Commonly used social media platforms for self-presentation by tertiary institution students in Cross River State

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	199	50%
Twitter	75	19%
Instagram	26	6%
Telegram	4	1%
WhatsApp	59	15%
YouTube	7	2%
All of the above	28	7%
None of the above	2	1%
Total	**400**	**100.0%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The first research question of this current study sought to assess the commonly used social media platform for self-presentation by tertiary institution students in Cross River State. Data in the Table below shows that the most commonly used social media platform to post about the self is Facebook, with about 199 respondents (50%) selecting it. This is directly followed by Twitter (75 respondents (19%)), while the other social media share the remaining percentages (Table 4).

Also, data from the FGD equally confirm the position of Facebook as the most commonly used social media platform and the best for self-presentation purposes due to its uniqueness. Based on the foregoing, the answer to the first research question is made by stating that Facebook represents the most commonly used social media platform for self-presentation by tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

Table 5. Proportion of Respondents' Use of Social Media

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	280	70%
Agree	97	24%
Disagree	16	4%
Strongly Disagree	7	2%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The second research question sought to find out the proportion of tertiary institution students who employ social media for self-presentation in Cross River State. Table 5 above shows that 70% of the respondents strongly agreed and that 24% of them also agreed that they use social media platforms on a daily basis. Only 1% of them strongly disagreed. Consequent upon this, it is affirmed in answer to the second research question that the proportion of tertiary institution students employs social media for self-presentation in Cross River State is very high.

Table 6. Respondents' Preference to Put Thoughts in Writing during Self-Presentation

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	179	45%
Agree	161	40%
Disagree	38	10%
Strongly Disagree	18	5%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Table 7. Respondents' Choice to Post Pictures that Describe them during Self-Presentation

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	183	46%
Agree	165	41%
Disagree	41	10%
Strongly Disagree	11	3%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The third research question sought to assess the various ways tertiary institution students employ social media for self-presentation in Cross River State. Data from Table 6 above shows that a good number of the respondents strongly agreed and also agreed to prefer putting their thoughts in writing during self-presentation. The data in Table 7 also identify the posting of pictures as another way people engage in self-presentation on social media. This is as a good number of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed to choose to post pictures that describe their person and opinion during self-presentation. Data from the FGD also confirm that people chat, post pictures and make comments to present self on social media, especially the Facebook and Twitter users. Based on the foregoing, the answer to the third research question is that writing their thoughts and posting pictures about the self are the popular ways tertiary institution students employ social media for self-presentation in Cross River State.

Table 8. Whether Respondents like to present themselves on the Social Media as trustworthy personalities

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	242	61%
Agree	125	31%
Disagree	22	6%
Strongly Disagree	11	2%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Table 9. Whether Respondents purposely embellish their posts to present Self

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	135	34%
Agree	181	45%
Disagree	63	16%
Strongly Disagree	21	5%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The fourth research question of this study sought to discover what images of self-tertiary institution students seek to project while using social media for self-presentation in Cross River State. Table 8 revealed that a good a number of the respondents strongly agreed and also agreed to like to present themselves as good and trustworthy personality during self-presentation

on Social Media. Similarly, data from Table 9 showed that in most times a number of respondents agreed and strongly agreed to purposely doctor some of their posts to showcase themselves as good and trustworthy personality on social media.

Table 10.Whether Respondents Expect People to react positively to their Posts Each Time they engage on Self-Presentation on Social Media

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	253	63%
Agree	122	31%
Disagree	14	3%
Strongly Disagree	11	3%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Table 11. Whether Respondents often feel bad when People do not respond positively to their Posts on Social Media

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	229	57%
Agree	125	31%
Disagree	31	8%
Strongly Disagree	15	4%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Table 12. *Respondents believe that Negative Comments or Disapproval from Audience on One's Post on Social Media can affect theirSelf-Esteem*

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	205	69%
Agree	112	25%
Disagree	40	4%
Strongly Disagree	44	2%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

The fifth research question sought to ascertain the extent to which audience feedback on self-presentation affects the self-esteem of tertiary institution Students in Cross River State. Data from Table 10 showed that a good number of respondents strongly agreed and also agreed to expect people to react positively to their posts each time they engage on self-presentation on social media. Data from Table 11 also showed that a good number of respondents strongly agreed and also agreed to often feel bad when people do

not respond positively to posts about them on social media. Also, data from Table 12 revealed that a sizeable number of the respondents strongly agreed and also agreed to believe that negative comments or disapproval from audience on one's post on social media can affect his/her self-esteem.

Table 13. I feel even more depress when I find out that my deceptive posts attract positive feedback

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	277	69%
Agree	100	25%
Disagree	17	4%
Strongly Disagree	6	2%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Data from Table 13 show that in spite of the positive feedback that audience attract to their posts on the social media platform they tend to get even more depressed because they are aware that these feedbacks are emanating from a manipulative self that doesn't reflect reality.

Table 14. Even though my post attracts positive feedback I still experience low self-esteem because those positive feedbacks don't reflect my true identity

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	211	53%
Agree	106	26%
Disagree	39	10%
Strongly Disagree	44	11%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Fieldwork (2019)

Data from Table 14 indicate that the majority of respondent still experience low self-esteem even though their posts may attract positive feed especially when the self-presentation is acted upon or deceptive.

6. TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis One

The summary of the testing of hypotheses is presented below. The three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H_1: The level of Self-presentation on Social Media has significant influence on the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

H_0: The level of Self-presentation on Social Media has no significant influence on the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression analysis was applied with self-presentation on social media as the independent variable and self-esteem as the dependent variable. The F-ratio test was used to test the significance of the overall influence model and t-test for the significance of the contribution of the regression constant and coefficient (which represents the influence of the independent variable) in the influence model. The results are shown in Table 15.

Table 15. Regression of Self-Esteem on Self-Presentation on Social Media

	R-Value = .507 R-Squared = .257		adj-R-Square = .255 Std-error = .757		
Source of Variation	**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F-Value**	**P-Value**
Regression	78.940	1	78.940	137.788	.000
Residual	228.020	398	.573		
Total	306.960	399			
Predictor Variable	**Unstandardised Coeff B**	**Std. error**	**Std. Coeff**	**t-Value**	**P-Value**
Constant	.733	.303		2.420*	.016
Self-present.	.398	.034	.507	11.738*	.000

The results in Table 15 show that an R-Value of .507 was obtained giving an R-squared value of .257. This means that about 25.7% of the total variation in self-esteem is explained by the variation in self-presentation on social media. The P-Value (.000) associated with the computed F-value (137.788) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that self-presentation on social media has significant influence on the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

Hypothesis Two

H$_2$: Female students spend more time on social media compared to male students in Cross River State.

H$_0$: Female students do not spend more time on social media compared to male students in Cross River State.

To test this hypothesis, independent sample t-test was used with gender as the independent variable and time spent on social media as the dependent variable. The results are given in Table 16.

Table 16. Independent t-test for gender difference in time spent on social media

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	t-Value	P-Value
Male	205	12.249	3.078	.215		
Female	195	12.016	2.446	.176	.835	.404
Total	400	12.133	.138	.138		
						Not Sig.

Table 29 results show that males spend more time on social media (ẍ = 12.249) than females (ẍ = 12.016). This difference is however not significant, because the P-Value (.404) associated with the computed t-value (.835) is greater than .05. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. This means that female students do not spend more time on social media compared to male students in Cross River State.

Hypothesis Three

H$_3$: There is significant relationship between feedback on self-presentation and the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

H$_0$: There is no significant relationship between feedback on self-presentation and the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

To test this hypothesis, Chi-Square test was applied because the relationship is implied in the items. The results are shown in Table 17.

Table 17. Chi-Square test

30	SA	A	D	SD		Total	
	278	100	17	5	2	400	
	80	80	80	80	80	400	Sig.
	490.05	5.0	49.613	74.113	76.05		
			13	3			
	$X^2 = 694.826^*$, df = 4 P= .000						
	Critical $X^2 = 9.49$						
29	SA	A	D	SD	U	TOTAL	
	229	125	31	9	6	**400**	Sig.
	80	80	80	80	80	**400**	
	277.513	2.105	30.125	63.013	68.45		
	$X^2 = 441.206^*$						
	df = 4 Critical $X^2 = 9.49$					P = .000	

28	SA	A	D	SD	U	TOTAL
	253	122	14	3	8	400
	80	80	80	80	80	400
	374.113	22.05	54.45	74.113	64.8	Sig
	$X^2 = 589.526^*$		P = .000			

Significant at .05 level. P< -05. Critical X^2= 9.49 df = 4

The results in Table 17 show that for the tree items, the computed Chi-Square values (694.826, 441.206 & 589.526) are greater than the critical Chi-square value (.9.49) when the degree of freedom is 4 and alpha level is .05. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is significant relationship between feedback on self-presentation and the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State.

7. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study showed that tertiary institution students have regular access to internet. This is made possible by their smart phones and personal computers. It was found that some schools provide free internet hotspot to their students, but the majority of students mostly depend on their personal data subscriptions. Facebook was identified as the most used and common social media platform for self-presentation among tertiary institution students in Cross River State. These findings aligned with the submission of Rui & Stefanone (2013) that communication technology is challenging traditional self-presentation strategies. Also, the study found that Facebook platform appeared to be the most popular and used social media channels for self-presentation among students of tertiary institutions. This means that the Facebook medium is the best at reaching students. This aligned with the submission of New York Behaviour Health (2019) that Facebook have become increasingly popular and pervasive in recent years with over a billion users around the world. It allows users to create electronic profiles for themselves, provide details about their lives and experiences, post pictures, maintain relationships, plan social events, meet new people, comment on others' live styles, beliefs, preferences and emotions.

The study found out that a very high proportion of tertiary institution students employed social media for self-presentation. Social media usage was very high among tertiary institution students in Cross River State who most of the times rely on them to chat, make comments and post images depicting self and their thought on issues as well as build their self-worthSocial media is growing very drastically in almost every country in the world. Therefore, it is impossible to keep people, especially students who use social media on a daily basis, away from social media for a very long time.

It was also found that tertiary institution students in Cross River State used the social media to project images of themselves as good trustworthy personalities. The try to use the social media to shape what people think and see about them. Some of them go to the extent of making fake comments and posting deceptive and deceitful pictures just to make people like them. In this regard, Vogel et al., (2014) found that participant's self-esteem and relative self-evaluations were lower when the target person's profile contained upward comparison information (e.g., a high activity social network, healthy habits) compared to when the target person's profile contained downward comparison information (e.g., a low activity social network, unhealthy habits). This implies that users often use the social media platforms to construct identities and expect favourable responses from others, which ultimately could affect their self-esteem.

It was established that feedback on self-presentation affects the self-esteem of tertiary institution students in Cross River State to a very high extent. This supports the findings of Uhlir (2016) that people feel depressed when they spend time on social media because they are frequently exposed to the self-enhancing images

of others, which provides an opportunity for negative social comparison.

Social media has a very strong impact on the self-esteem of individuals. Students use these social networking sites for information, communication and building and maintain of relationships. But the majority of people end up making upward and downward comparisons with others. The upward comparisons make people envy others, their lifestyles and also feel less obliged and ungrateful for their bounties. As a result, the self-esteem of such people gets negatively affected.

Phylactou (2018) discovered that there is a significant correlation between Instagram self-presentation and self-esteem. In the findings of Yang & Brown (2015), it was also established that Facebook self-presentation was positively associated with perceived support from the audience, which contributed to higher self-esteem. However, the major finding of the current study shows that self-esteem doesn't genuinely follow self-presentation given that respondents' knowledge of attracting positive comments or feedback is based on manipulation or deception. Again, respondent still experience low self-esteem even though their posts may attract a positive feed especially when the self-presentation is acted upon or deceptive. Put differently, that in spite of the positive feedback that audience attract to their posts on the social media platform, they tend to even get more depressed because they are aware that this feedback is emanating from a manipulative self which doesn't reflect reality.

8. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of the study, it may be concluded that social media is gaining unprecedented acceptability and global usage as a way of life. This is as it provides interactive platforms that make social engagements much faster, easier and accessible all over the world. The internet enabled communication technology to challenge the traditional self-presentation strategies (like through face-to-face communication with family and peers) and behaviour (Rui & Stefanone, 2013).

Social media sites (such as Facebook, Myspace, YouTube, WhatsApp and Twitter), have become increasingly popular among tertiary institution students to meet their needs as proposed by the uses and gratification theory. Students spent between thirty minutes and over two hours of their time daily online. This time spent on social media allow users to engage in self-presentation to create a profile, upload pictures, and share information about their self with others.

However, the excessive use and exposure to social media was indicted of being responsible for the low self-esteem of most students of tertiary institutions. In the process of using social media for self-presentation, students often expect positive feedbacks from their audience and when they get the reverse, their self-esteem is severally impaired and this leads to low self-esteem. This is why knowledge of social media literacy is important among tertiary institution students, as damaged self-esteem may even adversely affect their social interactions and academic performance.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

There should be media education on why self-presentation should be acted upon or be manipulated because the current study has shown that self-esteem doesn't genuinely follow self-presentation given that respondents' knowledge of attracting positive comments or feedbacks is based on manipulation or deception.

Again, respondent still experience low self-esteem even though their posts may attract positive feed especially when the self-presentation is acted upon or deceptive.

Social media users especially, tertiary institution students, need to be educated that in spite of the positive feedback that the audience attracts to their posts on the social media platform they tend to even get more depressed because they are aware that these feedbacks are emanating from a manipulative self that doesn't reflect reality.

Social media contents should be digested with caution, as most of the posts and comments displayed by people are not always real but can be constructed by users.

Parents and guardians should monitor and regulate the social media use of their children, especially for adolescences who are students of tertiary institutions.

Teachers / lecturers should be proactive in guiding students on how to manage the influence of social media on their self-esteem.

References

BOYD, D. & ELLISON, N. (2007) Social network sites, definitions, history, and scholarship. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13(1), pp. 210–230.

BOYD, D. (2007) Why youth heart social network sites; the role networked publics in teenage social life, In: Buckingham, D. (ed), *MacArthur Foundation series on Digital Learning- Youth, Identity and Digital Media Volume.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 119-142.

CHEN, W. & LEE, K. (2013) Sharing, liking, commenting, and distressed? The pathway between Facebook interaction and psychological distress. *Cyberpsychology, Behaviour and Social Networking*, 16(10), pp. 728-734.

YANG, C.C. & BROWN, B. (2015) Online Self-Presentation on Facebook and Self-Development During the College Transition, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 45, pp. 402–416.

DE VRIES, D. A. (2016) *Social media and online self-presentation: Effects on how we see ourselves and our bodies,* Master's thesis, University of Manchester. Available from: https://pure.uva.nl/ws/files/2056850/142212_thesis.pdf [November 06, 2022].

ELLISON, N., HEINO, R., & GIBBS, J. (2006) Managing impressions online: Self-presentation processes in the online dating environment. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11, pp. 415-441.

GOFFMAN, E. (1959) *The presentation of self in everyday life.* New York: Anchor Books.

ISOSOMPPI, L. (2015) *Studying self-presentation in online social network sites Facebook & Instagram.* Available from: https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/handle/123456789/18462 [November 02, 2022].

JAMES, C. (1980). *Contrastive Analysis*. London: Routledge.

MANNING, P. (1992) *Erving Goffman and modern sociology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

MUISE, A., CHRISTOFIDES, E., & DESMERAIS, S. (2009) More information than you ever wanted: Does Facebook bring out the green-eyed monster of jealousy? *Cyber Psychology&Behaviour,* 12(4), pp. 441– 4.

MUQADDAS J, SANOBIA A. S. & NAWAZ, A. (2017) Impact of Social Media on Self-Esteem. *European Scientific Journal,* 13(23), pp. 329-341.

ODUBA, F.A. (2017) *Self-Disclosure and Motivation in Social Media Use Among Nigerian Women.* Available from: https://tamucc-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/1969.6/19198/Oduba_Foluke_thesis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [October 23, 2022].

PANTIC, I. (2014) Online social networking and mental health. *Cyberpsychology Behaviour and Social Networking,* 17(10), pp. 652–657.

PHYLACTOU P. (2018) The Relationship Between Instagram Self-Presentation Factors and Social Self-Esteem, Conference: Psychology and the Media: The Psychological Effects of the Diffusion of Mass Media in Every Day Life, At Limassol, Cyprus.

ROSENBERG, M. (1979) *Conceiving the self.* New York: Basic Books.

RUI, J. & STEFANONE, M.A. (2013) Strategic self-presentation online: A cross-cultural study. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 29(1), pp. 110-118.

TIGGEMANN, M., & MILLER, J. (2010) The internet and adolescent girls weight satisfaction and drive for thinness. *Sex Roles*: *A Journal of Research*, 63(1-2), pp. 79–90.

UHLIR, J.L. (2016) *Social Comparison and Self-Presentation on Social Media as Predictors of Depressive Symptoms*. Available fom: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/70983152.pdf [October 17, 2022].

VALKENBURG, P. M., PETER, J. & SCHOUTEN, A. P. (2006) Friend networking sites and their relationship to adolescents' well-being and social self-esteem. *Cyberpsychology Behaviour,* 9 (5), pp. 584-590.

VANDENBOSCH, L. & EGGERMONT, S. (2012) Understanding sexual objectification: A comprehensive approach toward media exposure and girls' internalization of beauty ideals, self-objectification, and body surveillance. *Journal of Communication*, 62(5), pp. 869-887.

VOGEL, E. A., ROSE, J. P., ROBERTS, L. R. & ECKLES, K. (2014) Social comparison, social media, and self-esteem. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 3(4), pp. 206-222.