

Social Media Engagement as a Correlate of Entrepreneurial Intentions of University Undergraduates in Anambra State, Nigeria

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<p>Corresponding Author Ezeonwumelu Victor Ugochukwu</p> <p>Department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka</p> <p>Article History</p> <p>Received: 26 / 04 / 2025</p> <p>Accepted: 08 / 05 / 2025</p> <p>Published: 12 / 05 / 2025</p>	<p>Abstract: This study determined the association between social media engagement measured through communication, information sharing, and networking—on the entrepreneurial intentions of university undergraduates in Anambra State, Nigeria. Using a correlational research design, data were collected from 1,897 students across Nnamdi Azikiwe University and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University via a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was considered reliable as Cronbach Alpha analysis revealed coefficients of .81; .76; and .89, for the three clusters of the questionnaire. Pearson PPMC and Simple Linear Regression analyses were conducted. Results indicated a strong positive relationship between social media communication and entrepreneurial intentions ($r = 0.714$, $p < 0.05$), with regression confirming a significant predictive influence ($\beta = 0.714$, $p = 0.000$). Information sharing ($r = 0.532$, $\beta = 0.532$, $p = 0.000$) and networking ($r = 0.563$, $\beta = 0.563$, $p = 0.000$) also showed moderate yet statistically significant predictive effects on the students' entrepreneurial intentions. The researchers concluded that active engagement on social media—particularly through communication—has a significant impact on how students develop their business goals. Recommendations include integrating digital entrepreneurship training, fostering mentorship via social platforms, and providing subsidised internet access to enhance students' entrepreneurial intentions.</p> <p>Keywords: Social media engagement, entrepreneurial intentions, regression analysis, digital entrepreneurship, Nigerian undergraduates.</p>
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Introduction

In the rapidly evolving global entrepreneurship has become a major force behind innovation and economic growth in the current environment (Costa, 2015). The dynamic nature of the business environment, coupled with the increasing emphasis on creativity and adaptability, has caused a growing recognition of how crucial entrepreneurial skills are. This trend is not only evident in the professional world but is also significantly impacting the realm of education.

As educational institutions strive to educate students for the opportunities and challenges of the contemporary labour market, there is a heightened focus on cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset. Entrepreneurial intentions, reflecting the inclination and commitment of individuals toward starting their own ventures, have become a pivotal aspect of this discussion.

Within the context of higher education, understanding and fostering entrepreneurial intentions among students is critical. Universities play an important part in shaping the aspirations and career paths of young individuals. It is not merely about imparting theoretical knowledge but also about instilling the vision and drive to pursue innovative solutions to real-world problems.

Entrepreneurial intentions go beyond the desire to start a business; they encapsulate a mindset of innovation, risk-taking, and a proactive approach to problem-solving (Zhu et al. 2022). As universities aim to produce graduates who are not only academically proficient but also equipped for the challenges of a dynamic job market, understanding and fostering entrepreneurial intentions have become imperative.

In tandem with the evolving educational landscape, the influence of digital technology, particularly social media, has permeated every sector of society. Social networking sites have been transformed to important tools for communication, sharing information, and networking, creating an interconnected global community (Offor et al., 2025; Sivalkumar et al., 2023; Ezeonwumelu et al., 2021; Ezeonwumelu & Okoro, 2019). In the scope of education and entrepreneurship, the importance of social media engagement on shaping individuals' perceptions, aspirations, and decision-making processes has become a focus of academic research. Engagement on social media is the degree of interaction and activity that users involve in on social networking sites (Sivalkumar, et al. 2023). It goes beyond mere presence or passive consumption of content and involves active participation, such as likes, comments, shares, and other forms of interaction with the

content and other users. Social media engagement involves communication, information sharing and networking.

Social media engagement is a multifaceted means of communication facilitated through various interactive activities on digital platforms. It transcends traditional one-way communication by encouraging users to actively participate, shaping a dynamic and interconnected online community (Ezeonwumelu et al., 2025; Offor et al., 2024; Nurudeen et al., 2022; Ezeonwumelu & Okoro, 2019). Engagement manifests through actions such as likes, comments, shares, and direct interactions, enabling a continuous exchange of ideas, information, and opinions.

This active participation fosters real-time conversations, creating a virtual space for users to connect, collaborate, and share diverse perspectives. Beyond textual communication, social media engagement includes multimedia interactions, such as sharing images, videos, and live content. The reciprocal nature of engagement transforms social media into a dynamic dialogue where users contribute, respond, and amplify content. As a result, social media platforms serve as powerful channels for building relationships, disseminating information, and fostering a sense of community, making them integral tools for modern communication strategies in both personal and professional contexts.

Social media engagement as a means of information sharing refers to the active involvement and interaction of individuals on social networking sites to disseminate, exchange, and contribute to the flow of information (Jarman et al., 2021). It goes beyond the passive act of consuming content and involves users participating in conversations, expressing opinions, and sharing content with their network. This dynamic process includes actions such as liking, commenting, and sharing posts, fostering a collaborative and interactive online community. Users engage in information sharing by providing feedback, asking questions, and contributing their perspectives, creating a multifaceted dialogue. Social media platforms serve as virtual spaces where diverse voices converge, allowing information to be disseminated rapidly and broadly (Jarman, et al. 2021). This collective participation transforms social media into a dynamic ecosystem where users actively shape the narrative, which makes it a formidable tool that enhances information dissemination, facilitating the democratization of information in this era of digitisation.

Social media engagement as a means of networking refers to the active involvement of individuals on social networking sites to connect and build relationships among virtual communities (Mahfud et al., 2020). It transcends passive observation, encompassing actions such as likes, comments, shares, and direct interactions. Networking on social media allows individuals to expand their professional or personal circles, fostering connections with like-minded individuals, colleagues, potential collaborators, or friends. By engaging with content shared by others and participating in conversations, users create a dynamic virtual network that extends beyond geographical boundaries (Rafiq, & Malik, 2018). Social media platforms provide a unique space for individuals to showcase their interests, expertise, and personalities, facilitating the discovery of common ground with others. Networking through social media is not only about self-promotion but also about building meaningful relationships, staying informed about industry trends, and leveraging the collective knowledge and experiences of a diverse online community (Rafiq, & Malik, 2018). Ultimately, social media engagement serves as a powerful tool for cultivating and nurturing a network of connections that can have professional, educational, or personal significance.

One of the main forces behind innovation and economic growth nowadays is entrepreneurship, this explains why substantial research has been done on this. Several factors have been highlighted as possible determinants of student's entrepreneurial intentions, which include; education level, socioeconomic status, and so on (Tian et al., 2022). However, the researchers would like to see if social media engagement have any influence on undergraduates intention to engage in entrepreneurial ventures in Anambra state.

Research Questions

- Does communication on social platforms have any relationship with the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra state?
- Does information sharing on social platforms have any relationship with the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra state?
- Does networking on social platforms have any relationship with the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra state?

Hypotheses

- **Ho1:** Social media communication does not significantly predict entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduates in Anambra State.
- **Ho2:** Social media information sharing does not significantly predict the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State.
- **Ho3:** Social media networking does not significantly predict the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State.

Method

The correlation design was adopted for this research and is considered appropriate for the present study because it aimed at investigating the correlation between the social media engagement and entrepreneurial intentions of university student in Anambra state, using a representative sample.

The population comprised all the 57503 undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, enrolled for the 2022/2023 academic session. A sample of 1897 undergraduates (845 male and 1052 female) were drawn from the 27 Faculties domiciled in Nnamdi Azikiwe University and Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam, using Convenience Sampling Technique. Participants filled an Online Survey for the study.

A structured questionnaire titled; "Social Media Engagement and Entrepreneurial Intentions Questionnaire (SMEEIQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument consisted of three clusters i, ii and iii. In the first cluster, respondents were asked to rate the degree of social media communication necessary to answer research question one; in the second cluster, they were asked to rate the degree of social media information sharing necessary to answer research question two; and in the third cluster, they were asked to rate the degree of social media networking necessary to answer research question three. The questionnaire had a total of 15 items based on the four- point scale

In order to determine the instrument's reliability, a trial test was conducted. Copies of the instrument were distributed to 150 students in public universities in Enugu state, which is outside the study area. Cronbach Alpha coefficients of 0.81, 0.76, and 0.89

were obtained for clusters 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Additionally, the instrument's overall reliability estimate was 0.84, indicating that it was deemed reliable enough to be used in the study. The data collected were analysed using SPSS version 24. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions, and Simple Linear Regression was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 Significance Level.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent does communication on social media platforms influence entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduates in Anambra state?

Table 1: The Relationship between Communication on Social Media Platforms and Entrepreneurial Intentions of university undergraduates in Anambra State

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R	Sig. Value
Communication on Social Platform – Entrepreneurial Intentions	.714**	.509	.504		.000

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 revealed that the correlation coefficient between communication on social media and entrepreneurial intentions is 0.714. This proves that there is a strong and positive relationship between communication on social platforms and entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, it could be inferred that when undergraduates

interact more on social media, they tend to nurture designs to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of information sharing on social media platforms on the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra state?

Table 2: Correlational Relationship between Information Sharing on Social Media Platforms and Entrepreneurial Intentions

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig. Value
Information Sharing on Social Platform – Entrepreneurial Intentions	.532**	.284	.276	.000

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Data in Table 2 revealed the relationship between information sharing on social media platforms and entrepreneurial intentions. The data yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.532 which implies a moderate and positive association between the predictor and outcome variables. Thus, information sharing on social media platforms has a moderate relationship with

entrepreneurial intentions among the undergraduates in Anambra State.

Research Question Three: What is the influence of networking on social media platforms on the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra state?

Table 3: The Relationship between Networking on Social Media Platforms and Entrepreneurial Intentions.

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig. Value
Networking on Social Platform – Entrepreneurial Intentions	.563**	.317	.311	.000

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 revealed that the coefficient for the correlation between networking on social media platforms and entrepreneurial intentions is 0.563 which implies a moderate and positive correlation between the two variables. Consequently, it denotes that information sharing on social media platforms had a moderate

correlation with entrepreneurial intentions among the undergraduates in Anambra State.

Hypotheses One: Communication on social media platforms has no significant influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State.

Table 4: Regression Analysis on the Influence of Communication on Social Media Platforms to the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Undergraduates of Anambra State.

		Coefficients ^a					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	R	Sig.	F
1	(Constant)	.483	.260				
	Communication on Social Platforms	.766	.076	.714	.714 ^a	.000	101.791

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intentions
b. Predictors: (Constant), Communication on Social Media Platforms

The predictive influence of communication on social platforms on the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State was shown in Table 4. The Beta value was ascertained to be $B = 0.714$ ($p < 0.05$) and the p-value (0.00) is less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus,

communication on social platforms predicts entrepreneurial intentions among the undergraduates of Anambra state.

Hypothesis Two: Information sharing on social platforms has no significant influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State.

Table 5: Predictive Influence of Information Sharing on Social Media Platforms on the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Undergraduates in Anambra State.

		Coefficients ^a					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	R	Sig.	F
1	(Constant)	.893	.353				
	Information Sharing on Social Platforms	.646	.104	.532	.532 ^a	.000	38.785

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intentions
b. Predictors: (Constant), Information Sharing on Social Platforms

The predictive influence of information sharing on social platforms on the entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduates in Anambra State was revealed in Table 5 and was shown to be 0.532 ($p < 0.05$). The p-value (0.000) is lower than 0.05, so the null hypothesis was not accepted. Therefore, information sharing on

social platforms can moderately predict the entrepreneurial intentions of the undergraduates in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Three: Networking on social platforms has no significant influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State.

Table 6: Regression Analysis on the Influence of Networking on Social Media Platforms on the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Undergraduates of Anambra State.

		Coefficients ^a					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	R	Sig.	F
1	(Constant)	1.256	.273				
	Networking on Social Platforms	.562	.083	.563	.563 ^a	.000	45.589

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intentions
b. Predictors: (Constant), Networking on Social Media Platforms

Table 6 showed the predictive power of networking on social media platforms on the entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates in Anambra State was found to be $B = 0.563$ ($p < 0.05$). The p-value (0.00) is lower than 0.05, so the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, networking on social media platforms predicts entrepreneurial intentions among undergraduates in Anambra State.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant influence of communication on social media platforms on entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State. This can be explained by the tendency of young social media users to share information with one another, in an attempt to learn from each other. This is in consonance with the findings of Alalwan

(2022) in learning boosts interaction between learners and consequently boosted actual engagement in the learning process.

Sai and Tiwari (2022) also found that there is a significant impact of social media on entrepreneurship intention of individuals involved in business starts ups. This finding was anchored on strong associations among case of use of social media, desirability of use, usefulness of social media platforms social norms and entrepreneurship intention. Thus, the pleasurable experiences associated with social media use can be said to increase the desire of undergraduates to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours.

The findings of this study also revealed a moderate and significant relationship between information sharing on social graduate students in Anambra State. This implies that as peers assimilate information regularly shared on social media. This concurs with the findings of Lee (2022) that information sharing enhanced individual learning perspectives which mediated the relationship with entrepreneurial intention of individuals. Vaingankar et al. (2022), however, found no clear association between sharing of messages on social media and users' propensity to engage in goal-oriented pursuits. They rather saw that considerable levels of communication among social media users may predict goal-oriented behaviour considering the fact that most communications are intentional and directed towards the achievement of one goal or another.

The findings of the study further revealed that networking on social media strongly predicted entrepreneurial intention of undergraduates in Anambra State. This can be justified by the tendency of young social media users to use referrals in expanding their entrepreneurial ventures. Most times, patronage is necessitated by recommendations made on social media. This finding was corroborated by the findings of Khalid *et al.* (2022) that social media marketing activities had significant influence on intentions. Khan *et al.* (2022) also found that the networking potentialities of social media has make it a viable tool of enhancing entrepreneurial intentions. The findings also resonates with that of Adebayo (2015) and Hermitta et al. (2023) that found networking capabilities among social media users to play a significant role in their ability to create value and leverage on other people's skills for creativity and innovation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that social media engagement had a significant influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduates in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- There is need to adapt viable models that can motivate young people to boost their entrepreneurial intentions
- Young entrepreneurs should be encouraged to engage with other entrepreneurs' industry leaders and potential collaborators on social media. This can help engender mentorship and valuable connections for young entrepreneurs.
- Undergraduates can be encouraged by providing them with various incentives like free Wi-Fi and subscribed subscription to ameliorate the cost of social media use.

- There is need for collaborative networks created to foster cooperation and brainstorming for budding entrepreneurs

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