



Research Article

Influence of Facebook Advertisement of *Okeite* by Digital *Dibias* on Academic Performance of Undergraduates in Anambra State

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the Advertisement of *Okeite*, a ritualistic get-rich-quick practice, and the influence of digital *dibias* (native doctors) on Facebook on undergraduate students in Anambra State, Nigeria. Traditionally, *dibias* operated within communal settings, but the advent of digital media has extended their reach, particularly through Facebook where ritual content is now advertised and promoted to young audiences. The research sought to understand the frequency of awareness of this phenomenon among undergraduates, the factors associated with it, the extent of student engagement with such content, and its consequences on academic performance. The study adopted a survey research design, employing a structured questionnaire to collect data from 356 undergraduate respondents across universities in Anambra State from the population of 57,607. It was anchored on two theoretical frameworks: The Uses and Gratifications Theory, which explained how individuals selectively use media to satisfy personal needs and desires was used for the study. Key findings revealed a high frequency of awareness of both the *Okeite* phenomenon and the digital *dibia* presence on Facebook among respondents. The visibility of these practices was driven by social media exposure, peer influence, economic hardship, and the desire for sudden wealth. The study further revealed that students' engagement with *Okeite*-related content on Facebook has negative academic implications, including reduced academic focus, poor study habits, and a shift in value systems. The study concluded that digital platforms, particularly Facebook, have amplified the appeal of ritual practices among youths. It recommended digital media literacy campaigns, strengthened institutional counseling, and policy frameworks aimed at regulating harmful online content to mitigate the influence of such practices on Nigerian undergraduates.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The role and presence of traditional spiritual healers or *dibias*, as they are called locally, has undergone a dramatic change in recent times in Nigeria, especially in Anambra State. While these spiritualists once existed discreetly in rural communities and were often the subjects of folklore or dramatized in Nollywood films, the advent of social media, especially Facebook, has brought them into the limelight. Today, they are highly visible, often appearing online in dramatic attire clad in red, black, or white regalia, with chalk markings and ritual symbols publicly advertising their services, soliciting spiritual consultations, and offering so-called wealth-making charms, especially *Okeite*, the "pot of wealth." This shift has coincided with a pervasive "get-rich-quick" (GRQ) culture among Nigerian youths, particularly undergraduates, who are increasingly drawn to schemes promising instant wealth and social elevation. Many young people now seek shortcuts to affluence and recognition hoping to be seen as those who "run things" on campus or in society, who command attention and respect, and whose material display demands reverence from peers. Among the most alluring of these shortcuts is the *Okeite*, often advertised by a new class of spiritual influencers referred to as *Digital Dibias* native doctors who leverage platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram to market their practices to a wide audience.

The phenomenon here referred to as ***Okeite Digital Dibia Phenomenon (ODDP)***, merges mystical traditionalism with digital modernity. The *Digital Dibia* uses communication technologies to perform and promote esoteric services, including the preparation of mystical objects (such as *Okeite*) which purportedly grant wealth,

power, or success. This convergence of cyber spirituality and wealth fetishism has created a cultural and moral crisis. The rituals involved, often documented on social media, are shrouded in mystery and fear, frequently linked with human and animal sacrifices, secrecy, and alleged supernatural consequences. Traditionally, the role of a *dibia* in Igbo society was sacred and highly regulated. A true *dibia* was believed to possess spiritual insight and healing power, often gained through years of apprenticeship and initiation. They acted as mediators between the physical and spiritual realms, offering guidance, healing, and protection to the community. Ogbonnaya (2021) identifies several types of *dibia* including *Dibia Afa* (diviners), *Dibia Ohụ* (visionaries), *Dibia Anwansi* (magicians), *Dibia Ogbanje* (liberators of reincarnating spirits), and *Dibia Aja* (sacrifice specialists) all traditionally tasked with preserving life and spiritual harmony.

However, the rise of the *Digital Dibia* marks a dramatic departure from these traditional roles. These self-proclaimed spiritual experts use social media to publicize their services, often boasting of their ability to provide *Okeite* and other money-making charms to clients across the world. Such digital visibility has introduced new threats, particularly to the values and aspirations of impressionable youth. Nworah (2023) and Adimike (2023) have both warned against the growing popularity of these practitioners, noting that their actions profane African spirituality, reduce divinity to commerce, and mislead vulnerable populations into unethical or criminal behavior. An example of such unethical or criminal behaviours or statements that has the tendency of shaping young minds into believing unrealistic

assumptions is seen from these posts by few Digital *Dibias* on facebook:

Akwa Okuko Tiwara Aki (2024): “No one is born to suffer and can only come out of struggle if only you move” whereas in a real world, suffering is inherent if success is assured, hence “NO PAIN NO GAIN”

Iyi Etenabo Aranazunwa (2025): “That your Stubborn client that doesn't want to pay you, don't hesitate to bring he or she to me and he or she must pay” this is his post to his Yahoo clients on Facebook and the names being requested, are for vulnerable people who have marked to be defrauded.

Eke Hit; DSTV Okija (2023) in one of his interview with Jahson King Comedy posted on the latter's page was asked how he felt about yahoo boys and how they defraud people? He convincingly said” whenever it has to do with defrauding a foreigner, call me anytime, any day, I will follow up with the appropriate charm because they are the ones that defrauded Africans first” The glorification of *Okeite* on Facebook and other social media platforms now appeals to many undergraduates in Anambra State. With advanced access to smartphones, internet connectivity, and social networking apps, these students are constantly exposed to this digital mysticism. Studies show that undergraduates are particularly vulnerable to cybercriminal influence due to their high digital engagement and socio-economic pressures (Bidgoli, Knijnenburg & Grossklags, 2016). The harsh realities of unemployment, poverty, and material inequality have driven many students to abandon academic pursuits in favour of deceptive wealth schemes advertised online. Statements like “school is a waste of time”

and “who school epp?” echo a growing disenchantment with formal education. Where once academic excellence was considered the pathway to success, today, many students seek social validation through displays of wealth, owning luxury cars, living in expensive apartments, and adorning designer brands all often, without verifiable income sources. This lifestyle, bolstered by the ideology of *Okeite* and the influence of digital *dibias*, undermines academic focus and compromises educational integrity. The involvement of university students in the *Okeite* digital phenomenon has implications not only for morality and security but also for academic performance. The core mission of tertiary education to prepare students in character and learning is at risk. When students prioritise quick wealth over knowledge acquisition, they compromise their academic integrity and long-term potential. As Ojedokun & Eraye (2012) observe, many of these students view the university certificate merely as a formality, not as a product of merit or hard work. They resort to bribery, sex-for-grades, sorting, and other unethical practices, reducing education to a transactional endeavor.

This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the influence of such Advertisement by digital *dibias* on Facebook on the academic performance of undergraduates in Anambra State. It also explores the motivations behind students' engagement with digital spirituality, and the broader implications on university life and values.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Okeite has become a trending subject on Facebook and other social media channels, where videos and posts by self-acclaimed spiritualists or native doctors showcase its

alleged powers. These contents often emphasise wealth accumulation, luxury lifestyles, and dramatic “before and after” transformations, all credited to the use of *Okeite*. The growing visibility of these digital spiritual contents has significantly influenced the perceptions, choices, and values of young people, especially undergraduates, who are often navigating economic hardship, social pressure, and the pursuit of success. The potential consequence of this trend is a decline in academic motivation and performance, especially when students become emotionally or psychologically invested in rituals that promise to solve all their problems overnight. The ritualistic culture, repackaged through social media, may distract students from the discipline, patience, and critical thinking required for academic success. In extreme cases, it may even lead to social deviance, financial recklessness, and a total disregard for academic goals. While existing literature has explored the cultural relevance of traditional medicine, the socio-economic implications of ritual practices, and the influence of digital media on youth culture, there remains a significant gap in empirical research examining the nexus between the Advertisement of *Okeite* through digital *dibias* on Facebook and the academic performance of undergraduates in Anambra State. This is the critical void that this study seeks to fill. The study therefore aims to investigate how the digital dissemination and glorification of *Okeite* rituals by *digital dibias* particularly through Facebook are influencing the academic focus, performance, and overall educational values of students in tertiary institutions across Anambra State. It explores the nature of this advertisement, its reach among undergraduates, and the extent to which it impacts their academic trajectories.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to examine the Influence of Facebook advertisement of *Okeite* through digital *dibias* on academic performance of undergraduates in Anambra state. However, the specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the level of awareness of the *Okeite* phenomenon among undergraduates in Anambra State;
2. Assess the level of awareness of digital *dibia* activities on Facebook among undergraduates in Anambra State;
3. explore the factors associated with the engagement of *Okeite* among undergraduates in Anambra State;
4. investigate the academic consequences of *Okeite* engagement among undergraduates in Anambra State.

3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories are bodies of knowledge tested overtime and having a universal acceptance. Theory is not yet a system of law-like proposition, but rather a set of idea of varying status and origin which explain realities. This study adopted two theories namely: Social Learning Theory and Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT). This is due to their appropriateness and much relevance to the study. According to Owuamalam (2010), a theory refers to a set of related propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relationships among concepts. It suggests a direction, a researcher should take and it guides in accomplishing the study objectives.

3.1 Social Learning Theory

This study is also anchored on the Social Learning Theory as a theoretical foundation. The theory was propounded by Albert Bandura in 1973. It embodies a model in psychology proposed to describe how people

behave (Bandura, 1973). Several revisions have been carried out in the theory. The basic tenet of the theory is its exposition in the processes of human behaviour, as it concerns a regular give and take communication between factors such as: logic, behaviour and environment (Bandura, 1977). That is, observed stimuli, personal experiences, and individual cognitive processes all perform together, to determine a person's values and behaviours. Social learning theory draws upon the notion of reinforcement, whereby individuals come to adopt those values and behaviours that are perceived as rewarding and discard those that are not. Bandura (1977) suggests that as a general rule, seeing behaviour succeed for others increases the tendency to behave in similar ways, while seeing behaviour punished decreases the tendency. Bandura strongly rejects the idea that his interpretation of reinforcement is mechanistic, making the point that "both people and their environments are reciprocal determinants of each other" (Bandura, 1977). This process of vicarious learning through observation of models, in real life or the media, involves noticing or attending to the modeled behaviour. This includes verbal or facial expressions. It also involves coding the behaviour in memory visually or verbally and enacting the behaviour and also motivation. On the basis of this, evaluating the consequences becomes imperative (Bandura; 1977, 1983, 1994). Essential components influencing social learning include, observational learning, social control theory and the influence of the media and the socialisation process. Social learning theory integrated behavioural and cognitive theories of learning in order to provide a comprehensive model that could account for the wide range of carry experiences that occur in the real world.

As initially outlined by Bandura and Walters in 1963 (Bandura, 1963) and further detailed in 1977 (Bandura, 1977) key tenets of social learning theory are as follows:

1. Learning is not purely behavioural rather it is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context.
2. Learning can occur by observing behaviour and by observing the consequence of the behaviour creations (re-enforcement).
3. Learning involves observation extraction of information from those observations and making decisions about the performance of the behaviour (observational learning or modeling). Thus, learning can occur without observable change in behaviour.

Re-enforcement plays a role in learning but is not entirely responsible for learning. The learning is not the passive recipient of the information, cognition, environment and behaviour, all mutually influence each other reciprocal determinism.

Social learning theory draws heavily on the concept of modeling, or learning by observation behaviour. Bandura outlined three types of modeling stimuli:

Live Model: In which an actual person is demonstrating a desired behaviour.

Verbal Instruction: In which an individual describes the desired behaviour and instructs the participants on how to engage in the behaviour.

Symbolic: This is the aspect that relates to the discourse because it is in which modeling occurs by means by media, including movies television, internet literature and radio. Stimuli can be either real or fictional characters.

According to Bandura (1972), information gleaned from observation is influenced by the type of model, as well as series of cognitive and behavioural processes, including:

Attitude: In order to learn, observers must attend to the modeled behaviour. Attention is impacted by characteristics of the observer e.g. perceptual ability lies, cognitive abilities, arousal, past performance of the behaviour and characteristics of the behaviour or event (e.g. relevance, novelty, effective valence and functional value).

Reproduction: To reproduce behaviour, the observer must organise responses in accordance with the model. Observers' characteristics affecting reproduction include physical, cognitive capabilities and previous performance.

Motivation: The decision to reproduce (or refrain from reproducing) an observed behaviour is dependent on the motivation and expectations of the observer intruding anticipated consequences and internal standards.

Retention: In order to reproduce an observed behaviour observers must be able to remember features of the behaviour. Again, this process is influenced by observer characteristics (cognitive capabilities and cognitive rehearsal).

An important factor of social learning theory is the concept of reciprocal determinism. The notion claims that just as an individual's behaviour is influenced by the environment, environment is also influenced by the individuals' behaviour. Environment and personal qualities reciprocally influence each other.

The relevance of social learning theory to this study is that the theory suggests that learning takes place by observing the behaviour of others. Hence when the Nigerian society adopts a materialistic lifestyle through ostentatious display of ill-gotten wealth, and the music and movies industry celebrate the life and lifestyles of “yahoo-yahoo boys”, thousands of youth and undergraduates are watching, learning and imitating. Social learning here helps predict certain behavioural outcome for undergraduates in Nigeria where overnight and unexplained success is praised and adored.

4.0 THE REVIEW

4.1 Digital and Social Media as Advertising tools for *Okeite Digital Dibia*

The digital *dibia* is the specialist who prepares the *Okeite* pot of imagined progress to mislead youth thirsting after luxuries of life without requisite diligence and work. The digital *dibia* preys on his victims in the today's Nigeria using the digital and social media. He is on the Internet, he uses the cell phone, he googles relevant locations and persons, he has Facebook accounts, he maintains an Instagram handle, he does video and voice calls on WhatsApp. The digital *dibia* has made the new interactive tools of social media his reliable companion in the business of rituals for money. On Facebook pages, the *Okeite* digital *dibia* can reach clients, home and overseas. Geography is no more a barrier for him and his ilk. The self-declared digital *dibia* and soothsayer uses new communication technologies and the social media to prepare powerful, confidence-giving *Okeite* with human, animal and vegetable parts for all classes of persons who want to get rich quick and are willing to engage in all sorts of crimes, fraud and rituals. Digital *dibias* are social media savvy. They today use tech tools

to market and promote their *dibia* services. Distance is no longer a barrier, even people living in America, Europe and Asia now send money across and are represented by friends and family members where *aweke, ibobo, obala ola*, powerful juju are prepared for them (Nworah, 2023).

In the opinion of Adimike (2023) digital *dibias* are false messengers wearing the toga of the gods. He states that 'these agents embody the worst human fragility, invest them with religious praxes, and claim them in the name of the gods. As such, they give the impression that African gods support wealth without work and success through fraudulent and wicked paths. Killings and other fetishistic practices are inadvertently presented as the magic wand for the attention and action of these gods. They present these gods as bloodthirsty cannibals and monsters who must require human parts to listen to the requests of their subjects. These are purely evil ways of men attributed to gods, giving the gods a bad name to pitch them as purveyors of evil. ... These ritualists and *dibias* profane the name of the gods, misrepresent them and destroy the purity of religions. Our youth need rescue from the grip of these evil men who parade themselves as the agents of deities and gods. Nigerians and Christians must say no to this grand fraud in the name of the gods'.

The Internet and the new media currently enable a two-way online interaction across continents. There is also the capability for user-generated content wherein anyone with the connectivity can create and post materials online to reach everyone else online. Social media, particularly Facebook, allow users to showcase themselves, create and maintain social connections with others, and put

together their own social networks. The days are long past when monopoly of content creation was solely in the hands of a few content creators and media distributors. Marketers and top organisational hierarchy no longer control the communication path between the public and information or news sources. The current new media model is collective, collaborative, shared and customised (Jegede, 2014). It's a world in which the consumer is the creator, consumer and distributor of content. There are currently over a billion content creators and hundreds of millions of distributors all vying for recognition in the social media especially the Facebook platform. The increase of affordable and quality technology alongside the popularity of Facebook and other social networking sites have forever altered the media landscape. This growing popularity of Facebook has meant a shift in the way that digital *dibias* can reach their target audiences or clients using online social networking sites (Akinyemi, 2017). Social media platforms have empowered and emboldened digital *dibias* that ordinarily would not peddle their services and wares through the mainstream media, to do so through the digital platforms. This is the case with the *Okeite* digital *dibia* who work with laptops and other computer devices today, who use online platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp on their cellphones to solicit and interact with their clients.

Okeke, Nwosu and Ajagu (2023) avers that 'in recent times, marabouts, spiritualists, witch doctors and other promoters of money-making ritual techniques have seized the opportunity of the interactiveness and the popularity of Facebook to seek for their target audience and woo them into patronising their services. The rate of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria has placed the

youths in a gullible position where they easily fall victims to certain information and advertisement seen on Facebook. The quest to get rich quick has further placed these youths at the mercy of these vendors who introduce them to these money ritual techniques and try to convince them on their efficacy claims. Upon investigation, it has proven that most youths caught engaging in money rituals swore that they got the idea on Facebook as most of the promoters of money rituals have their Facebook pages where they disseminate information concerning the particular money ritual technique they are advertising and making its efficacy claims to anyone who cares to listen'.

The digital and social media are two edged swords. They offer the positive and the negative, they can be used for ill and for good. An example of this obtains in possibilities offered by digital technologies for emailing, advertisements, news, information and entertainment in contrast to the sinister offerings of the dark web where dangerous and criminal materials exist. But the digital *dibias* do not operate in the dark web. They are in our faces, open with their dubious fare and business. They have turned the digital and social media into advertising platforms for money-making rituals.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive survey design, which facilitates the collection of structured data from a representative sample of undergraduates in Anambra State. This study was designed as a survey and the area of study is Anambra State of Nigeria and Universities in Anambra. The State hosts nine Universities; two public and seven private universities. The universities are; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (Federal),

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam (State), Madonna University Okija, (Private), Paul University, Awka (Private), Tansian University, Umunya (Private), Legacy University, Okija (Private), Peter University, Achina (Private), Shanahan University, Onitsha and University on the Niger, Umunya (Private).

However, the Universities of interest for this study are Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. (Federal), Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam (State), and Tansian University Umunya, (Private). These universities were purposively chosen not only based on logistics but also based on distribution capturing Federal, State and Private universities in different local government areas of Anambra State. These three select universities also have the target population with required characteristics. These universities are made up of departments distributed into faculties. They have both male and female populations in the different departments and programmes of the universities.

The target population for this study comprises of students studying in the three select Universities: Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam and Tansian University, Umunya. According the students' affairs units of these three universities, the population of undergraduate students from first year to final year are: Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU) 18,246; Nnamdi Azikiwe University 33,719 and Tansian University, Umunya 5,642. The data collected based on the information from the Office of Students' Affairs of the three universities in the 2024/2025 academic session is further expressed in the table below:

Table 1: Population

S/N	Institution	Ownership	Student Population
1	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	Federal	33,719
2	Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam	State	18,246
3	Tansian University, Umunya	Private	5,642
Total			57,607

Source: Office of Students' Affairs

Thus, the population is 57,607.

The sample size for the survey was determined by referring to the sample sizes for various population ranges, as worked out by Krejcie & Morgan (1970). Therefore, since the study population is 58,067, the researcher used 370 as the sample size. Thus, the sample size of 370 is adopted at 5% error margin and 95% percent confidence level. The sample selection involved a multi-stage procedure. To ensure spread, one University each was selected from three groups; Federal, State and Private. The researcher then purposively selected a Federal University (Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka) which is the only Federal University within the area of study. In the same vein, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, the only State university in the study area is also automatically chosen. Then employing the simple random approach, the researcher selected one of the seven Private Universities in the area of study; Tansian University, Umunya.

At the second stage, two faculties were randomly selected from each of the three universities chosen above as follows: Nnamdi Azikiwe University (Management Sciences & Arts), Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (Social Sciences & Management Sciences), Tansian University, Umunya

(Social Sciences & Humanities; & Management Sciences). The Faculties of each University was listed in an alphabetical order and then a simple random sampling was employed for choosing two departments.

At the third stage, two departments are randomly selected from each faculty as follows:

Nnamdi Azikiwe University: Faculty of Management Sciences (Accounting & Business Administration).

Nnamdi Azikiwe University: Faculty of Arts (English & Religion).

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University: Faculty of Social Sciences (Mass Communication & Political Science)

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University: Faculty of Management Sciences (Marketing & Business Administration),

Tansian University, Umunya: Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities (Mass Communication & Political Science)

Tansian University, Umunya: Management

Sciences (Banking & Finance; & Accounting)

At the fourth stage, the researcher randomly selected a predetermined number of respondents from each of the departments mentioned above. The number selected from each department is based on the number of sample allotted to each university as determined using the formula to ensure proportionality.

$$R = \frac{I \times S}{N}$$

Where;

R= Number of respondents allotted to an institution

I= Student population of the institution

S= Sample size

N = Total population of the three institutions sampled

Nnamdi Azikiwe University:

$$\frac{33,719 \times 370}{57,607} = 217$$

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University:

$$\frac{18,246 \times 370}{57,607} = 117$$

Tansian University:

$$\frac{5,642 \times 370}{57,607} = 36$$

$$57,607 = 36$$

$$\text{Total} = 370$$

Hence, 217 students were randomly selected from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, 117 selected from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University and 36 from Tansian University to get the desired sample size of 370. The selection is (as far as mathematically possible) distributed proportionally across the various faculties and departments selected.

Table 3.5.1: Institution Population

S/N	Institution	Population	Sample
1	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	33,719	217
2	Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Ibadan	18,246	117
3	Tansian University, Umunya	5,642	36
Total		57,607	370

In all, 370 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents in the various faculties and departments that were selected. This is because, on the suggestion of Stacks and Hocking (1999, p.217) that, “the larger the sample, the more representative of the population the sample will be and the smaller the error will be”.

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1: To assess the level of awareness of the *Okeite* phenomenon among undergraduates in Anambra State, respondents were asked to indicate their degree of knowledge on the subject. The findings are summarised in the table below:

Table 2: Level of awareness of the *Okeite* phenomenon among undergraduates in Anambra State

Awareness	No of respondents	% of respondents	Age of
Daily	263	73.9	
Weekly	73	20.5	
Rarely	20	5.6	
TOTAL	356	100	

Source: Field Work, 2024

The data clearly show that a substantial majority of respondents (73.9%) report having Daily exposure of the *Okeite* money-making ritual, indicating strong awareness of the phenomenon among undergraduates in Anambra State. Only 20.5% of the respondents report weekly exposure, while a smaller proportion (5.6%) reported rarely. These findings suggest that the concept of *Okeite* is widely recognised and discussed among students, reflecting a high level of

societal exposure to the subject. Many respondents demonstrated confidence in their responses, which further underscores the perceived visibility and relevance of the *Okeite* phenomenon in contemporary youth culture.

Research Question 2: Respondents were asked to indicate their level of awareness of digital *dibia* activities on Facebook.

Table 3: Level of Awareness of digital *dibia* activities on Facebook.

Awareness	No of respondents	% of respondents	Age of
Highly aware	278	78.1	
Moderately aware	58	16.3	
Slightly aware	20	5.6	
TOTAL	356	100	

Source: Field Work, 2024

The data shows that a significant majority of the respondents (78.1%) indicated a high level of awareness of digital *dibia* activities on Facebook. This suggests that most

undergraduates in Anambra State are familiar with the online presence and ritual-related content shared by self-proclaimed native doctors or spiritualists on the platform. Only

16.3% reported moderate awareness, while 5.6% remained slightly aware of such activities. This high awareness level highlights the pervasive exposure of students to Facebook-based ritual promotion, particularly those involving the glamorization of *Okeite* practices. It further reinforces concerns about how digital platforms are used to influence youth perceptions of wealth

acquisition and traditional spirituality.

Research Question 3: Response on Factors associated with student engagement in *Okeite* in Anambra State.

Respondents were asked to identify the factors they believe are responsible for the rise of the *Okeite* phenomenon in Anambra State.

Table 4: Factors associated with *Okeite* in Anambra State

Factors Responsible	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Desire for quick wealth	139	39.0
Peer group Influence	64	18.0
Influence of Facebook Glamorization	87	24.4
	48	13.5
Unemployment Ignorance	18	5.1

The results indicate that the strongest factor associated with student engagement in *Okeite* money ritual among undergraduates in Anambra State is the desire for quick wealth, as reported by 39% of the respondents. This was followed by the influence of Facebook glamorization, with 24.4% pointing to the way platforms like Facebook project ritualists as successful and powerful.

Research Question 4: Response to academic consequences of *Okeite* engagement among undergraduates in Anambra State.

Respondents were asked to indicate the consequences of engagement with *Okeite*-related content on their academic performance.

Table 5: Academic implications of *Okeite* engagement among undergraduates in Anambra State.

Academic Implications	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Decline in the study time and academic focus	128	35.9
Poor academic Performance	96	27.0
No noticeable academic impact	82	23.0
Improved academic interest	21	5.9
Uncertain/Undecided	29	8.2
Total	356	100

Source: Field Work, 2024

Findings from the study show that a substantial proportion of undergraduates in Anambra State perceive negative academic consequences from their engagement with *Okeite*-related content. Specifically, 35.9% indicated a decline in study time and academic focus, while 27.0% reported poor academic performance, including low grades and academic setbacks. Conversely, 23.0% believed their engagement had no impact on their academic life, suggesting a neutral stance. Interestingly, a small group (5.9%) claimed it improved their academic interest or motivation, which may point to outlier experiences or misunderstood influence. Meanwhile, 8.2% remained undecided about any direct academic implications. These results imply that for a significant number of students, the attraction to *Okeite* content often glamorized on platforms like Facebook can lead to distraction, misplaced priorities, and poor academic outcomes. This underscores the need for further enlightenment on digital media literacy and value reorientation among youth.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The first research question examines the level of awareness of the *Okeite* phenomenon among undergraduates in Anambra State. Findings indicate that awareness occurs frequently, with a majority of respondents reporting daily exposure, followed by weekly exposure, while a smaller proportion report rare exposure. This pattern suggests that *Okeite* related content is consistently present within the digital information environment of undergraduates rather than appearing intermittently. It reflects sustained circulation of such content across social media platforms, where repetition enhances visibility and familiarity. From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, this frequent exposure

reflects active audience engagement with media content that satisfies specific psychological and social needs. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) argue that media users are goal oriented and actively select content that provides gratification such as information seeking, social interaction, and identity reinforcement. In this context, repeated exposure to *Okeite* related content may be driven by curiosity, peer influence, and the desire to remain updated on trending social narratives. Castells (2010) further explains that digital communication networks intensify the circulation of symbolic content, thereby increasing the visibility and recurrence of specific themes within online environments.

The second research question investigates the level of awareness of digital *dibia* activities on Facebook among undergraduates. Findings show a similarly high level of frequent exposure, indicating that digital *dibia* related content is widely circulated and consistently visible within students' online spaces. This suggests that Facebook functions as a major platform for the dissemination of ritualised and symbolic narratives associated with wealth acquisition. Jenkins (2006) explains that participatory digital culture enables continuous sharing and redistribution of content, which amplifies exposure and reinforces familiarity among users.

The third research question identifies the factors associated with engagement of *Okeite* among undergraduates in Anambra State. Findings reveal that desire for quick wealth, peer group influence, unemployment, exposure to glamorised representations of wealth on Facebook, and ignorance are key contributing factors. This aligns with Merton's Strain Theory (1938), which

explains that individuals experiencing a gap between societal goals and legitimate means may adopt alternative or deviant pathways to success. Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) further supports this finding by emphasising that behaviour is learned through observation, imitation, and reinforcement, particularly when observed behaviours appear rewarded. In addition, research by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) demonstrates how digital media environments can shape behavioural orientation and reduce academic engagement when consumption becomes excessive.

The fourth research question investigates the academic implications of engagement with *Okeite* related content among undergraduates. Findings show that engagement is largely associated with negative academic outcomes, particularly reduced study time, poor academic performance, and decreased academic focus. A smaller proportion of respondents report no noticeable impact or improved academic interest. This finding aligns with the displacement hypothesis in media effects research, which suggests that time spent on media activities can reduce time available for academic work. Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) found that intensive social media use is negatively associated with academic performance among students, reinforcing the observed pattern in this study. Social Learning Theory further explains that repeated exposure to rewarded portrayals of sudden wealth may influence motivation and shift attention away from academic effort. Overall, the findings indicate that *Okeite* related content and digital *dibia* activities circulating on Facebook are highly visible and influential among undergraduates in Anambra State. Theoretical perspectives

from Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Learning Theory, and classical media effects research provide a coherent explanation of how media exposure, audience motivation, and observational learning interact to shape awareness, engagement, and perceived academic consequences.

6.0 CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of the advertisement of *Okeite* through digital *dibia* activities on Facebook and its implications for the academic performance of undergraduates in Anambra State. The findings revealed that a significant number of students are highly aware of both the *Okeite* phenomenon and the activities of digital *dibias* who actively promote these rituals on Facebook. The study concludes that the combination of economic pressure, peer influence, and the pervasive nature of social media has fueled the rise of digital ritualism. The visibility and repetition of *Okeite* content on Facebook not only normalise the practice but also lure undergraduates into viewing ritual-based wealth as a viable shortcut to success. This exposure has notable academic implications, including distraction from studies, declining focus, and poor performance.

6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Since the study found a high level of awareness of *Okeite* among undergraduates, universities in Anambra State should strengthen students' awareness programmes on the social and academic implications of *Okeite*-related practices. Such programmes should provide students with accurate information that can help

them critically evaluate claims about quick wealth acquisition.

2. In view of the high awareness of digital dibia activities on Facebook, social media literacy programmes should be incorporated into university orientation and students' development activities. Students should be encouraged to critically assess Okeite-related content and avoid accepting promotional claims without verification.
3. Since economic hardship, unemployment, peer pressure and the glorification of wealth were identified as major factors associated with interest in Okeite, universities and relevant government agencies should strengthen career guidance, entrepreneurship education and employability programmes for undergraduates. These interventions should help students develop legitimate pathways to financial independence and reduce vulnerability to unrealistic quick-wealth messages.
4. Since Facebook features such as live streaming, video uploads, comments and shares were identified as contributing to the visibility of digital dibias, relevant regulatory agencies and social media stakeholders should strengthen monitoring and reporting mechanisms for content that promotes unlawful or harmful Okeite-related practices. Digital platforms should also make it easier for users to report such content.
5. Since engagement with Okeite-related content was associated with reduced academic focus, distraction and perceived decline in academic performance, university authorities

should strengthen counselling and academic support services for students who may be excessively engaged with such content. Students should also be encouraged to manage their social media use in ways that protect their study time and academic activities.

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