

Social Media and Organizational Crisis Management: The use of Facebook by Ghanaian Senior High Schools to Manage Fire Outbreaks



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ABSTRACT: Communication plays an important role in the successful operation of organizations. During crises, the survival of these organizations highly depends on its response structure. This study delved into how social media and Web 2.0 technologies like Facebook are used to manage the effects of fire outbreaks in Senior High Schools in Ghana, using Saint Charles Senior High School as a case study. The study sought to ascertain the knowledge respondents have on the use of Facebook, and the challenges they encounter, in managing and responding to fire outbreaks. The study also proposed the reinforcement and integration of Facebook in the school's crisis response. The study adopted the mixed method approach to obtain information through the use of key interview guides and personal interviews.

From the survey, 31.1 % of respondents stated that the impact of the use of Facebook in communicating the fire outbreak was satisfactory. Another 31.1 % of the respondents said the impact was effective and 26.7 % said the impact was weak. The last 11.1 % of the respondents said that its impact was very effective. Generally, 88.9 % were of the view that the use of Facebook did not pose any challenge in managing the crisis while 11.1 % of the respondents thought it posed some challenges.

The study recommended that the school should create accounts on other platforms so they can be easily accessible. The study advocated for the review of Ghana Education Service's (GES) policies on banning the use of mobile phones in schools as this would help inform students of fire safety precautions.

Finally, it was recommended that the school should use quality electrical wires and appliances. Policy regulations for building wiring should be reinforced by Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCo) and Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo) as this would help reduce fire outbreaks.

KEYWORDS: Facebook, Fire outbreaks, Crisis management, Stakeholders, Social media, Crisis response, Safety measures

INTRODUCTION

Fire, while useful to the human populace, is also viewed as a basis for disaster. For example, the challenges of starting and managing fires, and struggling with the danger of wildfires and burns poses a great threat to people and organizations (Barnett, 2008). Today, electrical power is the source of fire in homes, offices and schools since its improper handling and use has led to several accidents with serious damages (Ayarkwa *et al.*, 2010) In some sections of Ghana, fire outbreaks are reported almost every day, with state facilities like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kumasi Central Market, Office of the Electoral Commission etc. being affected (Gakpe & Mahama, 2014).

Ghana has, even most recently, been crippled with increasing and disastrous fire outbreaks. Kumasi and Accra for instance, have had exceptional number of fire outbreaks with disproportionate property damages worth millions of US dollars. According to statistical data from Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS), in 2013 the country had a total of 5, 489 fire outbreaks, with closely over 1, 128 injured persons and 213 deaths, resulting into a sum cost of about 18 million dollars (Graphic Online, 2014). Most studies attribute the cause of fire outbreaks in Ghana to electrical faults originating from poorly-designed and constructed electrical circuits (Simpson, 2010). According to Simpson (2010), deterioration that occurs in cable insulations with time, mostly results into fire outbreak.

In many third-world economies, fire-triggered accidents and many other predicaments such as disease outbreaks are a serious dilemma that calls for urgent attention. Hence, a prompt and effective reaction to different crises events is paramount (Oppong *et al.*, 2017). It is however appalling to see that crises response systems are either out of place or inadequate. As argued in literature, inconsequential incidents result into crises that pose threats to public security, population health and general welfare.

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Unlike the developed world, losses arising from crises in most of the developing economies are extremely costly and more detrimental.

Research shows that, the deficiency of economic resources tied with impotence are the chief hindrances in effectively responding to emergencies in most of the third-world countries. Adamtey et al. (2015) added that access to crisis care has become a key matter of concern in most of the third world as this is often attributed to poor transportation and unavailability of national fire service, as in the situation of Ghana.

In Northern Region, some organizations have not been spared from this agony. St. Charles Minor Seminary, which is the focus of this study, in two separate years had been faced with such crisis. In 2017 and 2021, the school was almost burnt down to ashes and no one seems to know the cause of the fires.

According to a report by Diana Ngon (2021), the fire outbreak led to the destruction of many belongings in the school's storeroom, six classrooms, a PTA block, and four offices (Retrieved from citinewsroom.com). According to the headmaster, Polycarp Kuusokub, though an immediate call was placed to the Ghana National Fire Service in Tamale to ensure things were brought under control, the fire service department did not arrive on time since they got stuck on the way. Also, the fire could not be brought under control when it was first noticed because the school lacked fire extinguishers (2021).

Existing research shows that today, media can largely influence crisis positively by framing the perspective of the people or the public in managing and responding to such emergencies effectively. Social media has become increasingly significant for organizational crisis management as it allows organizations and publics to give information in a variety of formats (Pohl *et al.*, 2013). It is widely used as a platform to learn about new things including the occurrences of crisis. Even among organizations and corporations, social media is transforming the way everyone interacts among themselves. Due to its nature, it can be used as a platform to manage crises in organizations, by allowing publics to communicate their concerns to management to be addressed. (Apuke & Tunca, 2018)

In addition to this, social media has made publics resourceful in crisis management. The disaster information arena is growing in terms of opportunities and procedures for public participation in disaster management. social media allows for backchannel communication which gives room for large scale engagement between members of the public to generate information that would otherwise be difficult to access (Shklovski *et al.*, 2008). Facebook users and organizations who use Facebook as a tool for crisis management assist in the dissemination of information during emergencies by setting up support sites and using hash-tags in posts to catch attention of people (Dragović *et al.*, 2019).

Again, social media platforms like Facebook cover and keep up with disaster news longer than traditional mainstream media. Even after a crisis has passed, Facebook can be used to keep people informed about ongoing disaster-related initiatives and to share their own personal experiences (Almansoori & Habtoor, 2018). People are being encouraged to use social media for their own safety; sites like Facebook have developed into an integral part of people's daily lives as well as a potent means of communication and management in times of crisis, such as fire outbreak. Studies showing the use of social networking sites like Facebook in challenging situations provide proof of sharing information about missing people, issuing warnings about additional potential repercussions, running safety checks during natural disasters, and letting people know where they may go for support or a safe haven (Dragović *et al.*, 2019). According to research, when a crisis occurs, using Facebook to deescalate the situation can be a very effective technique which can contribute to the development and success of an organizations crisis management system (Apuke & Tunca, 2018).

Ghana lacks a systematic evaluation tool that could be used to assess the geographic coverage of emergency responses. As essential as information is to the planning and decision-making processes in crises management, sources for obtaining useful information that can be used to analyze and prevent the reoccurrence of crises have not been developed (Pohl & Bouchachia, 2015). Moreover, regardless of the relevance of Facebook as a social media tool, only a few studies have been undertaken on the use of social media as a strategic tool for emergency management.

To be specific, very little is known about how and the extent to which key organizations like St. Charles Minor Seminary have used Facebook effectively, in times of crisis, for emergency communication. On this account, the study seeks to examine how Facebook can be used as a tool for managing and responding to the fire outbreaks in organizations in Ghana.

METHODOLOGY

The chapter provides an overview on the study area, the research design as well as the research method. The chapter also discusses the sample size and sampling techniques, types and sources of data, data collection procedures, and the analytical tools for this investigation.

The study adopted a Case Study Design, focusing on St. Charles Minor Seminary Senior High School, as this design gathers well detailed data through the use of a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. This design served as an inquiring technique that allowed for the use of both semi-structured questionnaires and interviews, which the group employed to solicit requisite data on the topic under study from the respondents. Thus, the targeted populations for the study were the students,

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management board members and alumni of St. Charles Minor Seminary Senior High School in Tamale, Northern Region, with the total number of students being 1, 200. In line with the chosen design, this study adopted a mixed method approach, which harmonized the context of qualitative and quantitative research techniques, including key informant interviews, in-depth personal interviews and semi-structured questionnaires from the study location.

SAMPLING AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

As Briken defined, sampling refers to a systematic selection of representative cases from a larger population. Thus, taking into consideration the student population of Saint Charles Minor Seminary Senior High School which is 1, 200 students and the teaching staff population being 44 teachers, the study adopted the following sample size formula by Calderon to determine the size of the sample of the students and the teachers which is: $n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$, where n is the sample size, N is the total of student population and e is the allowable error that is determined by the researcher. In this study, the allowable error is 5 % with a 95 % confident interval since the study concerned individuals whose personal biases might have an influence on the level of accuracy. Using the formula, $N = 1, 200$ (to represent the student population of the school) and $e = 0.05$.

$$n = \frac{(1,200)}{1+1,200(0.05)^2} \quad n = \frac{1,200}{4} = 300. \text{ Therefore, } n = 300 \text{ students, approximately.}$$

Using the same formula to determine the sample size from teaching staff, $n = \frac{(44)}{1+44(0.05)^2}$

$n = \frac{44}{1.11} = 39.639639639$. So, $n = 40$ teachers, approximately. In total, the sample size based on the formula used for the respective study areas is 340 but due to time and resource constraints, the study considered 100 respondents who were purposively and randomly selected. The respondents will include 90 students, who will be selected from all levels, 9 teachers and the principal.

In the process of obtaining the relevant knowledge towards achieving the set objectives, the study deployed the following techniques- Purposive sampling: was used to carefully source and choose secondary data useful to the study on the basis of its relevance to the findings of the study at hand. In all, the study purposively selected eight secondary literature which included articles, journals and dissertations that could help provide accurate responses to the study questions and address the problem of the study. The abstract of each of the secondary data was chosen

Again, this technique was employed to purposefully interview 10 key informants (i.e. 1 Principal, and 9 teaching staff) who play key roles in the running of the school, and can provide in-depth knowledge and relevant inform in relation to the fire outbreak and its management.

The Simple random sampling technique was used to randomly choose a sample size of 90 student respondents, which were representative of the entire population from the selected study area, where every element has the same chance of being chosen. The study therefore used the Lottery method to randomly select the participants.

The following were the vital data collection methods used to source data from the study respondents: Individual Interview: This was used to obtain an in-depth knowledge regarding their knowledge on social media (i.e. Facebook in particular) and organizational crisis management. Key informant interview: In this procedure, both the opened-ended questions were used to gather data from the management, teaching and non-teaching staff of the school pertaining to the discourse under study. SPSS (version 20) was used to analyze the gathered data. Simple descriptive statistics and frequency tables, pie chart and bar graphs were generated. Cross tabulations of relevant variables was also done to reveal patterns and relationships. Differences in number of respondents reported in the findings were perhaps due to respondents' inability to answer some of the questions. The analyses were done on valid responses. These were explained with regards to their occurrence in a text. This was done so to measure the significance of the current state of the school (particularly the state of academic performance) since the outbreak of the crisis. Content analysis was used to analyze the visuals that were taken from the study area and this served as evidence to the factors/causes of fire outbreak in the study area.

DISCUSSION

This paper's discussion will be guided by the following set of questions: What is the knowledge about the use of Facebook in managing and responding to fire outbreaks? What are the challenges involved in the use of Facebook in crisis management? What measures can be recommended to reinforce an inclusive integration and effective use of Facebook in crisis management?

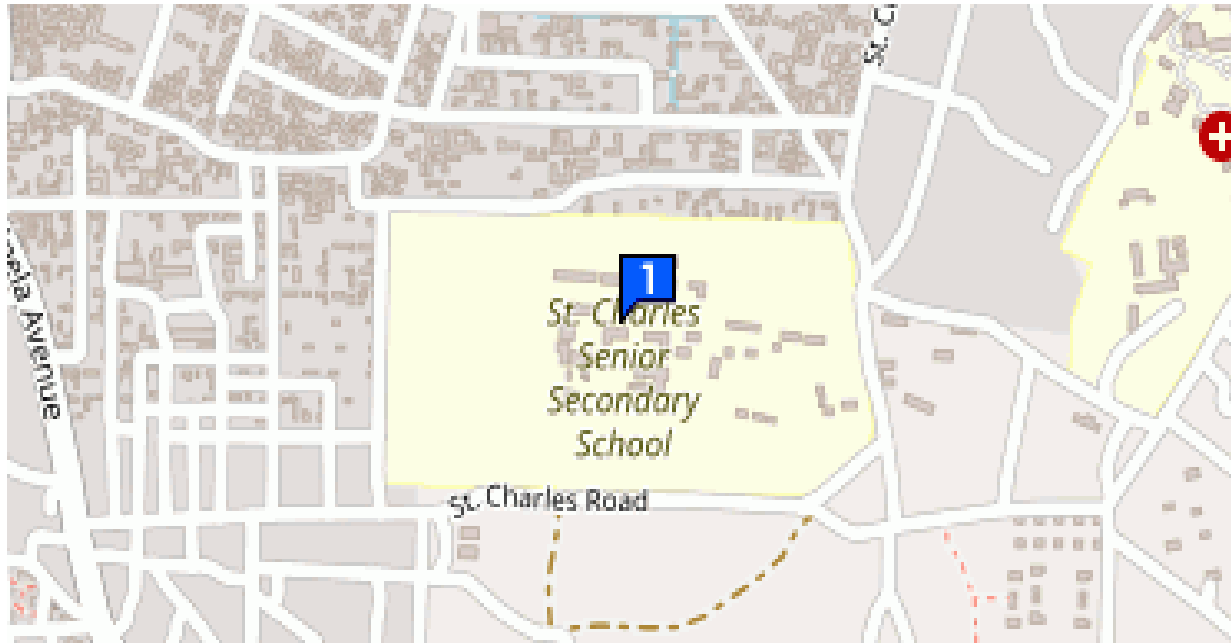
PROFILE OF STUDY AREA

St. Charles Minor Seminary/Senior High School

St. Charles Minor Seminary Senior High School is a Catholic institution which was established with the aim of training priests and religious for the Church, while at the same time forming responsible people for the nation and the world at large. The school was established by the Missionaries of Africa in 1953 at Wiaga in the Buils District of the Upper East Region of Ghana. In 1955 the school was relocated to Tamale because of its strategic and central location as the administrative center of the north. The school at

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Wiaga began with 12 kids in the pioneering class, 8 students in the second batch, and 21 students in the third batch, all of whom were relocated to Tamale. The fourth batch which constituted 29 students was later reduced to 15 students at the latter part of the same year; with 14 of the remaining students being withdrawn from the school for several reasons. When it became more impossible for the church to operate the school on its own, in the late 1990s, a decision was made to collaborate with the government, which eventually led to the school's absorption by government in 2001. Currently, the school can boast of having a total student population of one thousand, two hundred, under the leadership of Mr. Jakpa Paul Kelly. The institution has 43 teaching staff, 32 non-teaching staff and 993 alumni.



Source: (Available@<http://www.stcharles.edu.gh/>).

Source (<https://vymaps.com/GH/St-Charles-Minor-Seminary-senior-High-School-tamale-419886504776875/>).

Demographic Characteristics

This analysis considers the respondents who are the students of St. Charles Minor Seminary Senior High School's gender, age, educational level, the program they read, place of residence, parents income status and their background.

Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender distribution is a significant socio-demographic variable as it relates to the roles and subject of discourse in the twenty-first century. Based on the results from the survey, 90 students representing 100% of the total number of respondents made themselves available to be interviewed. There were no female respondents because the school is a single sex school for boys. As a result, data collection focused on only on the male gender.

Age Distribution of Respondents

Age is a significant demographic variable that defines the active labor force and dependency ratio in a given economy. Of the sample size shown in the immediate figure below, the ages ranging from 17 to 19 were the highest respondents, followed by 20 to 22, then 13 to 16, as the least respondents among the sample under study. 68 students representing 75.6 % of the sample population fell between the ages of 17 to 19, while 13 students representing 14.4 % of the sample size fell between the ages of 22 to 24 and 9 students representing 10.0 % of the sample population fall under the ages of 13 to 16 which is the least age. In implication, the results demonstrate that majority of the study sampled population are youthful, and therefore, form part of the active labor of the economy who could contribute significantly towards the growth of their respective families, society and the country at large if given the necessary provisions to successfully complete their education. However, it can be argued that in a situation where their studies is frequently disrupted by fire outbreaks, their dependency on their families, society and the economy at large will be prolonged.

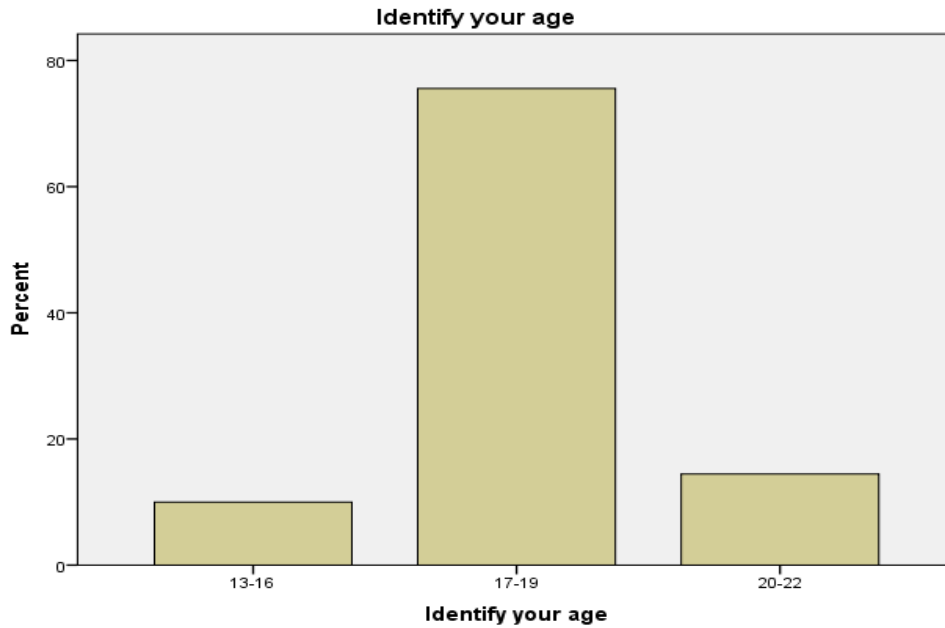


Figure 4.1 Age Distribution of Respondents
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Distribution of Educational Levels of Respondents

The educational level data of respondents were taken according to the various classes of students, (i.e. from Form 1 to Form 3). The results were summarized in the figure below as follows. From the summarized data, out of the 90 respondents, 69 students representing 76.7 % were students in Form 2 and they constitute the highest respondents of the sample population while 21 students representing 23.3 % of the total sample size were in Form 3. The low number of participants from Form 3 was because majority of them were taking their mock examinations. Also, there was no data from Form 1 students since they had vacated.

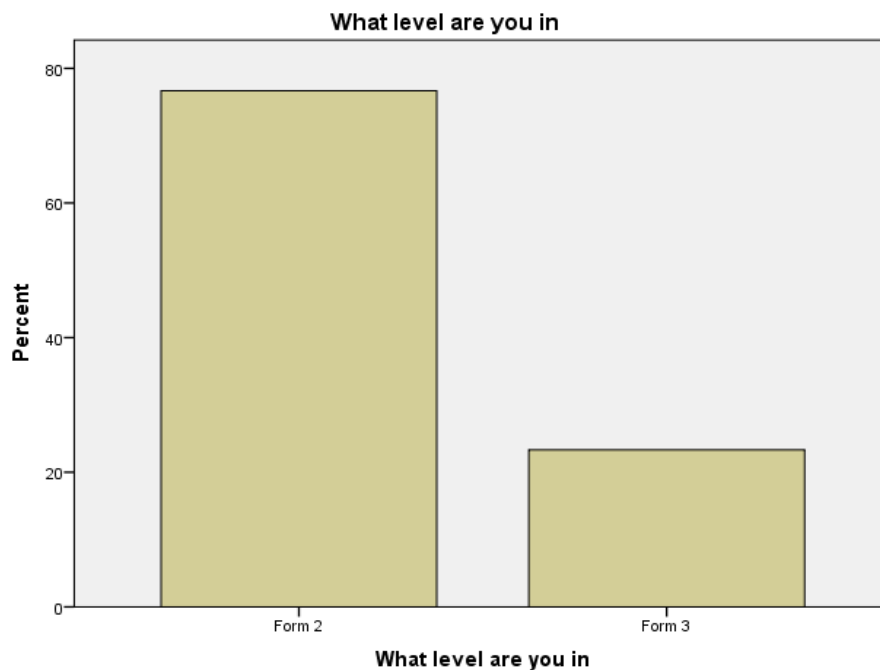


Figure 4.2 Educational Levels of Respondents (Students)
(Source: field survey 2022)

Program of Study Distribution by Respondent

St. Charles Minor Seminary Senior High School offers the following programs: General Arts, Science, Business and Agricultural Science. According to the survey, 42 respondents representing 46.7 % are students offering Science, 25 of them representing 27.8%

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are pursuing General Arts, 14 students representing 15.6% are those pursuing Business, with the remaining 9 students representing 10.0% pursuing Agricultural Science.

The results clearly show that respondents from the General Science program is the most top leading in the study, followed by respondents from the General Arts, Business and Agricultural Science programs respectively. This is represented in the figure below as follows.

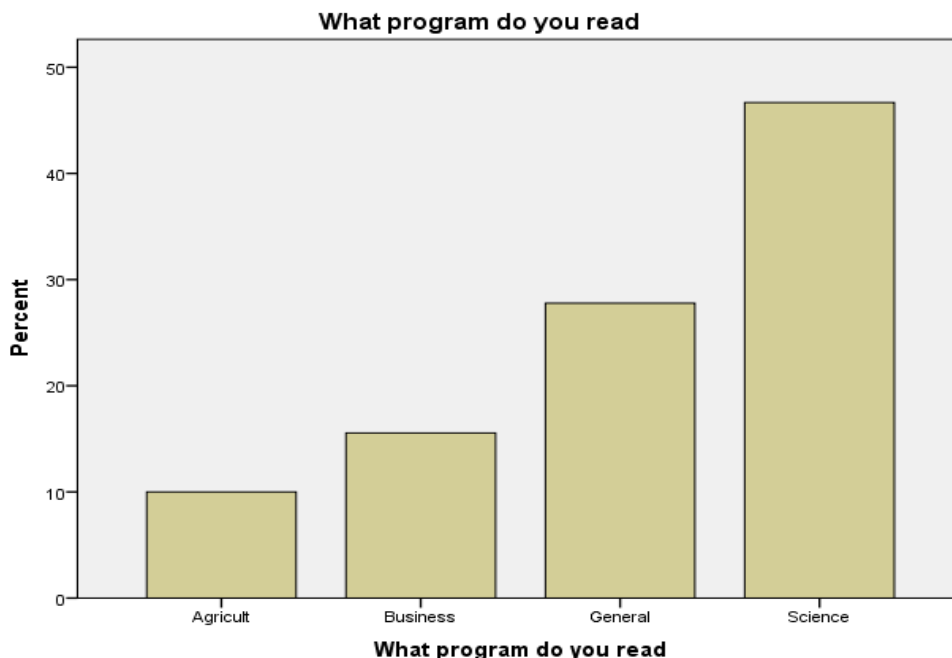


Figure 4.2 Program of Study Distribution
(Source: field survey 2022)

Residence of Respondents

The survey classified the location or residence of the respondents into urban and rural based on their access to internet. The results from the survey demonstrate that, out of 90 respondents, 52 representing 57.8 % and 38 representing 42.2 % are from rural and urban settings respectively. This was done to identify their accessibility to internet when using Facebook as far as update of information on academic progression and measures put in place to get the students back to school are concerned.



Figure 4.2. Residence Distributions of Respondents.
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Income and Social Status of Respondents' Family

In finding out the income and social status, the respondents were interviewed and the following are the results that were obtained. In comparison, the results in figure 4.2.6a & b reveal that those within the middle income status are 78 representing 86.7 % . The

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respondents who fall within the poor income status are 5 representing 5.6%. Also, those who fall within the rich income status are 4 representing 4.4% while 3 representing 3.3% are those within the low income status. Again, the survey shows that 65 representing 72.2% are those within the privileged status, with 17 representing 18.9%, 4 representing 4.4%, are those within the high income class and underprivileged class respectively.

In implication, students from high income earning and privileged families could afford smartphones and data bundles and could therefore have access to updated information on academic progression and crisis prevention measures put in place by the school via Facebook. But those from low income earning and underprivileged families may not have the purchasing and accessibility power and therefore may not gain from the information shared on Facebook.

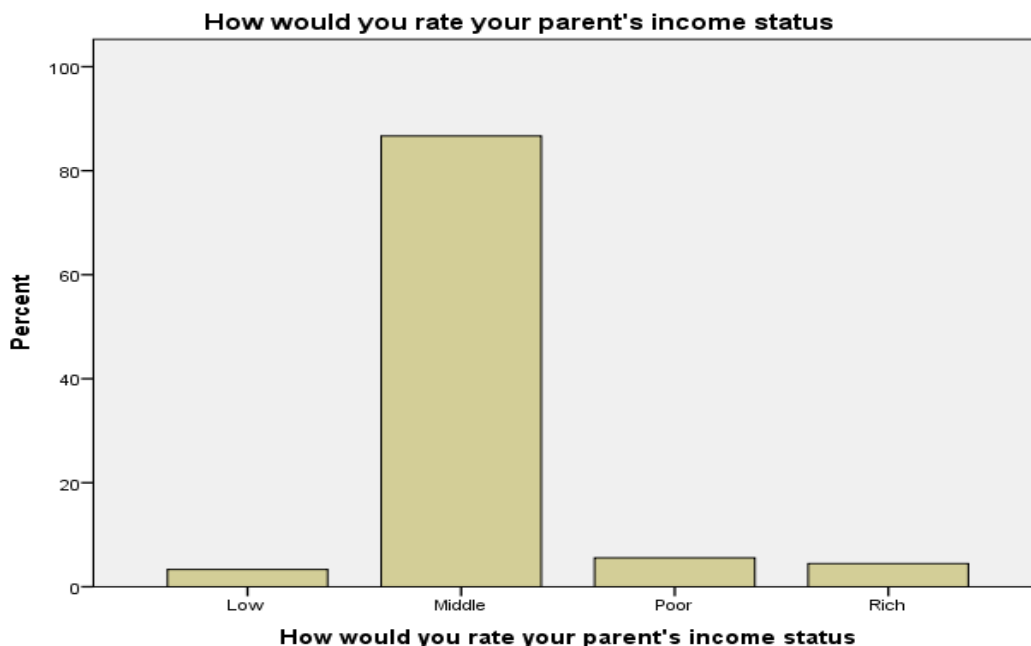


Figure 4.6a. Income Status of Respondents
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

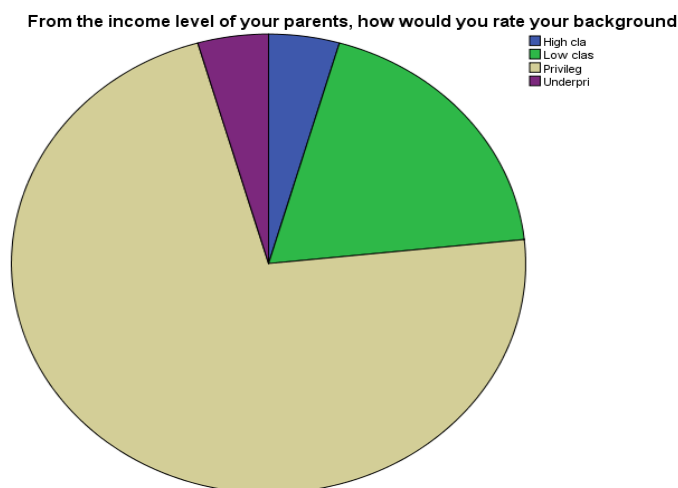


Figure 4.6b: Social Status of Respondents
(Source: field survey 2022)

Use of Smartphone Distribution of Respondents

According to the survey, it was indicated in figure 4.2.7 below that, 62 students representing 68.9% of the respondents own and have access to smartphones and can obtain update information on measures of fire outbreak whereas 28 of them representing 31.1% do not have smartphones and have no access to Facebook. This clearly shows that socio-economic factors have the tendency of influencing students' abilities to access relevant and timely information.

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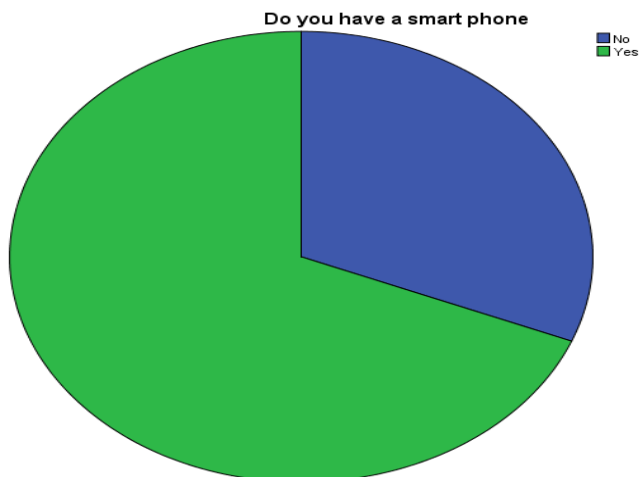


Figure 4.2 Use of Smartphone Distribution
(Source): Field Survey 2022

Network Coverage

From the survey, it was indicated that, the most and common networks that the students use to access Facebook for updates posted by their school on the management of fire outbreak were MTN and VODAFONE. Majority of the respondents preferably used both networks simultaneously in order to change to the favorable one wherever they find themselves. Yet, they had network challenges. From the survey, it was revealed that, 21.1% experienced a weak network coverage as against 47.8% experienced a strong network coverage and the remaining 31.1% experienced a complete absence of network since they own no smartphone. The outcome is shown on table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Network Coverage Distribution of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strong	43	47.8
Weak	19	21.1
Absence of Network	28	31.1
Total	90	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Facebook Account Distribution of Respondents

This survey was conducted to find out the number of respondents who have Facebook account as against those who do not have Facebook account. From the survey, it was shown that, 63 students representing 70% have Facebook account while 27 representing 30% do not. Among the reasons shared for not having Facebook accounts, they claim that their accounts have been blocked and therefore cannot have access to Facebook. Others also claim that they cannot afford to buy a smartphone, while the rest claim they would want to complete school before getting one.

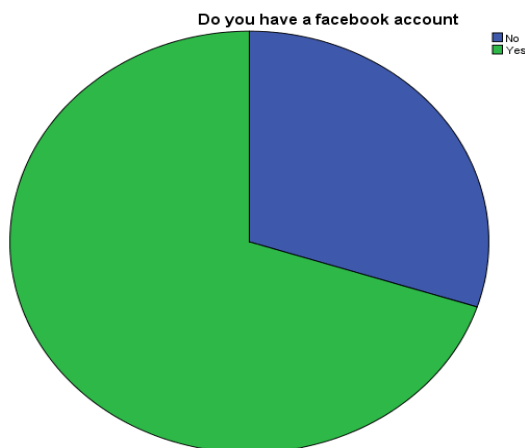


Figure 4.3 Facebook Account Distribution
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

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The Use of Facebook Distribution

In a quest to know how often respondents use their Facebook account to access information, data was collected on the frequency of their use of their Facebook account, and the following results were obtained. The number of respondent who do not often use their Facebook account were 49 representing 53.8 %, whereas those who use their account often and very often constituted only 21 representing 23.1% respectively. Thus, from the outcome, one could argue that those who do not use their accounts often are the top leading groups with the reason being that, they are either not allowed to use their personal phones in the school, or they do not own smartphones at all.

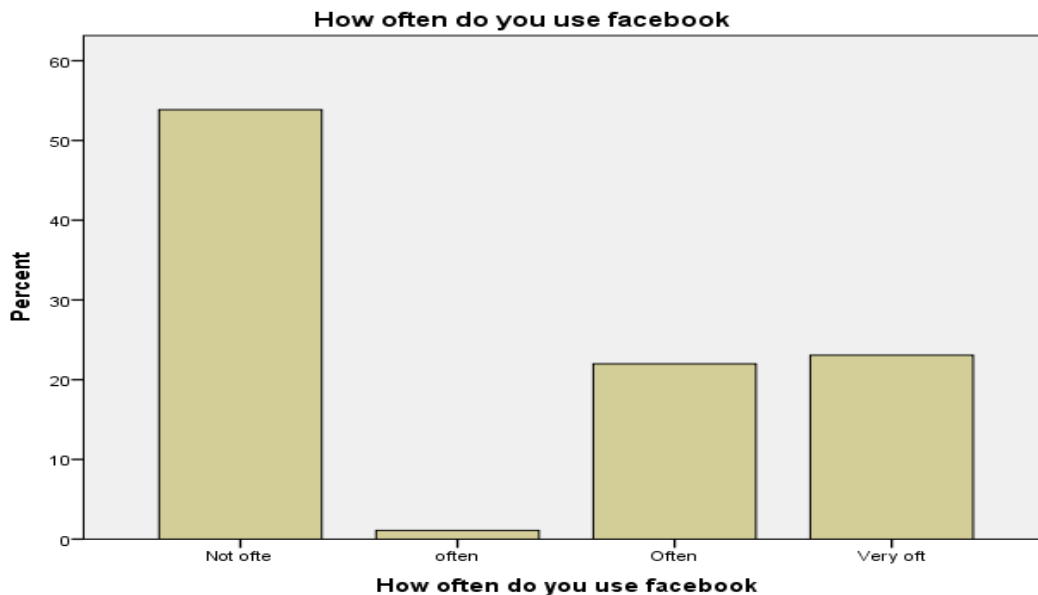


Figure 4.3 The Use of Facebook Distribution.
(Source: field survey 2022)

Knowledge on the School’s Facebook Account

The survey provided information on the knowledge students’ have of the school’s Facebook account. It was shown that 61 students representing 67.8% are aware of the school’s Facebook account, while 29 representing 32.3% have no knowledge about the school’s Facebook account.

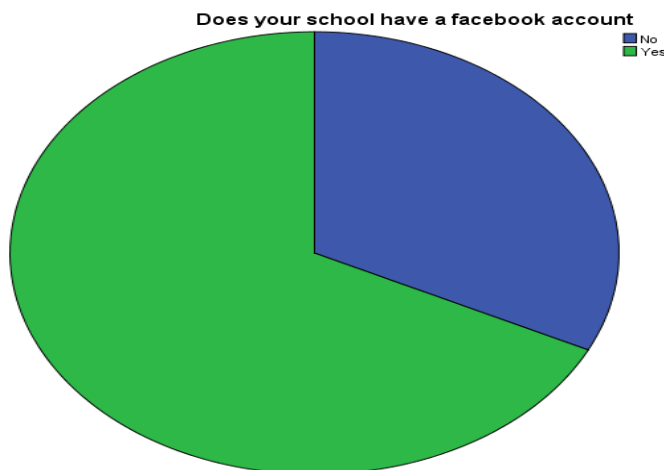


Figure 4.3 Knowledge on the School’s Facebook Account
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Knowledge on School’s Facebook Account Followers

From the survey, it was indicated that, 57 students representing 63.3% of the students targeted population do not follow the school’s Facebook account. These respondents explained that they do not follow because the school’s administrators are the same people who usually manage the Facebook page so there are no discussions of interest. The remaining 33 representing 36.7 % of the respondents explained that they follow the school’s Facebook account since they get to learn new things from the page and also gets relevant information which they sometimes share with their mates. This is illustrated on figure 4.3.5 as follows.

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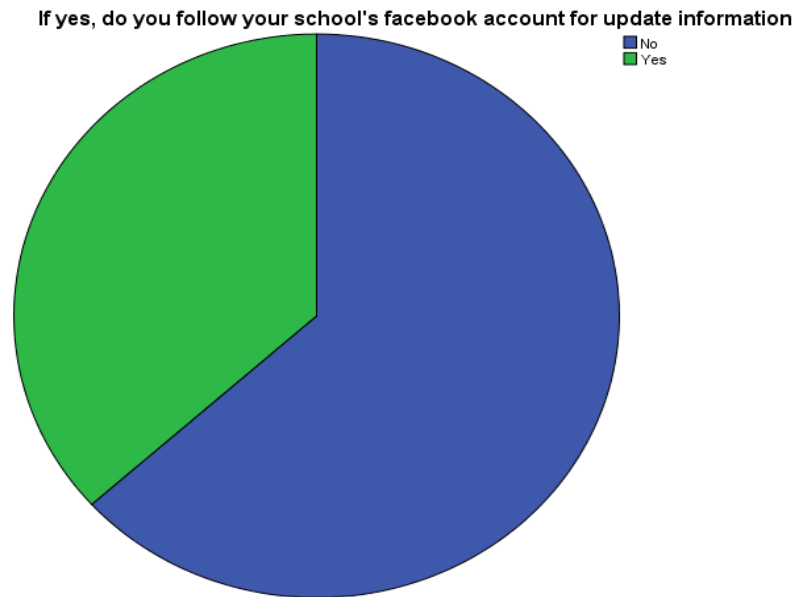


Figure 4.3 Knowledge on School's Facebook Account Followers
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Knowledge on the Causes of Fire Outbreaks in the School

Students' knowledge on the cause of fire outbreak in the school is very paramount. The survey therefore provides some level of knowledge students have about the fire outbreak. These include, electrical faults, damaged appliance cords, aged electrical wiring, wood shingle/thatched roofs, and spirituality. From the survey it was revealed that, 40 respondents representing 44.4% disclosed fire outbreaks have been caused by electrical faults, 10 respondents representing 11.1% made a claim that, the fire outbreaks occurred because of the use of wood shingle/thatched roofs, whilst 18 respondents representing 20% allegedly said, the fire outbreaks were as a result of damaged appliance cords, and 12 people representing 13.3% were of the view that, they were caused by aged electrical wiring. The remaining 10 representing 11.1% hold the view that the fire outbreaks have been as a result of spirituality factors. From the analysis, it could clearly be argued that a greater proportion of the respondents associate the persistent fire outbreaks to electrical faults, followed by damaged appliance cords, and then, aged electrical wiring in that order. The table 4.3.5 below illustrates the information below.

Table 4.3 Knowledge on the Causes of Fire Outbreaks in the School

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Wood shingle/thatched roofs	10	11.1
Electrical faults	40	44.4
Damaged appliance cords	18	20.0
Aged electrical wiring	12	13.3
Spirituality factors	10	11.1
Total	90	100

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Knowledge on the Information Shared by the School on Facebook with Regards to the Fire Outbreaks

In the quest to know the information shared on the fire outbreak by the school' authorities via Facebook, a survey was conducted to interrogate the respondents under study. The outcomes are discussed as follows. Out of the 90 sample size, 57 of the students representing 63.3% of the respondents claimed the school shared every relevant information on the fire outbreak via Facebook. The remaining 33 students representing 36.7 % asserted that the school did not share any related information about the incidents as they only saw the posted messages on Facebook after the fire had been quenched.

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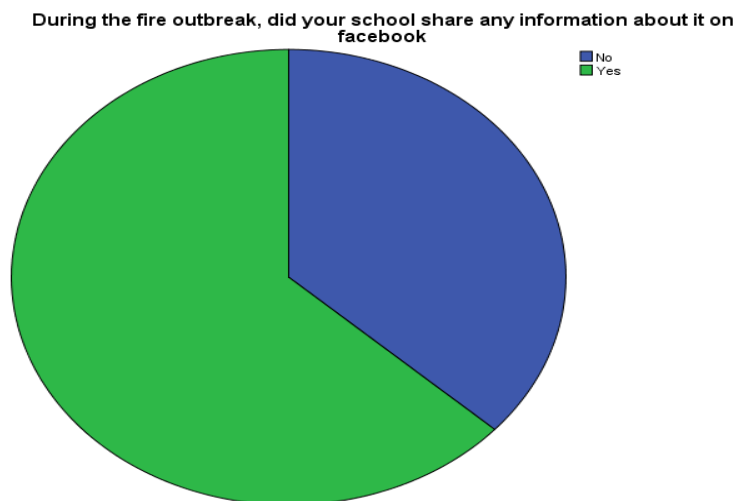


Figure 4.3 Knowledge on the Information shared by the School on Facebook with regards to the Fire Outbreaks
(Source: field survey 2022)

Knowledge of Information Exchanged and Shared on Measures in Dealing with Cause of Fire

From the survey, it was realized that, 45 students representing 50% claimed that the school shared information on measures kept in place to deal with the fire outbreak via Facebook. The other 50% were of the view that the school did not make any attempt to share such information on Facebook. However, they claimed the information was rather communicated through their WhatsApp groups. Some, who formed the latter 50% also asserted that they were informed of the measures by their course mates.

Knowledge of Respondents on the Measures Taken by the School to Mitigate the Negative Effects of the Fire Outbreak

This survey was undertaken to identify the measures the school kept in place to mitigate the negative effect of the fire outbreak. In the results from the survey as shown in figure 4.6 below, 85 students representing 94.4 % submitted that the school took required measures to reduce the negative effect like the destruction of the school's properties, disruption of academic activities, etc. caused by fire outbreak. On one hand, the remaining 5 representing 5.6 % of the respondents claimed the school did not take any measures to combat the fire outbreak because when they got back to school the day after the fire, a lot of properties had been damaged. On this basis, they opine that the school was not capable enough to take requisite measures to mitigate the negative effects of the fire outbreak.

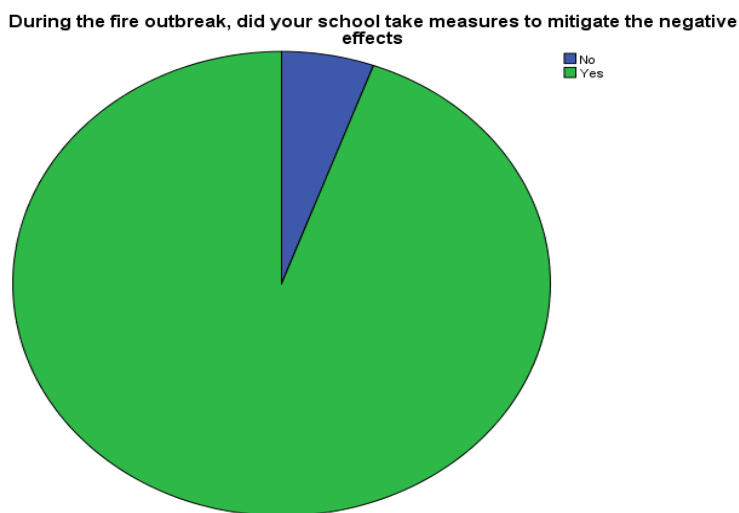


Figure 4.4 Knowledge of Respondents on the Measures Taken By the School to Mitigate the Negative Effects of the Fire Outbreak

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Knowledge of Respondents on the Medium Used by the School to Share the Measures

To ascertain data on the various media/channels used to communicate the appropriate measures taking by the school, a survey was carried out, and in the end, the following results were retrieved. 50 students representing 55.6% asserted that the school used Facebook to communicate the measures. On the other hand, 38 representing 42.2 % supposedly claimed the school used WhatsApp

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to communicate the measures. Only 1 respondent representing 1.1% was reported that Instagram was the medium through which the measures were disseminated. Another 1 respondent representing 1.1% said the measures were communicated via Twitter. In implication, the result clearly shows that Facebook was ranked the top most medium the school used in disseminating the measures to the students and the general stakeholders of concern.

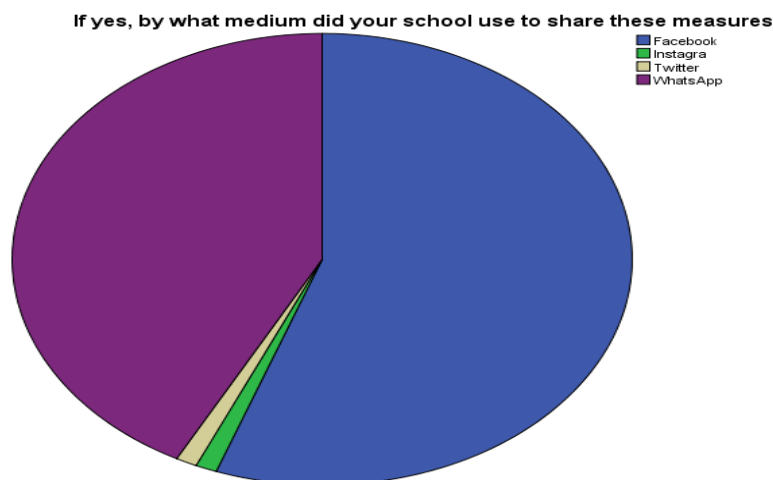


Figure 4.4 Knowledge of Respondents on the Medium Used by the School to Share the Measures
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Knowledge of Respondents on the Rate at Which the Use of Facebook Impacted the Communication of Fire Outbreak

From the survey, it was indicated that 28 respondents representing 31.1% hold the view that the impact of the use of Facebook in communicating the fire outbreak was satisfactory as against another 28 representing 31.1% who claimed Facebook was impactful and effective. 24 respondents representing 26.7% relayed that the impact was weak, while 10 representing 11.1% contested that the impact was very satisfactory. Those who claimed the use of the Facebook was weak, argued that a many stakeholders became disturbed, causing some parents to withdraw their wards from the school.

Commenting on this issue during the interview session, a teaching staff submitted that:

“Well I will say it wasn’t useful because, it only blew things up! Parents became worried although the situation was brought under control. Some parents threatened to take their wards out of the school and enroll them in another school. In fact, these actions distracted academic activities as they were brought to a halt.” And they said, some of the students were withdrawn from the school. (Interview with a teaching staff, August 12, 2022).

However, those who were of the view that the impact was effective, argued that many people came to the aid of the school when they got to know of the incident as donations and ideas were made available and shared. Attesting to this is the fact that, during an interview session with another teaching staff, he cited that:

“Indeed, not everyone has access to listening or watching news on television so most of us who have access to Facebook got the news from there and came to support the school during the crisis.” (Interview with a teaching staff, August 12, 2022).

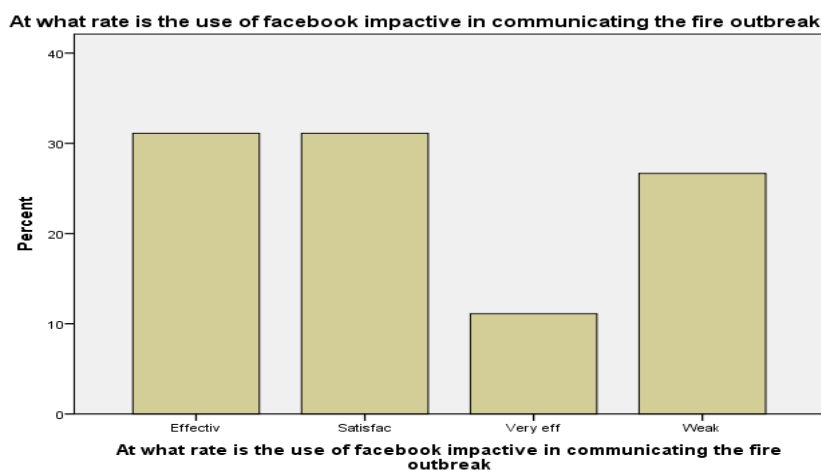


Figure 4.4 Knowledge of Respondents on the Rate at Which the Use of Facebook Impacted the Communication of Fire Outbreak

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

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Knowledge of Respondent on the Challenges Posed by the Use of Facebook in Managing the Fire Outbreak

In a quest to identify the challenges posed by the use of Facebook in managing the fire outbreak, a survey was carried out. According to the results, 80 respondents representing 88.9% argued that, the use of Facebook in managing the fire outbreak did not pose any challenge but rather yielded a great and positive result. On one hand, 10 representing 11.1 % of the respondents asserted that the use of Facebook in managing the crisis posed some challenges as some had no access to smartphones while they were in school during the outbreak. Others also claimed they had no data to access the internet to know what was happening.

In another interview session with a key respondent on the above objective, he alleged that:

“One of the major hindrances is data. If you don’t have data, you cannot access the internet for information on Facebook”. (Interview with a teaching staff, August 12, 2022).

In further discussions with Mr. Roland Bulber, he said: *“students are actually not allowed to use phones in school. So, whatever information we put on Facebook is a waste of time because they will not have access to that information unless they are home. And at home I don’t think they will visit the school’s Facebook page to read the updated postings.”* (Interview with a teaching staff, August 12, 2022).

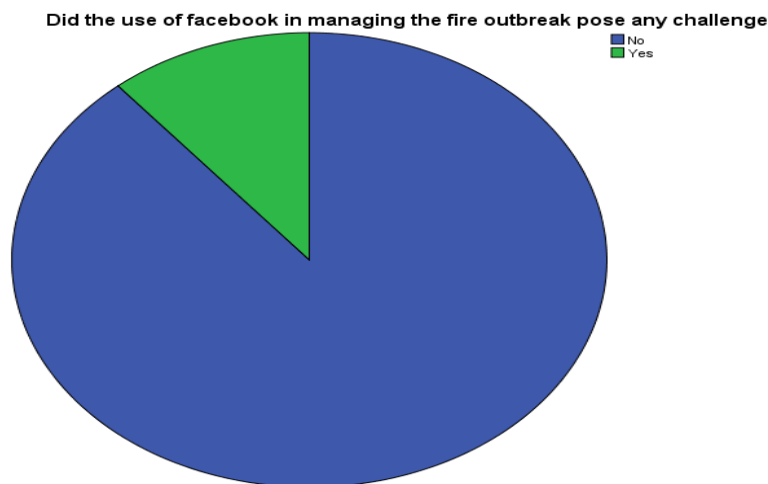


Figure 4.4 Knowledge of Respondent on the Challenges Posed by the Use of Facebook in Managing the Fire Outbreak
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Rate of School’s Instant Preparedness/Responses to Fire Outbreak

This survey was to solicit the respondents’ knowledge in terms of the school’s preparedness towards fire outbreaks as this would help make suggestions that could go a long way to improve their crisis response measures. According to the results, 32 students representing 35.6% asserted that in terms of their responses to fire outbreak, they will rate it as satisfactory. The remaining 22, 19 and 17 respondents representing 24.4%, 21.1%, and 18.9% respectively claimed their responses to be very good, excellent, and unsatisfactory accordingly. This then suggests that, in terms of present preparedness to fight against fire outbreaks, the school has put in measures such as educating the students on what they need to do. However, the unsatisfactory outcome then suggests that there is still room for the school to improve on the measures relevant and adequately enough to curb any fire outbreaks.

In an interview with a teaching staff, he re-echoed that:

“The readily available measure is educating the students on some of the fire safety precautions. They have been advised to be on guard and be vigilant enough in detecting any signals of fire outbreak”. (Interview with a teaching staff, August 12, 2022).

In another interview with another teaching staff, he asserted that:

“For the safety of students and staff, we have first educated the students and staff on some of safety precautions. The school has secured some fire extinguishers as part of the measures to deal with any future outbreak.” Adding, he pointed out that the school has written to the National Fire Service team branch in Tamale to come and educate both the teaching and non-teaching staff and the student populace on fire safety measures. Stating, he said, this exercise would be organized in each academic term throughout the academic calendar and if possible would suggest to the GES and the school board to inculcate this as part of the curriculum. (Interview with a teaching staff, August 12, 2022).

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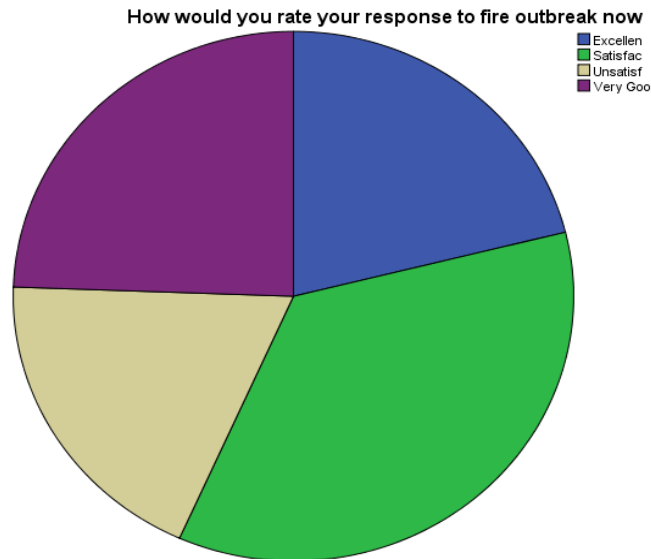


Figure 4.5 Rate of School's Instant Preparedness/Responses to Fire Outbreak
(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results from the study proved that, Social media (i.e. Facebook) plays a major role in managing and responding to the school's fire crisis. With a high number of respondents coming from middle income and a privileged backgrounds, the population of the 'haves' out numbers that of the 'have not' in the school. In particular, the outcome of the survey indicates that, 62 students representing 68.9 % possess smartphones while 28 representing 31.1 % do not. This clearly shows that majority of the respondents have the ability to access Facebook as they have accounts and can access the internet. Comparatively, Facebook is the most widely used social media handles to others like WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, etc. in managing and responding to crisis. This affirms that the incorporation of Facebook in the school's crisis response structure allows stakeholders to come together to create swift and effective solutions to the disaster. Facebook has proven to be useful for determining emergency needs, making decisions, and enabling learning and training following disasters, as witnessed in the case of St. Charles Minor Seminary School, where stakeholders provided safety measures such as fire extinguishers and fire safety education to the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the survey conducted, the analysis extracted from the data, the discussions of the results, and the findings derived from the discussions about social media and organizational crisis management, the following recommendations were drawn:

Firstly, the study recommends that, in times of crisis, management should provide the facts and avoid hesitation whenever they communicate with stakeholders so that parents especially can avoid unnecessary panic which can result in withdrawing their wards from the school.

In addition, the study recommends that the school's authority should ensure they educate the students and encourage them to follow the school's Facebook account so that they can be abreast with the educative content they share on the school's Facebook page.

Again, the study recommends that other social media Apps like YouTube and Instagram should be created by the school so that students can follow to access educational materials and contents since some of the students are not on Facebook but on other social media platforms.

Furthermore, a similar study must be carried out in other schools of the region to know the use of social media and organizational crisis management.

Also, the management should liaise with some phone manufacturing companies to supply smartphones to students at all forms of learning as a basic necessity to suit the current educational model. The cost of this can be spread over their years of studies.

More so, management should liaise with Mobile telecommunication networks providers including (MTN and Vodafone Network) to provide higher internet connectivity and Wi-Fi internet coverage on campus by routing the campus networks to Forth Generation (4G) network connectivity for the school.

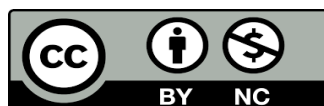
Lastly, management should liaise with the Ghana National Fire Service to intensify the education of staff and students on fire safety measures.

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Finally, the study recommends that high quality electrical wires and other appliances should be used by the school. Policy regulations of building wiring should be reinforced by Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCo) and Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo) as this would help bring the escalation of fire outbreaks under control.

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