The Effectiveness of Social Media on Higher Education Student Recruitment

Students use it. Colleges and Universities have it. But is collegiate Social Media truly impacting the decision to enroll?

**Rationale**

**Social Media Facts**
- Social media was originally developed as a tool for college students to make new friends (Nyagau & Bado, 2011).
- In a 2012 Pew Research Poll, 85% of adults age 18-29 used at least one type of social media account (Duggan & Brenner, 2012).

**Methodology**
- Quantitative Survey
- Developed online and administered via email
- 15 multiple choice, Likert-Scale, ranking, and fill-in-the-blank questions
- 131 first-year student participants at Florida Southern College, a small, private institution in Lakeland, FL.

**Findings**

- **Reflect previous research**
- **High usage of Social Media - 98% of study participants**
- Only 2/3 of participants utilized Florida Southern College Social Media prior to accepting offer of admission
- 68% of participants stated that Florida Southern Social Media did not influence their decision to enroll
- Campus Visit and Institution Website remain most influential resources in enrollment decision

**Other Factors Influencing Enrollment**

- **participant Use of Social Media**
  - Use Social Media
  - Do not use Social Media
  - No FSC Social Media

**Background**

- 99% of colleges have Facebook (UMass CMR, 2014)
- Few studies conducted on social media influence on recruitment, especially in U.S.
- Media Systems Dependency Theory did not apply to study findings - because the majority of participants were not influenced by the college's social media

**Conclusions**

- Conduct further research
  - Qualitative analysis of students who did access collegiate Social Media prior to enrollment
  - Design Social Media websites targeted specifically for first-year students
  - Hiring of Social Media-related positions

**References**