

IMPACT, ACCESSIBILITY AND UTILIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *Social media are rapidly changing the communications landscape. Their emergence has impacted significantly how students learn and the way instructions are being disseminated. The study was carried out to investigate the impact, accessibility and utilization of social media by university students in Education Development. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. A sample size of 150 respondents were drawn from Library and Information students and Home Economics students at University of Ibadan and Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology Ikere Ekiti respectively for the study, who were selected via stratified sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire. Total copies of 150 questionnaires were administered and returned by the respondents. Frequency and percentages were used to analyse the research questions raised to guide the study, while t-test of independent sample was used to test for the lone hypothesis formulated for the study at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that students used different types of social media. While some students were using social media daily, it was revealed that others were using social media mainly to keep in touch with family and friends, find information and disseminate information. The inferential analysis of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the accessibility and utilization of social media among the undergraduate students in higher institutions with respect to their gender. Based on the findings, it was recommended that social media should be adopted as a means of interaction among lecturers and students for educational purposes. Students generally should be enlightened on every aspect of Information Ethics to prepare them for the future.*

Keywords: Social media, Impact, Accessibility, Usage, Library and Information Science, Home Economics

INTRODUCTION

The use of Information Technology (IT) in education has become a subject that is mostly discussed in this modern era. It has brought great improvement to the life of mankind in all human endeavors. Computers and other aspects of information technology are now

used in education to monitor students' achievements, teach students and also as instructional media to assist in teaching in the classroom, especially in home economics (Fallis, 2007). The field of education has been affected by Information Technology, which has undoubtedly affected teaching, learning, and research (Yusuf, 2005). Teaching process

is considered paramount, especially when we consider teaching and learning as the acquisition of knowledge and skills by individuals who become useful members of the society. Indeed, teaching may convey and at the same time, actualize the objectives of education of learners. It involves deliberate activities geared towards the development of the less matured and the inexperienced (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007). According to Douglas (2012), teaching embraces forms of process, behaviours and activities which do not succumb to explanation by a single theory, it is also argued that in educational institutions, teaching cannot take place without the students (learners), the teacher and the curriculum, the content and instructional materials. The above judgment according to Mabawonku (2014) cannot stand the test of the information aspect. This is because; teaching imposes content, learner's freedom in teaching is restricted while information technology employs independent judgment in decision-making. The main task of the teacher is to create enabling environment that may bring about desirable change in behaviour (Johns, 2012). Nelson & Kuh (2005) is of the opinion that classroom teachers are expected to utilize IT facilities such as the computer, the internet, the visual aids, the audio-visuals etc., to inculcate relevant knowledge to students. Any classroom teacher therefore, with adequate and professional skills in ICT utilization will definitely have his/her students perform better in classroom learning.

Social media tools are rapidly changing the communications landscape. Their emergence has impacted significantly how students learn and the way instructors teach. In today higher education settings, instructors, students, and others collaborate on the tasks of knowledge construction. Social media tools are meant to disseminating information to various people across the world. They had opened up vast new means for communication, socialization, expression and collaboration. Social media tools include the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet and to share information and resources. They can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications.

Adapting platforms that are not meant for learning is not an easy task but is achievable with appropriate guidelines and planning for both teachers and students (Jamari, Mohd Zaid,

Mohamed, Abdullah & Aris, 2017). For instance, Facebook can be positive tool for teaching and learning but can also be a negative tool that disengage both male and female students if it is not appropriately utilize (Said, Tahir, and Ali, 2014) likewise social media in general.

In the world today, social media tools are virtually the most powerful origins of information, news and constant updates. Social media tools are medium of interaction among people in which they create, share or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. There are many social media platforms that are extremely popular. They include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Blogs, BBM, Google, Skype, Whatsapp, 2go, etc.

Home Economics is one of the subjects in the Technology Education Key Learning Area. It comprises major areas of study on food, clothing, home and family which intertwine with the six knowledge contexts proposed in the Technology Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide. The six knowledge contexts are: Information and Communication Technology, Materials and Structures, Operations and Manufacturing, Strategies and Management, Systems and Control and Technology and Living. Technological shift from analogue to digital has immensely changed the way people communicate in society. It is something that cannot be wished away. Many teenagers have joined and many more are still joining Social Media Sites. Social media websites content is least monitored and these sites though popular with teenagers, do have many issues such as addiction and even online intimidation which can have adverse effects on their academic performance. It is against this backdrop that this study investigated the impact, accessibility and utilization of social media by university students in Education Development.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. What is the impact of social media on Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions?
- ii. What is the extent of Library Information Science and Home Economics students' access to social media in higher institutions?
- iii. What is the extent of utilization of social media by Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions?

Research Hypothesis

One hypothesis was formulated for the study. It was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the accessibility and utilization of social media among the LIS and Home Economics undergraduates in higher institutions with respect to their gender.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of Social Media and Use by Students

Students use various types of social media for various reasons. Types of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Skype, Whatsapp, etc. Social media is used to keep in touch with friends, for business purpose, networking, marketing, education, news, entertainment, assignments, to read newspapers, etc. According to Mutula (2013), the use of social media is the fastest growing online activity worldwide and it has had the most significant impact, in the shortest time, among people of diverse professions, ages and genders. Social media are the media used for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques to turn communication into interactive dialogue (Princeton University Social Media Policies 2013).

Meta (2013) stated that "Here are just a few social media examples that are common today and growing in mainstream use: Collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), Discussion forums, podcasts, blogs, Micro blogs (e.g. Twitter), Content communities (e.g. YouTube), Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn), Virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft), and Virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life).

Information Ethics and Social Media Use

According to Mutula (2013), Information Ethics is the field that investigates the ethical issues arising from the development and application of information technologies. It provides a critical framework for considering moral issues concerning information privacy, moral agency (e.g. whether artificial agents may be moral), new environmental issues (especially how agents should behave in the info sphere), problems arising from the life-cycle (creation, collection, recording, distribution, processing, etc.) of information, especially ownership and copyright in the environment of a digital divide). Buchanan (2012) identifies anonymity, confidentiality of data, data integrity and data security as critical aspects of Information Ethics.

According to Kaplan and Henlein (2010) individuals are entitled to privacy, ownership and access. They underline the need for adequate provision to protect the privacy of subjects as well as maintaining the confidentiality of any data that are collected and kept for individuals. They state that a violation of privacy or breach of confidentiality presents a risk of serious harm to individuals especially if their personal or sensitive information protected under the law is exposed to divulge.

Confidentiality and privacy are related, but distinct concepts. The Code of ethics defines confidentiality as "the ethical obligation to keep someone's personal and private information secret or private". Privacy relates to the right of clients to keep information about them from being disclosed to anyone. The Code of Ethics informational privacy as "the right of individuals to determine how, when, with whom, and for what purpose any of their personal information will be shared" Ethics refers to a code of conduct that guides an individual in his/her dealings with others. It has to do with personal behaviour and moral duty. It is concerned with what is right and wrong. Studies of ethics have been made compulsory courses in the advanced countries in institutions of learning based on the belief that the more you teach or repeat them, the more they are likely to take root in the hearts

of the people and consequently influence their behaviour.

Knowledge of Information Ethics for Students

From the myriad of definitions available, ethics seem to focus on the norms and standards of behaviour of individuals or groups within a society based on normative conduct and moral judgment, principles of wrong and right (Ocholla 2008), “moral consequences of human action” (Ocholla, 2008), and responsibility and accountability (Sembok, 2004). Gleaning from these definitions, the role or purpose of ethics in society is to promote what is good in people, avert chaos and provide norms and standards of behaviour based on morals and values that are unifying, as opposed to dividing (Ocholla, 2008). Mabawonku (2014) stated that ethics is concerned with the behaviour or conduct of individuals or groups in the society. She further explained that in a profession, ethics often refers to principles and rules that guide the conduct of members to ensure that the acceptable standards are maintained. The concept of students' unethical behaviour in higher educational institutions remains widespread (Love, 1997). This phenomenon has been established irrespective of cultural differences (Arkoudis, 2007).

Mabawonku (2011) opines that Information Ethics should be inculcated in the formative stages of education so that students grow with “filters in the head” that assist them in differentiating between right and wrong online. Shurden, Santandreu, and Shurden's (2010) buttress the importance of ethics education by similar results found in their research, which concluded that students' perception of ethics changes over time and is also positively influenced by ethics education. Bista (2010) noted that unethical behaviour includes "cheating (use of unauthorized notes or study aids in an examination); plagiarism (use of other's works as their own without acknowledging contribution of authors); fabrication (falsifying any information of data, unauthorized access, misuse of availability of computer system or alteration of computerized records); deception (providing false information to instructors); and sabotage (preventing others from completing their

course work). The most common argument for internet plagiarism is related to the widespread opinion among students that information on the internet belongs to the public domain, the use of which is unrestricted and requires no citation (Moeck, 2002). According to this approach, different perceptions of printed and internet plagiarism stem from the belief that the transfer of information to the internet renders the content free and available for anyone to copy or use as they please.

Gender usage of Social Media

Fausto-Sterling (2012) noted that gender is shaped by the dynamics of physical, social, and emotional experiences and becomes the basis of future identity transformations. Gender differences in ICT (especially social media) use are explored in their social complexity since one must consider that gender is not universal (Eduarda, 2017). There are about five times more men than women among those who study computing at a tertiary level (Organisation for Economic co-operation and Development (OECD), 2015), which may be related to feelings of incompetence (low self-efficacy) by girls and women. Bujala (2012) established that men are likely to have more time for the use of social network because of gender expectations and roles but Volkovich, Laniado, Kappler and Kantenbrunner (2014) suggest contrary that women outnumbered men for most social networking sites with the exception of LinkedIn. Few researches on the gender differences in usage patterns of Social Networking Sites (SNS) highlighted that the male gender used social networking sites for networking, making new friends, and looking for latent dates and enjoying games; whereas feminine gender used it for relationship maintenance (Rousseau and Puttaraju, 2014) and posting public message (Muscanell, 2012).

Kasahara (2017) reported from the result that female was most likely to prevent certain people from accessing their social media content, males were more likely to use a gaming console for about six hours per day. Idemudia, Raisinghani, Adeola, and Achebo (2017) opined that behaviours that accompany seeking data differs for men and women, and additionally the employment of social media tools further reinforces this belief whereas

males square measure the primary to adopt the tools, their focus is on exploitation the tools for job-related activities. Hu, Gu and Zhang (2017) explained that developed cultural intelligence enables individuals to better master personal and vicarious experiences through social media attendance. Social media has been used to connect students in an online classroom setting or distance learning settings to help with communication.

METHODOLOGY

The research design employed in carrying out this study was descriptive survey design because it helps in problem identification, systematic collection, analysis and presentation of data to clearly demonstrate a situation or event as it exists. The population for this study comprised of LIS students of the University of Ibadan and Home Economics students of Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti (BOUESTI). The total number of LIS undergraduate students in the University of Ibadan was 184 while the total number of Home Economics students in BOUESTI was 67. Stratified sampling procedure was adopted for the study. Stratified sampling is a sampling procedure which consists of dividing the population into sub populations (strata), then taking a sample from each stratum. In this study, the population was divided into four strata according to the level of education: from 100 level to 400 level. The next step involved

the determination of the sample size with the use of 60% sampling fraction of the population in each stratum. Therefore, the sample size for this study was 150 which comprised 80 male students and 70 female students.

The instrument for data collection for the study was a self-structured questionnaire tagged “Dynamics of Social Media Usage and Knowledge of Information Ethics by University Students” which was constructed and subjected to validity and reliability test. A degree of internal consistency of 0.79 was obtained using test-retest method. The researcher administered the questionnaire to LIS students at the University of Ibadan and Home Economics students of Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti. The instrument employed four Point Likert scale rating of VGE: Very Great Extent, GE: Great Extent, LE: Low Extent and VLE: Very Low Extent. Data was analyzed using frequency count, percentage and weighted mean to answer the three (3) research questions raised for the study. The one research hypothesis formulated for the study was tested using *t*-test of independent sample statistic at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS version 23.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1:

What is the impact of social media on Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions?

Table 1: Responses to the impact of social media on Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions.

S/N	ITEM	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	Mean	Remark
1	The usage of social media has influenced me to be more interested in studying as a university.	98 (65.3)	33 (22.0)	12 (8.0)	7 (4.7)	3.16	Great Extent
2	I use social media web pages to be in touch with lecturers and students who I have not met	47 (31.3)	80 (53.3)	19 (12.7)	4 (2.7)	3.11	Great Extent

	often during studies.						
3	As a university student, I use social media to be in touch with lecturers and students who I have met more often.	55 (36.7)	54 (36.0)	35 (23.3)	6 (4.0)	3.07	Great Extent
4	As a university student, social media platform has contributed to improve my direct communication with other students and lecturers	52 (34.7)	58 (38.7)	28 (18.7)	12 (8.0)	2.82	Great Extent
5	Social media equips me with versatile tools of knowledge exchange and collaboration	57 (38.0)	50 (33.3)	29 (19.3)	14 (9.3)	2.91	Great Extent
6	As a student, social media increase my self-directed learning skills	47 (31.3)	54 (36.0)	34 (22.7)	15 (10.0)	3.08	Great Extent
7	It helps better to develop and realized my personal potential as an undergraduate	64 (42.7)	50 (33.3)	28 (18.7)	8 (5.3)	3.17	Great Extent
Weighted Mean		3.05 Great Extent					

The result in table 1 revealed that social media have positive impact on students in higher institutions. This is because the respondents consistently agreed to a great extent to all the items in the table. The mean score of the items are above the fixed decision value of 2.50. It was obviously shown that item 7 was at the forefront with a mean score of 3.17 revealing that social media help better to develop and realize their personal potential as an undergraduate. This was followed by item 1 with a mean score of 3.16 which indicated that the usage of social media has influenced them to be more interested in studying as university students. It was followed by item 2 with a mean score of 3.11 which indicated that the respondents used social media web pages to be in touch with lecturers and students who they have not met often during studies. This was followed by item 6 with a mean score of 3.08 which indicated that social media increases the self-direct learning skills of students. Item 3

with a mean score of 3.07 indicated that as a university student, the respondents use social media to be in touch with lecturers and students who they have meet more often. Also, item 5 with a mean score of 2.91 indicated that social media equip them with versatile tools of knowledge exchange and collaboration. Lastly, item 4 with a mean score of 2.82 indicated that social media platform has contributed to improve students' direct communication with other students and lecturers.

Summarily, the weighted mean of 3.05 showed that the respondents agreed that social media has great impact on Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions.

Research Question 2

What is the extent of Library Information Science and Home Economics students' access to social media in higher institutions?

Table 2: Responses to the extent of Library Information Science and Home Economics students' access to social media in higher institutions

S/N	ITEM	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	Mean	Remark
1	E-mail	37 (24.7)	61 (40.7)	34 (22.7)	18 (12.0)	3.61	Great Extent
2	Facebook	47 (31.3)	61 (40.7)	28 (18.7)	14 (9.3)	3.55	Great Extent
3	Instagram	41 (27.3)	43 (28.7)	43 (28.7)	23 (15.3)	2.87	Great Extent
4	Twitter	43 (28.7)	56 (37.3)	33 (22.0)	18 (12.0)	2.91	Great Extent
5	Whatsapp	57 (38.0)	45 (30.0)	34 (22.7)	14 (9.3)	3.04	Great Extent
6	Blogs	38 (25.3)	50 (33.3)	43 (28.7)	19 (12.7)	2.79	Great Extent

Weighted Mean

Table 2 above revealed that majority of the respondents have access to almost all the social media platforms in the table. E-mail and Facebook appeared as favourites for the students with mean scores of 3.61 and 3.55 respectively. This is followed by Whatsapp with mean score rating of 3.04. Twitter and Instagram have a mean scores of 2.91 and 2.87 respectively while Blog had the least mean score of 2.79.

3.01 Great Extent

Summarily, the table revealed that the weighted mean was 3.01 which indicated that undergraduate students have access, to a relatively great extent, to social media in higher institutions.

Research Question 3

What is the extent of utilization of social media by Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions?

Table 3: Responses to the extent of utilization of social media by Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions

S/N	ITEM	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	Mean	Remark
1	E-mail	54 (36.0)	48 (32.0)	32 (21.3)	16 (10.7)	3.22	Great Extent
2	Facebook	38 (25.3)	60 (40.0)	32 (21.3)	20 (13.3)	3.41	Great Extent
3	Instagram	38 (25.3)	53 (35.3)	43 (28.7)	16 (10.7)	2.69	Great Extent
4	Twitter	55 (36.7)	50 (33.3)	28 (18.7)	17 (11.3)	2.85	Great Extent
5	Whatsapp	54 (36.0)	55 (36.7)	25 (16.7)	16 (10.7)	3.37	Great

							Extent
6	Blogs	56 (37.3)	49 (32.7)	31 (20.7)	14 (9.3)	2.72	Great Extent

Weighted Mean

3.04 Great Extent

Table 3 above revealed that majority of the respondents had utilized almost all the social media platforms in the table. Facebook and Whatsapp appeared to be more utilized than other social media platforms by the students with mean scores of 3.41 and 3.37 respectively. This is followed by E-mail with mean score rating of 3.22. Twitter and Instagram have a mean scores of 2.85 and 2.69 respectively while Blog had the least mean score of 2.72.

Summarily, the table revealed that the weighted mean was 3.04 which indicated that there was a great extent of utilization of social media by Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions.

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the accessibility and utilization of social media among the LIS and Home Economics undergraduates in higher institutions with respect to their gender.

Table 7: t-test analysis of difference in the accessibility and utilization of social media among the LIS and Home Economics undergraduates in higher institutions with respect to their gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t _(cal)	t _(tab)	Decision
Male	80	12.00	3.313	148	1.22	1.98	NS
Female	70	10.25	3.111				

P < 0.05 level of significance

NS

=

Not

Significant

From table 7, the mean score of the male respondents (12.00) was higher than the mean score of the female respondents (10.25) with a mean difference of (1.75) which is marginal. The measure of variability (standard deviation) has a difference of (0.202). The t-test analysis shows that the calculated value (1.22) was less than the table value (1.98) at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is no significant difference in the accessibility and utilization of social media among the LIS and Home Economics undergraduates in higher institutions with respect to their gender. Hence, the null hypothesis is upheld. This implies that there was no difference in the accessibility and utilization of social media among the LIS and Home Economics undergraduates in higher institutions with respect to their gender.

The findings of the study showed that social media have positive impact on Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions. Social media has influenced students to be more studious as it allowed them to be closer to their fellow Library Information Science and Home Economics students and their lecturers. Corroborating this, Hu, Gu and Zhang (2017) explained that developed cultural intelligence enables individuals to better master personal and vicarious experiences through social media attendance. Social media has been used to connect students in an online classroom setting or distance learning settings to help with communication. Moreover, the study found that Facebook, E-mail and WhatsApp platforms are the most accessed and utilized by Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions amongst six sites specifically used for this study, while Instagram and others were the

Discussion of Findings

least accessed and utilized. For those who currently have accounts in different social media web pages, they spend varying amounts of time on these sites. This finding supported Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) who stated that the students use social networking websites approximately 30 minutes throughout the day as a part of their daily routine life. Even though the students are interested to use social media for different purposes, they agreed with the idea of getting information about their study related activities only through the mentioned platforms.

The inferential analysis of the study revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of Library Information Science and Home Economics students on the use of social media with respect to gender. This implies that there was no difference in the accessibility and utilization of social media among the Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions with respect to their gender. This findings is at variance with the position of Bujala (2012) who established that men are likely to have more time for the use of social network because of gender expectations and roles while Volkovich, Laniado, Kappler and Kantanbrunner (2014) suggest contrary that women outnumbered men for most social networking sites with the exception of LinkedIn.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there was great extent of impact, accessibility and utilization of social media by university students in Education Development. Social media have positive impact on Library Information Science and Home Economics students in higher institutions. Consequent upon this, it implies that when they are utilized adequately in education, they have enormous capacity to improve the teaching and learning. This would go a long way to help students to acquire relevant 21st century skills to be successful in a technological driven and competitive economy. The study recommends that effort should be made by the government to enact laws to do proper monitoring or restrict what undergraduate students use social media for in order to decrease unproductive behavior in

students via social media. Stakeholders could organize seminars for male and female' students on how to use social media to facilitate their learning in and outside the classroom environment.

Library and information science and Home Economics lecturers should enlighten their students on ethical issues and behaviours regarding information and make them understand what is morally right or wrong in dealing with information.

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