Perception and the Use of Social Media by Junior Secondary School Teachers in Abia State

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ABSTRACT: This study investigated the perception and use of social media by junior secondary school teachers in Abia State. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The sample size consists of 240 junior secondary school teachers randomly selected. A self-developed instrument titled, Social Media Questionnaire (SMQ), which consists of twenty-seven (27) structured questions was used for data collection. A reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained for SMQ using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while z-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that junior secondary school teachers are more familiar with facebook, whatsapp, twitter, and youtube, among other social media networks to a high extent. The study also showed that teachers had positive perception about social media impact in education, though they do not use the media for educational purpose, rather, they employed the social media account to connect with and chart with friends, for sending private messages, uploading photos, online profiles, watching movies, communicating and interacting with friends. Gender difference was not significance among teachers in terms of perception and using social media in education. Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it was recommended that teachers should be encouraged to adopt social media platforms as an effective learning strategy in order to improve students' social interaction skills and foster meta-cognition in students. The school management should organize workshops and seminars to expose teachers and students constantly to the use of social media in education. Learning should be blended in that educational materials and videos should be posted on the various social media platforms that are predominant to the students where they share, read, comment and collaborate with their peers and teachers.

KEYWORDS: Perception, Social Media, Junior Secondary School and Teachers.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Kietzmann (2012) social media are viable tools that use mobile and web-based technology to create highly interactive platforms via the internet, through which an individual or group can share, co-create, discuss and modify users' generated content. Social media are kinds of powered electronic communication that enhance interaction based on certain interests and characteristics. Loken (2011), reiterated that social media are internet-based tools that support collaboration and information sharing. Katz (2009) noted that information that usually takes many days or weeks to disseminate now takes seconds or minutes. It is now possible for people to make interpersonal communication with others to instantly obtain the information they want worldwide through the use of social media, without leaving their environment. Social media are said to include a variety of tools and services provided on the web to encourage community development through collaboration and information sharing (Arnold & Paulus, 2010). Social media are known globally for their capacity to influence the decision-making role; in addition to the economic, political, social and educational potential. The driving force behind social media adoption is the progressively ubiquitous access, convenience, functionality and flexibility of social technologies (Alonso, Guzman, & Amescua, 2013). These tools provide access to individual expression and interactions with other users. Safko and Brake (2008) defined social media as activities, practices and behaviors between communities of people who have come together online to share information, knowledge and opinions using modern technology. Social media use web-based applications that make it easy to create and deliver content in the form of words, pictures, video and audio. Social media are kind of electronic communication which smoothens the progress of interaction based on certain interests and characteristics. Social media are medium for social interactions, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques (Osharive, 2012). Social media use web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues into social dialogues. Social media help in speeding up the democratization of knowledge and information, which in turn transform people from content consumers to content producers. Social media depict a website which does not only give one information but also interact with one while giving one information. It also means a group of internet based applications that allows the creation and exchange of users' generated content. These modern technologies in communication no doubt have turned the entire world into a Global village.

Although, the technology is a two edged sword, bring with it both the negative and positive side. It helps people to be better informed, enlightened and \keep abreast with world developments trends. This technology also exposes mankind to a better way of doing things. Social networking sites include: Twitter, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), WhatsApp Messenger, Skype, LinkedIn, Instagram, Google talk, Google+, YouTube, Myspace, Blog and Google Messenger. These networking sites serve as an avenue for people of different races and tribes to interact easily irrespective of distance (Dzvapatsva, Mitrovic, & Dietrich, 2014). According to Bryer & Zavatarro (2014), social media are technologies which facilitate social interaction, foster collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies are blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (like Facebook and Whatsapp), and virtual worlds. Social media are an internet–based application that builds on the ideological and technological foundation of web 2.0 and that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. They cover all digital media technologies such as user generated content (UGC), question-answer databases, digital video, blogging, podcasting, forums, review-sites, social networking, social media, mobile phone, photography and wikis.

Different types of social media consist of collaborative projects such as Wikipedia, blogs like blogger; social networking sites like Facebook; content communities like YouTube, and virtual worlds like second life. Social media have become one of the most prevailing sources for news updates through platforms like Facebook, Blogger, Twitter, Word press, LinkedIn interest, Google+, Tumbir, Myspace and Wiki. More so, there has been an increase in mobile social media which have created new opportunities, particularly for business, which is able to utilize social media for marketing research, sales, promotions and relationship development among others. Social media are different from traditional/industrial media in the aspects of quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy and performance. Social media technologies come in different forms such as internet, social networks, forums, social blogs, micro blogging, social bookmarking, weblogs, photographs or pictures, video, rating and podcast (Dumpit & Fernandez, 2017).

Furthermore, most of the universities, colleges, secondary and primary schools (particularly private schools) nowadays have an official page or group on one of the social media networks where students and staff can share resources and interact (Selwyn, 2009). According to Junco (2014) many researchers found various effects of social media use on college students' experiences. Some of the mentioned effects are: enhanced self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011; Mehdizadeh, 2010; Tazghini & Siedlecki, 2013) as well as the development of identity and peer relationships (Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009), relationship building and maintenance (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007, 2011; Manage, Taylor & Greenfield, 2012; Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009), higher life satisfaction, social trust, civic engagement, and political participation (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009) student engagement (Heiberger & Harper, 2008; Junco, 2012; Junco, Elavasky & Heiberger, 2012; Loken, 2011), as well as perceptions of social and academic integration (Selwyn, 2009; Yu, Tian, Vogel & Kwok, 2010), perceptions of social support (DeAndrea, Ellison, Larose, Steinfield & Fiore, 2011; Manago, Taylor & Greenfield, 2012).

The impact of social media on learning and teaching is increasingly considered and debated among higher education scholars, administrators, and stakeholders. Lynn, Healy, Kilroy, Hunt, Werff, Venkatagiri and Morrison (2015) considered social media as one of the game-changers in the realm of learning and instruction. Selwyn (2012) discussed the implications of social media for new types of learners, learning and higher education provision. McLoughlin & Lee (2010) stated that using social media networks in the educational process could help educators to apply the inquiry-based approach and encourage the collaboration between the instructor and the students, thereby encourage engagement. Also important is the potential of these technologies for encouraging independent self-directed learning as well as encouraging students' as active producers of knowledge (Dumpit & Fernandez, 2017), which once again is commonly regarded as a positive affordance for media.

II.   THE PROBLEM

Social networking has become an international trend, which has spread world-over. With this advancement, a major concern keeps arising as in social media sites are becoming more and more accepted among users. Social media are built in dual capacity to be exploited through the mobile and web based technology to create highly interactive platforms through which an individual and community share, co-create, discuss and transform user-generated content. Evidence from research have suggested that using online technologies can encourage online discussion among teachers and students outside the classroom, beyond the traditional class setting, which assisted in solving individual students' problems.

However, irrespective of the great impact achievable with social media platform in education, teachers have continued to teach with the traditional methods. It is not still clear in Nigeria, particularly in Abia State, teachers'

perception and extent of use of social media in teaching and learning. Therefore, the problem of the study is to examine teachers' perception and use of social media in Abia State.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' perception and use of social media in junior secondary schools in Abia State.
Specifically, the study sought to:
1. Ascertain the various kind of the social media sites accessible to Junior Secondary School teachers..
2. Examine the perception of Junior Secondary School teachers about social media.
3. Find out teacher's extent' of utilization of the social media sites.

Research Questions
1. What are the social media sites that Junior Secondary School teachers are more familiar with?
2. What is the perception of Junior Secondary School teachers on the impact of social media networks in education?
3. What is the extent of usage of social media sites among Junior Secondary teachers in Abia State?

Research Hypotheses
1. There is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female Junior Secondary School teachers' perception of social media impact in education.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female Junior secondary school teachers on the extent of usage of social media sites.

III.   METHODOLOGY

The design of this study is descriptive survey. It was used because it permitted the researcher to study small sample and later generalized the findings on the whole population. Survey research is concerned with ascertaining and establishing the status-quo, facts or pieces of information as at the time of research and presenting such facts as they are. The population of the study consisted of all the junior secondary school teachers in public secondary schools in Abia State. A total of 240 respondents consisting of (113) male and (127) female teachers constituted the sample for the study, using random sampling technique. Data was collected through questionnaire named Social Media Questionnaire (SMQ), which consist of twenty-seven (27) structured questions. The items on the SMQ were scored on 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Strongly Disagree (2), and Disagree (1). The instrument was validated by two experts in Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology, Abia State University, Uturu. A reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained for the study using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the null hypotheses were tested with z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

IV.   RESULTS

Research Question 1
What are the social media sites that Junior Secondary School teachers are more familiar with?

Table 4.1: Mean ratings and standard deviations on social media sites that junior secondary school teachers are more exposed to.

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Twitter	3.39	0.61	Agree
2	Facebook	3.41	0.69	Agree
3	Google +	2.45	0.53	Disagree
4	Yahoo	2.27	0.50	Disagree
5	WhatsApp	3.56	0.77	Agree
6	YouTube	3.04	0.35	Agree
7	LinkedIn	2.12	0.40	Disagree
8	Myspace	2.34	0.50	Disagree
9	Skype	2.22	0.48	Disagree
10	Blog	2.10	0.40	Disagree
	Cluster mean	2.60	0.53	

From the Table 4.1 above, items 1, 2, 5 and 6 were accepted by the respondents. This is because the mean of the items were above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, they agree that they are more exposed to facebook, whatsapp, twitter, and youtube, among other social media sites.

Research Question 2 : What is the perception of Junior Secondary School teachers' on social media networks in education?

Table 4.2: Mean and standard deviations of Junior Secondary School teachers' perception on social media networks

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Encourages teachers to teach well.	4.25	2.05	Accept
2	It encourages collaboration.	4.36	2.07	Accept
3	Fosters individual development for professional delivery.	4.45	2.10	Accept
4	It encourages independent self-directed learning.	4.43	2.09	Accept
5	Provide strong aura of enthusiasm that raises the confidence and aspirations of teachers	3.95	1.98	Accept
6	It enhances self-esteem.	3.90	1.97	Accept
7	It encourages the development of identity and peer relationships.	3.90	1.96	Accept
8	It encourages quick feedback	4.28	2.05	Accept
9	It provide avenue for checkmating students learning	3.93	1.97	Accept
10	It makes learning more interesting and accommodating.	4.45	2.10	Accept
	Cluster mean	**41.9**	**2.03**	**Accept**

From the table above, all the mean items were accepted by the respondents about the perception of Junior Secondary School teachers on social media networks in education. This is because, the weighted mean (41.9) for teachers were above the criterion mean of 2.50. The respondents agreed that social media networks encourage teachers to teach well, encourage collaboration, it foster individual development for professional delivery, encourage independent self-directed learning, provide strong aura of enthusiasm that raises the confidence and aspirations of teachers, enhance self-esteem, encourage quick feedback, provide avenue for checkmating students learning, make learning more interesting and accommodating.

Research Question 3 : What is the extent of usage of social media sites among Junior Secondary teachers in Abia State?

Table 4.3: Mean and standard deviations of Junior Secondary School teachers' social media utilization

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1	I use my social media account to connect with friends.	3.59	0.76	High Extent
2	I use my social media account to chat with friends.	3.01	0.65	High Extent
3	I use social media sites for private messaging, uploading photos and online profiles	2.65	0.67	High Extent
4	I use social networking sites for watching movies	2.58	0.53	High Extent
5	I Use social networking sites for communicating and interacting with friends.	3.96	0.78	High Extent
6	I use social media sites for personal business	2.65	0.59	High Extent
7	I use social networking sites for academic purposes	0.84	0.15	Low Extent
	Cluster mean	**3.04**	**0.67**	**High Extent**

From the Table 4.3 above, items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were accepted by the respondents to a high extent. This is because the mean of the items was above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, they agree to a high extent that

they use their social media account to connect with friends, chart with friends, send private messages, upload photos, online profiles, watch movies, communicate and interact with friends, and for personal business. However, in item 7, teachers deny using social media sites for academic purpose, which could be due to erroneous beliefs, poor knowledge and exposure as well as the inhibition from traditional method.

Hypothesis 1 : There is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female Junior Secondary School teachers' perception of social media impact in education.

Table 4.4: z-test analysis of the perception of social media impact in education by male and female junior secondary school teachers

Gender	No	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	113	2.41	0.71				
				238	1.02	1.96	Not Significant
Female	127	2.28	0.11				

Table 4.4 shows that the z-calculated (1.02) is less than the critical z-value of (1.96) at 0.05 level of significant. Based on the above result and analysis, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean response of male and female Junior Secondary School teachers perception of social media impact in education was retained.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female Junior Secondary School teachers on the extent of usage of social media.

Table 4.5: z-test analysis of male and female junior secondary school teachers on the extent of usage of social media sites.

Gender	No	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	113	9.60	2.04				
				238	1.01	1.96	Not Significant
Female	127	5.54	1.03				

Table 4.5 shows that the z-calculated (1.01) is less than the critical z-value of (1.96) at 0.05 level of significant. Based on the above result and analysis, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean scores of the male and female students on the extent of usage of social media among junior secondary school students was retained.

V. DISCUSSION

The result of the analysis of data in Table 4.1 revealed that junior secondary school teachers are more familiar to WhatsApp (3.56), Facebook (3.41), twitter (3.39) and YouTube (3.04) than any other social media network. Table 4.2 shows that teachers have positive perception towards social media applicability in education. Also, the z-test analysis in Table 4.4 indicated that the perception of male and female teachers do not differ significantly. The findings are in consonant with the work of Lynn, Healy, Kilroy, Hunt, Werff, Venkatagiri and Morrison (2015) who considered social media as one of the game-changers in the realm of learning and instruction. McLoughlin & Lee (2010) stated that using social media networks in the educational process could help educators to apply the inquiry-based approach and encourage the collaboration between the instructor and the students, thereby encourage engagement. Also important is the potential of these technologies for encouraging independent self-directed learning as well as encouraging students' as active producers of knowledge. Similarly, Dzvapatsva, Mitrovic, & Dietrich (2014) noted that social networking sites serve as an avenue for people of different race and tribe to interact easily irrespective of distance. Also, Bryer & Zavatarro (2014), aver that social media facilitate social interaction, foster collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders.

The result of the analysis of data in Table 4.3 revealed that junior secondary school teachers use social media networks to a high extent for social interaction and communication, charting, personal business, downloading of photos among others rather than using it for academic purpose. The z-test in Table 4.5 also showed that the mean responses of male and female teachers on the extent of usage of social media networks do not differ significantly.

VI.   Conclusion and Recommendation

The results of the study showed that teachers have positive perception of social media networks, though they lack the capacity requisite for using the networking sites in classroom teaching and learning. Hence, they use it simply for social interactions only. On the basis of the conclusion, the following were recommended.

1.   Teachers should be encouraged to adopt social media platform as an effective learning strategy in order to improve students' social interaction skills and foster meta-cognition in students.

2.   The school managements should organize workshops and seminars to expose teachers and students constantly to the use social media in education

3.   Learning should be blended in that educational materials and videos should be posted on the various social media platforms that are predominant to the students where they share, read, comment and collaborate with their peers and teachers.

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