

The Adoption of Social Media and Academic Staff Productivity in Universities of North Central Geopolitical Zone Nigeria

Madu E.C.¹, Idoko A.N.² & Akor P.U.¹

¹Department of Library and Information Technology, School of Information
Communication Technology, Federal University of Technology Minna, NIGERIA.

²Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, NIGERIA.

E-mail: evamadu@yahoo.co.uk; nkechidoko2007@gmail.com; philakor@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined the adoption of social media and Academic staff productivity in Universities in North Central Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Correlation survey design was used in the study to establish the relationship between the variables. The population of the study is 2690 which comprised of academic staff in the six (6) universities understudy. A proportionate random sampling techniques was used to draw a sample of 387 from the 6 universities chosen for the study. Out of the 387 sets of questionnaire administered, 227 were retrieved and used for the analysis. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency count, mean score, and percentage) for research questions 1 and 2. the only hypothesis was tested with the use of stepwise t-test to determine the significance of the relationship between social media and the productivity of the academic staff of the universities understudy. The finding revealed that the largest percentage (56.4%) of the academic staff indicated low adoption of social media. On academic productivity, finding revealed that the respondents have very how academic productivity as indicated by 64.3% of the respondents. It was also found out that there is a significant relationship between the level of adoption of social media and the productivity of the academic staffs therefore the hypothesis was not accepted. The study recommends increased financial resources for the universities especially in the areas of ICT facilities acquisition and training on how to use the new technologies.

Keywords: adoption, social, media, academic, staff, university, productivity, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Social media is increasingly becoming important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change and proliferation of information resources as it serves as a means of interaction among people of different ages in which they create, share and exchange information and ideas. The new way is remarkably different from the traditional way of meeting each other as the world now meets in social websites. Because of the increasing complexity of information environment, Individuals are faced

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with diverse, abundant information choices in their academic studies in the work place and in personal lives.

Some authors and commentators have used social media, social networking and on-line communication interchangeably. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), they are a group of internet based applications that draw a lot from the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0; Mariam-Wester dictionary (2008,) defines social media as forms of electric communication as web sites for social networking and micrologging through which users create on line communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other contents.

According to Lampe, Ellison and stainfield (2008) social media has continued to gain popularity as many users now use it for interaction, thereby understanding perceptions towards social media becomes essential. There popularity and perception of social media in information sharing have no doubt affected the sourcing of information for research by academics in the Nigerian Universities who must publish or else they perish. The popularity of social media has also changed the way and behaviour of information the world over (Maness) 2006. This position is corroborated by Stephen (2006) who perceived social media as the next embodiment of the world Wide Web where digital tools allow users to create, change and publish dynamics contents of all kinds.

According to Miller (2008) social media are now used by researchers as users are more in tune with on-line resources which are more responsive and appealing to their needs.

In this regard according to Huffman (2006) social media allows users to create, describe, post, search and communicate on line contents in various forms which range from bookmarks, to photographic and documentation. In addition, social media has an all pervasive impact through the society.

This is no doubt therefore according to Al-Rahmi and Othaman (2014) that “social media has gained wider acceptance and usability and it is also becoming probably the most important communication tools among students especially at the higher level of educational pursuit” P1. This is also exported of academicians in Nigerian University who need social media for research, teaching and learning. They are supposed to embrace this tool for academic output and visibility.

Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content- sharing and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microbloggmng, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are among the different types of social media, other examples of social medial include:

- Facebook: This is a popular free social networking website that allows 'registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. According to statistics from the Nielsen Group, Internet users within the United States spend more time on Facebook than any other website.
- Twitter: This is a free microblogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called tweets. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and devices.

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- Google+ (pronounced *Google plus*). This is Google's social networking project, designed to replicate the way people interact offline more closely than is the case in other social networking services. The project's slogan is "Real-life sharing rethought for the web."
- Wikipedia: This is a free, open content online encyclopedia created through the collaborative effort of a community of users known as Wikipedians. Anyone registered on the site can create an article for publication; registration is not required to edit articles. Wikipedia was founded in January of 2001.
- LinkedIn: This is a social networking site designed specifically for the business community. The goal of the site is to allow registered members to establish and document networks of people they know and trust professionally.
- Reddit: This is a social news website and forum where stories are socially curated and promoted by site members. The site is composed of hundreds of sub-communities, known as "subreddits." Each subreddit has a specific topic such as technology/politics or music. Reddit site members, also known as, "redditors," submit content which is then voted upon by other members. The goal is to send well-regarded stories to the top of the site's main thread page.
- Pinterest: This is a social curation website for sharing and categorizing images found online. Pinterest requires brief descriptions but the main focus of the site is visual. Clicking on an image will take you to the original source, so, for example, if you click on a picture of a pair of shoes, you might be taken to a site where you can purchase them. An image of blueberry pancakes might take you to the recipe; a picture of a whimsical birdhouse might take you to the instructions.

This is in line with the position of this research, which assesses the influence of social media on academic productivity.

Productivity in whatever form it takes, academic or industrial, would be seen as the rate of output of production of work performed by a worker. It can also be described as a measure of overall production of efficiency, effectiveness and performance of an individual worker to the industry (Isawumi 2003). Productivity can also be defined as the ratio of production to the resources used in providing it. At the national level, according to Isawumi (2003) productivity is often referred to as human productivity which can be termed as goods or services produced by an individual in a given time. Accordingly, the need for productivity improvement cannot be over emphasized since it is the only way for an independent nation to improve the standard of living of her population. This is the reason why this present study is looking at the relationship between social media and academic productivity. To optimize productivity therefore, believable, simple and accurate measurement as well as qualified standards are needed.

Academic productivity in relation to the objective of university education is therefore seen as the measure or the required output expected of an academic staff. Academic Analytics (2008) which specializes in the creation of the faculty scholarly productivity index has what it called the only objective measure of faculty productivity.

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There are many positions and opinions which recognized the advantages of social media in academics. Some of these positions include the ability of social media to enhance academic relationship improve academic motivation enhancing sources of information and encouraging collaborative activities among the academics. The implication of this therefore is that social media have the potential to enhance the teaching and research capability of the academics especially in the Nigerian Universities.

In view of this therefore there is the need to assess the influence of social media on academic productivity.

According to Academic Analytics the index or competence for academic productivity includes:

How many books written?

How many journal articles written?

How many grants won?

How many times publications have been cited?

How many awards won? (<http://www.academicanalytics.com>.)

This outlined academic productivity base as outlined by Academic Analytic will form the bedrock of this study with respect to productivity level. This is also in line with the roles and functions of university education.

In many universities in Nigeria, promotion guidelines are available to measure the required output. For instance, in many universities guideline for promotion to move from Lecturer I to Senior Lecturer, an academic staff is expected to have produced at least six journal articles in addition to other publications. To move from Senior Lecturer to Reader the staff must have ten journal articles plus other publications, while to become a Professor he should have fifteen journal articles in addition to other publications. The recently revised promotion guideline, makes provision for what is popularly referred to as "off shore on shore". By this provision, a certain percentage of the publications must be published outside the shore of Nigeria. The reason for this is for Nigerian scholars to make greater impact on the international scholarly scene and also have better visibility. This position is central to the objective of this study.

Academic productivity has now assumed international dimension. With information technology, it is possible to use internet to access information internationally. Locally, the Libraries are veritable sources of information for researchers. It is now possible to use internet to gauge the visibility and impact of any country or any academic. In most cases this is measured by the research output of the individual academic.

The National Universities Commission has set standards based on some criteria for works published in Nigeria. In all, visibility and impact on the international scholarly scene are very important.

A major factor which affects academic productivity negatively is the problem of lack of access to resources, (Nzotta, 1997). The books, journals and ICT facilities are often not there for use. Apart from the problem of lack of access to resources, there is also the issue of distractions resulting from extracurricular pressure. There is the need to survive in an environment where water, light, fuel, etc are not readily available.

Another factor is the issue of lack of infrastructure and security. These add to the problems of the academics in Nigerian universities. Another critical factors which affects academic productivity is what Banet-Weiser (2009) called gender inequity in academia. Gender inequity according to her involves what might be termed "extra-curricular pressures: "female faculty are often overloaded with student advising duties, and frequently juggle pressures of family and motherhood in university settings. The pressures of what is called the "second shift," where the additional labour that women perform in the context of and domestic relations is rendered invisible, becomes quite complicated in academics because of the time constraints of typical university practices such as tenure and promotion" p2.

However, some researchers have identified some traits in women which pre-dispose them favourably to higher productivity in all human endeavors including academic productivity. According to (Obaje 2008) "mythologies around the world have ascribed to women the supreme literacy achievements of creating alphabets and inverting languages"p7.

According to Obaje (2008), women were once at the centre of the world of learning. The publishing industry in Nigeria is not well developed, some journals disappear after two or more years of existence. Most reputable journals are foreign based and with the quality of research here it is difficult to get works published. Looking at the issue of low academic productivity from external angle, Alemna (1996) explained that it was not always easy to publish in foreign journals because much of the research in Nigeria addresses local issues which are not likely to interest an overseas audience.

Omolewa (2008) lamented that many of the professors in Africa are only local professors who are hardly known outside their institutions and are not recognized for the quality of their knowledge or scholarship. To be acknowledged as an international scholar, an academic must publish internationally. For this to be possible, the academic must have access to wide range of information resources, must be current and know what is going on in his field. Hence the relevance of social media to academic productivity cannot be overemphasized. In view of the above, this research seeks to find out how social media correlates with academic productivity in Nigerian universities, in the North Central Geo-political zone.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Most universities the world over are founded on the concept of service to man, primarily to meet the development needs of the society. This is done through a systematic approach to research as knowledge acquired is subjected to constant questioning and evaluation, and used in the acquiring of further knowledge. Social media affords the researcher the opportunity to have a wide range of information resources, ability to find and evaluate resources improve academic motivation, encourage collaborative activities among academics etc. These are necessary for research. This study therefore aims at investigating the influence of social media on academic productivity among the academic staff in the Universities, in the North Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

Aina (2005) have shown that the contribution of Nigerian academics to the international scholarly community is low. A study by Aina (2005) has also revealed that Nigerian publications make very little impact on the international scholarly scene. This could be

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tied to the lack of visibility of Nigerian academic. Visibility in the web is now widely used to determine the issue of output.

This low level of academic productivity has also affected Nigerian Universities in the rankings by web popularity (www.4icu.org). For instance, in the ranking of first 100 top universities and colleges in Africa, only two Nigerian Universities, Obafemi Awolowo University and University of Ibadan, out of about one hundred and fifty Universities in the country, came distant 47 and 58 respectively.

The implication of all these is that the universities may not be able to meet its primary objective which is the developmental need of the society. With low quality research output, the application of research outcome for development suffers greatly.

In view of this therefore, what could be the role social media on academic productivity among academic staff in North central geographical zone of Nigeria, this is the central focus of attention of this study.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of this study is to find out the extent to which social media play a role in academic productivity among academic staff in Nigerian Universities in North Central Geopolitical zone.

Specifically, the study will:

1. Determine the level of adoption of social media by the academic staff for teaching, learning and research in Nigerian Universities.
2. Ascertain the level of academic productivity possessed by academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study

1. What is the level of adoption of social media by the academic staff understudy for teaching, learning and research in Nigerian Universities.
2. What is the level of academic productivity possessed by the academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis was tested at 005 level of significance

1. There is no significant relationship between the level of social media adoption and the productivity of academic staff.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a correlation survey design to establish the relationship between the variables. The population of the study is 2690 which comprised of academic staff in the universities understudy, a proportionate random sampling technique was used to draw the sample of 387 from the six universities chosen for this study. The sample was composed through a multi-stage sampling techniques using proportionate stratified random sampling.

Firstly, the universities were grouped into strata based on university ownership, (federal, state, private). This gave a total number of twelve universities as follows (federal 4, state 5, and private 3).

Secondly, random sampling was used in selecting two universities across from each of the strata. This gave a total of six (6) universities that were used for this study.

Thirdly, a proportionate random sampling of 15% based on faculties was used to draw the sample from each of the six (6) universities. Fraenkel and Wallen (1993) have argued that between 10-15% is appropriate for a research of this nature. This is a good representative of all the university in terms of ownership.

The instrument used for data collection is questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency count, mean score and percentage) for research questions 1 and 2. the only hypothesis was tested with the use of stepwise t-test to determine the significance of the relationship between social media and the productivity of the academic staff.

Table 1 Distribution of Population and sample

University (Private)	Population	Sample (15%)
1. Al-Hikman University Ilorin	220	33
2. Salem University Lokoja	135	20
(State)		
Benue State University, Makurdi	325	49
Nassarawa University, Keffi	430	64
Federal		
Federal University of Technology Minna	670	100
University of Jos	810	121
TOTAL	2690	387

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research question 1

What is the level of adoption of social media by the academic staff understudy for teaching, learning and research in Nigerian University.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of the levels of adoption of social media by the academic staff of the universities

Levels	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
0-40 (very Low)	39	17.2
41-60 (Low)	128	56.4
60-80 (High)	60	26.4
81-100 (very High)	0	.0

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage of the levels of adoption of social media by the academic staff of the University. From this table, 39 staff Corresponding to 17.2% indicated very low level of adoption of social media, 128 staff Corresponding to 56.4% indicated low level of adoption of social media and 60 staff Corresponding to 26.4% indicated high level of adoption of social media from this result, it can be concluded that majority of the staff indicated low level of adoption of social media.

The findings of this study as it affects the above research question revealed that the largest percentage (56.4%) of the academic staff have low adoption of the new media technology, social media. This finding is no line with the position of Kevin and Shafeck (2002) who argued that the abundance of information will not in itself create a move informed citizenry without a duster of abilities to use them. Academic staff in our universities must therefore possess the competencies to enable them to adopt the new media social media.

Research Question 2

What is the level (Very Low, High and Very High) of academic staff productivity in Nigeria Universities?

Table 3: Academic Staff Productivity Levels

Levels	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Very High	38	16.8
Low	59	25.7
Very Low	89	39.4
Total	227	100.0

The above research question sought to determine the level of Productivity by academic staff in the universities under study. An Academic Productivity Index was used as an instrument to elicit information on what constitute academic productivity. Such index according to Academic Analytic includes how many books published, how many journals articles written, how many grants won, how many times publications have been cited and how many awards won. Here the academic staff were scored over 100%. The respondents were grouped based on their performance of below 40 (very low productivity), 41 to 60 (low productivity 61-80 high productivity and 81 and above (very high productivity) Findings showed that the respondents have very low level of academic productivity, as indicated by 64,3% of the respondents. This finding of this study is corroborated by a

study by Omolewa 2008 and the low ranking of Nigeria Universities in the Web, which shows that of the 100 universities and colleges in Africa out two Nigerian Universities came a distant 42 and 58. this poor showing is attributed to low productivity.

HYPOTHESIS 1: There is no significant relationship between the level of adoption of social media and the productivity of academic staff.

Table: 4 Step wise t-test for the significant of correlation coefficient

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
Productivity	.810	.048	.750	17.08	.000

The above hypothesis was tested by stepwise t-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance. It was discovered that a significant relationship was established between the level of adoption of social media and the productivity of the academic staff.

Table 4 shows that the t-value for the test of significant between the level of adoption of social media and the productivity of academics staff is 17.028: this t-value is significant at 0.000. however, the t-value is also significant at 0.05, this is because 0.000 is less than 0.05 ($0.000 < p < 0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis is not accepted, hence there is significant relationship between the adoption of social media and the productivity of academic staff.

The finding is corroborated by the finding of Madu (2013) and Found (2009) who asserted that access to sophisticated information tools without a concerted base for use will result in the diffusion of meaningless research effort.

CONCLUSION

This study was undertaken to find out the extent to which the adoption of social media correlates Academic staff productivity in Universities in North Central Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Correlation survey design was used in the study to establish the relationship between the variables. The population of the study is 2690 which comprised of academic staff in the universities understudy. A proportionate random sampling techniques was used to draw a sample of 387 from the 6 universities chosen for the study. Out of the 387 questionnaire administrated, 227 were retrieved and used for the analysis. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency count, mean score, and percentage) for research questions 1 and 2. the only hypothesis was tested with the use of stepwise t-test to determine the significance of the relationship between social media and the productivity of the academic staff of the universities understudy. The finding revealed that the largest percentage (56.4%) of the academic staff indicated low adoption of social media. On academic productivity, finding revealed that the respondents have very high academic productivity as indicated by 64.3% of the respondents. It was also found out that there is a significant relationship between the level of adoption of social media and the productivity of the academic staffs therefore the hypothesis was not accepted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made based on the findings of the study.

- a. There is the need to increase financial resources available to the universities in the areas of ICT facilities acquisition and training especially on how to use the new media/technologies.
- b. The Universities should influence policies and provide enabling learning environment for the new media and technologic to thrive.
- c. That the academic staff should take advantage of enabling environment to enhance their adoption of social media which will have positive impact on their research output.

The study has no doubt provided theoretical and empirical evidence of the level of adopting of social media and productivity level among academic staff in the universities understudy and the relationship between the two.

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