

SOCIAL MEDIA AS DETERMINANT OF UNDERGRADUATES CAREER CHOICE IN PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Undergraduates are now involved in the use of social media, which determines their career choice. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of social media on the career choices of undergraduates in Plateau State, Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey method. A self-designed instrument titled the Social Media and Career Choice Questionnaire (SMCCQ) was used to collect relevant data. A total of 210 respondents were chosen using a simple random sampling technique. Variables such as age, gender, university type, and level were also considered. Mean and rank order analysis were used to answer the research question, while four hypotheses were tested using a t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that the involvement of undergraduates in the use of social media has both a negative and positive impact on their career choices. The finding also reveals that the use of social media depends on individuals. The findings reveal that there is no significant difference in the influence of social media on the career choice of undergraduates based on gender, age, and university type, and there is a significant difference in the influence of social media on the career choice of undergraduates based on level. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that stakeholders in institutions sensitize undergraduates to the appropriate usage of social media, such as acquiring knowledge and dissemination of useful information and socializing in an acceptable way.

Keywords: career choice, social media, technology, undergraduates, university

Introduction

Technology has made the entire world global and made the uncivilized civilians civilized, exposing and giving information as well as giving updates about the happenings in the world system. Technology can be compared to a coin with two sides that has both negative and positive sides. Technology has equipped the use of social media in recent years to be more effective. The use of social media has gone viral to the extent to which underage people also use it, and the essence of social media is likely to be abused. Social media has been a platform for choosing a career, meeting new people, business partners, and life partners. Social media offers people new and various ways to communicate via the Internet, either through a mobile phone or personal computer (PC). Mobile phones and personal computers (PC) allow people to easily create their own online page or profile to construct and display online network contacts of "friends." On social media, users can easily communicate with friends on their profile or contacts on their list. Through social media, messages and information can be communicated to thousands or millions of people through sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Skype, Whatsapp, and MySpace, YouTube, TikTok (Efunwole and Sinjuade, 2023). Social media also assists entrepreneurs in advertising their skills, values, and products. Entrepreneurs now see social media as a major aspect of getting customers to patronize them.

Social media is a social structure made up of individuals or organizations called 'nodes', which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, common interest, financial exchange, dislike, sexual relationships, relationships of beliefs, knowledge, knowledge, or prestige (Asemah and Edegoh, 2012). Social media can also be referred to as a map of specified ties, such as friendship, friendship, friendship, between the nodes being studied. The nodes to which an individual is thus connected are the social contacts of that individual; the network can also be used to measure social capital—the value that an individual gets from the social network. Social networking sites include Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger, Google

TalkTalk, Google Messenger, and iPhones. iPhones, Androids, Androids, and so on. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, whether friends, whether friends, whether friends, whether physical or internet friends (Asemah & Edegoh, 2012). Social media websites enable a person to create a public profile to build relationships with his or her co-workers, friends, family members, and schoolmates. Furthermore, social media helps to establish and maintain interpersonal communication and connections. ... Studies have shown that social media sites have the ability to guide students who are entering an unfamiliar social environment (Selwyn, 2007). It has been 2007). It has been 2007). It has been 2007). It has been argued that social media networks like Facebook have become an important site for informal cultural learning for students, with online interactions and experiences allowing roles to be learned, values to be learned, values to be understood, and identities to be shaped. Social media influences the academic performance and choice of career of undergraduates, but for the purpose of this study, we will consider how social media influences the career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State. No matter what our age is, what we want to become in life is an important question for everyone. What you want to start doing today is also important because today is tomorrow. Anything one wants to become or achieve in the future starts today, which makes today very important. However, it is important that adults see the reason to help adolescents, notwithstanding their gender, find an appropriate career to secure their future. Adults should prepare adolescents to cope with the problems or challenges they will encounter within the next few or more years.

In a developing country like Nigeria, the economic development or standard of living of the country is getting poorer, so the future of our young ones is not very safe. Their future is much safer if we train and guide them in choosing the right career choice. Choosing a future career is the biggest decision facing undergraduates and youths. Career is a strong determinant of a person's social status within the community, earnings, wealth, and style of life. To this extent, young people or adolescents follow the same or similar occupations as their parents. The longer years of apprenticeship to family trades such as weaving, tailoring, and fishing are being replaced by years of formal education in primary and secondary schools, and the result is that the children may not take up their parents' trade. Labourers occupation, or trade (Oladele, 2002) is an activity constituting a lifestyle expressed in energy, energy, and activity. It is a type of work or way of life that an individual believes he or she is suited for. Vocation can be said to reflect one's calling to a particular business or profession. It is an occupation in which an individual's life is committed to an inherent liking and feeling for the work (Eze, 2010). Occupation is classified into categories, and the classification is very important for a nation, especially in a developing country like Nigeria (Nomeje, 2007). Occupations can also be categorized into nine areas: professional (medicine, law, teaching, etc.); managerial (head of state, governors, directors, etc.); business (accounting, insurance, sales, etc.); clerical (cashiers, typists, bookkeepers, etc.); agricultural (farmers, farm managers, etc.); technological (agricultural and food technicians, engineering and science technicians, etc.); skilled or semi-skilled (photography, plumbing, printing, etc.); apprenticeship (welding, electrical work, fashion design, etc.); and service occupations (waiting, cooking, security, military service, etc.), including unskilled labourers (farm labourers, cleaners). Choosing a career is a vital decision that impacts one's life journey, and career development is a lifelong process that evolves over time (Ohiwerei & Nwosu, 2009).

Individual social status, income, lifestyle, choice of friends, and mental and physical health are influenced by the type of work he or she does. That is, a person's career choice plays a very important role in his or her entire life. Career choices equip students with the capability to make confident choices about their goals and careers in order to be more successful in the world. Kemjika (1999) observed that most students have insufficient information about different jobs, courses of study, and other activities, which makes them unable to judge whether their choice is reasonable or not. Without details or adequate information, students may jump blindly into jobs to become frustrated and unhappy later in life, perhaps at times when a retreat would no longer be easy or possible (Omeje, 2007). There are so many sources of social media through which individuals can get career information, such as television, radio, bulletins, and social networking sites like Facebook, 2Go, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube. Social media is one major way in which the career choices of undergraduates are influenced.

Statement of the Problem

Technology has been likened to a coin that has both positive and negative sides, but the negative sides are weightier. In the early 1990s, since the emergence of social media networking sites, it has been discovered that undergraduates' career choices have been in a very poor state, and this challenge cannot be overemphasized. Social media has become a tutor for our undergraduates. Social media has caused distractions, deviations, and divided attention among undergraduates away from what they ought to focus on. Social media distracts undergraduates from paying attention to their academics and from making the right choice of career. Undergraduates make choices that are wrong, mostly through social media. They choose a career based on what social media suggests to them. People post on their own profile pages on social media networking sites; undergraduates admire them, and they begin to compare themselves with others and always want to be like them at all costs.

Generally, youths choose role models not only in their society but also on social media. Some meet friends who introduce them to drug abuse, criminal activities, and other indiscipline attitudes. Social media does not have rules. Youths today have access to any online information; they can download anything that they come across on social media, but not all of these are expedient. Many undergraduates' get different offers from social media networking sites, which make them get involved in maladaptive behaviours. Ladies get too exposed to what they see online on a daily basis due to social media. People post nude pictures of themselves and pornography videos, which teenagers who are not 18 years old have access to. This challenge fosters sexual abuse, harassment, rape, and all other sexual immoralities. Most of our youth today do not use social networking sites in a good way. For instance, our youths today, using the economic situation as an excuse, decide to be involved in the act of scamming others with the use of Yahoo, while others decide to hack bank accounts. Many have been kidnapped and killed while making new friends on social networking sites. Social media, based on career choice, has led a lot of people astray, and they ended up being confused about their lives. The study will try to find out how social media influences the career choices of undergraduates in Plateau State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate social media as determinants of undergraduate career choice in Plateau state. The study also sought to investigate the influence of age, gender, university type, level and religious affiliation.

Research Question

This research question was raised to guide the conduct of this study:

1. What is the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau state?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated and were tested in this study.

1. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau state based on gender
2. There is no significant difference in influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau state based on age
3. There is no significant influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau state based on university type
4. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau state based on their religious affiliation.
5. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau state based on level.

Methodology

The research design that was adopted for this study is a descriptive survey method. The population for this study comprised all undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Plateau state. Simple random sampling technique was used to select seventy undergraduates from each of the following schools University of Jos and Anan University, Kwall, Plateau State. The population consist of 3,437 (Anan University, Kwall, undergraduates), 43,340 (University of Ilorin).A sample is a representative fraction taken from the population. The samples for this study were 210 respondents selected from the institutions in Plateau state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred and five (105) from Anan University, Kwall, Plateau State and one hundred and five (105) from University of Jos. This makes a total number of two hundred and ten (210) respondents that participated in the study.

The instrument for this study was a Questionnaire tagged "Social Media and Career Choice of Undergraduates Questionnaire (SMCCUQ). Therefore, the questionnaire was divided into two main sections. Section A meant to collect personal information of the respondents such as age, level, religion, gender and type of institution while section B contained items on social media on career choice. The items were patterned after four (4) points Likert-type rating scale format. The instrument was given to three experts in educational foundations department, University of Lagos. The suggestions and corrections were effected in the final draft of the instrument. To determine the reliability of the instrument, a test re-test procedure was employed. At the end of the two administrations; a coefficient of 0.77 was obtained. Descriptive statistics of percentage was used to analyse the personal data of the respondents while inferential statistics of t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the postulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of respondents based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	95	45.2
Female	115	54.8
Total	210	100

Table 1 indicates that 210 respondents participated in the study. The table shows that 95(45.2%) of the respondents were males and 115(54.8%) of the respondents were females. This implies that females participated more in the study.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Percentage Distribution based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
15-19 years	86	41.0
20 & above	124	59.0
Total	210	100

Table 2 shows the distribution percentage of respondents based on age. The table shows that respondents within the age of 15-19 were 86(41.0%) while respondents who were 20 &above were 124(59.0%). This implies that 20 & above participated more in the study.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Respondents based on University

University	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Private	100	47.6
Public	110	52.4
Total	210	100

Table 3 shows the distribution percentage of respondents based on university. This indicates that 100(47.6%) of the respondents attends a private university while 110(52.4%) of the respondents attends public university. This implies that public university undergraduates participated more in the study.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Respondents based on Level

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
100 level	38	18.1
200 level	55	26.2
300 level	38	18.1
400 level	62	29.5
500 level	17	8.1
Total	210	100

Table 4 shows the distribution percentage of respondents based on level. The table shows that 38(18.1%) of the respondents were in 100level, 55(26.2%) of the respondents were in 200level, 38 (18.1%) of the respondents were in 300level, 62(29.5%) of the respondents were in 400level, 17(8.1%) of the respondents were in 500level. 400level undergraduates participated more in the study than other levels in the university.

Answering of Research Question

Research Question: What is the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State?

Table 5: Mean and Rank Order Analysis on Influence of Social Media on Career Choice of undergraduates in Plateau State

Item No	As far as I am concerned social media platforms	Mean	Rank Order
3	Provide the most interesting information for me on career choice	3.63	1st
19	Makes it easier for career choice option to be accessible	3.61	2nd
10	Helps me choose a career model	3.13	3rd
20	Solves all career choice problems	3.10	4th
5	Is a good place for me to choose career	3.09	5th
1	Provide hints for me on career choice	3.07	6th
13	Are frequently used by male undergraduates than female undergraduates	3.04	7th
16	Are used by older undergraduates than younger undergraduates	2.88	8th
6	Gives career choice that fits my personality	2.87	9th
14	Are frequently used by female undergraduates than male undergraduates	2.81	10th
2	Share with me, people that have made similar choices	2.80	11th
17	Supports all religious beliefs	2.63	12th
7	Provide links to career counselling centres	2.60	13th
11	Helps in providing career that are peculiar to male undergraduates	2.60	14th
12	Helps in providing career that are peculiar to female undergraduates	2.34	15th
9	Encourages entrepreneurship skills	2.28	16th

15	Are used by younger undergraduates than older undergraduates	2.28	16th
8	Gives answers to all my questions on career choice	2.05	18th
18	Educates all undergraduates on the career that suits their beliefs	2.04	19th
4	Affect my preference of career choice	1.69	20th

Table 5 reveals that item 3 was ranked 1st with a mean score 3.63 which states that provide the most interesting information for me on career choice. Item 19 was ranked 2nd with the mean score of 3.61 which states that makes it easier for career choice to be accessible, while item 10 was ranked 3rd, with the mean score of 3.13 which states that helps me choose a career model. However, item 8 was ranked 18th with the mean score of 2.05 which states that gives answers to all my questions on career choice. Item 18 was ranked 19th with the mean score of 2.04 which states that educates all undergraduates on the career that suits their beliefs. Item 4 with the mean score of 1.69 was ranked 20th which states that affect my preference of career choice.

Hypotheses Testing

Four null hypotheses were formulated and tested for this study. The hypotheses were tested using t-test and ANOVA statistical methods at 0.05 level of significance. The results are present as follows:

Hypothesis One:

There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on gender.

Table 6: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test showing the significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on gender.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P-value
Male	95	54.27	3.66	208	1.29	0.64
Female	115	54.94	3.80			

The summary of the result indicated that there is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduate ($t(208) = 1.29, P > 0.05$). This further showed that the on the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates for male and female is the same. Therefore, the hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on age.

Table 7: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on age.

Age	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P-value
15-19yrs	86	54.3488	3.75662	208	0.02	0.873
20 & above	124	54.8468	3.74610			

The summary of the result indicated that there is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates within the age range of 15-19 years and 20 years and above ($t(208) = 0.026, P > 0.05$). This further showed that the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates within the age of 15-19 years and 20 years and above is the same. Therefore the hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference in the Influence of Social Media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau state based on university type.

Table 8: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on university type.

University Type	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P-value
Public	100	54.4900	3.7698	208	0.562	0.06
Private	110	54.7818	3.7425			

The summary of the result indicated that there is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduate in public and private university ($t(208) = 0.562, P > 0.05$). This further showed that the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates for both public and private university is the same. Therefore, the hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis Five

There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on level.

Table 9: ANOVA Result Showing Difference in the Influence of in the Influence of Social Media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on level.

Source	SS	df	MS	Calculated F	Critical F	P-value
Between Groups	1110.997	4	277.749	31.16	2.37	0.000
Within Groups	1827.217	205	8.913			
Total	2938.214	209				

The summary of the result indicated that there is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates because the $P < 0.05$ level of significance and the calculated F of 31.161 is greater than the critical F of 2.37. This further showed that the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates is the same for all levels. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 10: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing the significant difference in the in the Influence of Social Media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on level.

Duncan Grouping	N	Mean	Group	Level
A	55	52.27	1	200
B	62	53.09	2	400
C	17	55.05	3	500
D	38	57.02	4	100
E	38	58.02	5	300

Table 10 shows the Duncan Multiple Range Test indicating the significant difference noted in the ANOVA in table 7. Group 3 with a mean score of 55.05 is significantly different from group 1, 2 with means scores of 52.27 and 53.09, and group 4, 5 with mean scores of 57.02 and 58.02. All groups differed from one another but the significant difference noted was as a result of the mean group 3 which describes those who are in 500 level.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that undergraduates' use of social media has both positive and negative effect on their ability to make career decisions. Positively, social media is mainly for conveying information and people from all spheres of life can easily share information and job advertisements. Social media has become a tutor for undergraduates which they have access to all information they want, even some of the information that cannot be found in libraries and research centres can be found online. Some institutions, schools and learning centres now prefer to do assignments online and submissions through social media like Gmail and Emails. The use of social media is a matter of choice, some undergraduates utilize the purpose of social media by getting more knowledge, promote their business and socializing in an acceptable way while some use social media unwisely by devoting most of their time chatting and posting unnecessary pictures while other necessary things should be done and attended to. Social media negatively has caused distractions, deviation and divided attention of undergraduates away from what they ought to focus on. It is found among undergraduate who is ought to study for an examination being distracted from the original intention while using social media. Undergraduates have been so addicted to social media to the extent that they use social media while receiving lectures.

Social media, if utilized wisely can serve as a good avenue for collaborative learning for undergraduates (Chen, Kaewkitipong & Ractham, 2016). Social media has a created alternative new world of information, communication, and interconnectivity order which cannot be activated using face-to-face method among the undergraduates (AL-Sharq et al., 2015; Chukwuere & Onyebukwa, 2017). More than 48% of Nigerian youth 12 to 17 years of age use the internet and nearly half log on it daily (Lenhart, Maadden & Hitlin, 2005). Maeve (2014) reiterated that the advent of social media on mobile phones, blackberry messenger, facebook, twitter, has made Nigerian youths to be addicted to these gadgets that they no longer have time for reading.

The first hypothesis revealed that there was no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on gender. This means that both male and female respondents are not different in their view on the influence of social media on undergraduate career choice. The finding negates the study conducted in December 2012 by Brenner (2013) that 71% of women were users of social media sites compared with 29% of men. The second hypothesis revealed that there was no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on age. This means that the view of the respondents of different age is not differed on the influence of social media on undergraduates' career choice. The finding is in contrast Peluchette and Karl (2008; Nemetz, 2010) that age difference is found regarding the type of information posted on social media sites in that older females are more likely to find some conventional postings and personal choice intrusions by faculty more inappropriate than younger male students. While these foregoing indicates that the older people become the less likely they would accept new technologies.

The third hypothesis revealed that there was no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on university type. This means that university type has no influence on the view of the respondents on the influence of social media on undergraduates' career choice. The fourth hypothesis revealed that there was a significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on level. This means that educational level of the respondents has an influence of social media on their career choice. This corroborate with the study of (Ellisson, Steinfield & lampe, 2007) whose findings revealed that social media sites help young people who have recently transitioned from high school to university to develop new relationships while maintaining their high school friendships. In particular, those students with lower level of satisfaction with secondary school life and lower levels of self-esteem benefited the most from active use of social media sites.

Summary of the Findings

1. The influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State are providing interesting information on career choice, making it easier for career option to be accessible, helps to choose a career model etc.
2. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on age.
4. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on university type.
5. There is a significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on level.

Conclusion

The major findings of the study revealed that social media has both positive and negative influence on undergraduates' career choices because undergraduates may decide to make their choice of career on social media and can to choose the right career that suits their personality. Undergraduates may choose a career on social media that is totally not suitable for their personality. The use of social media is to acquire beneficial knowledge, dissemination of information, interacting, communicating and socializing in their learning. The results of the hypotheses showed that there was a significant difference in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on level and there were no significant differences in the influence of social media on career choice of undergraduates in Plateau State based on gender, age and university type.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher recommends the following;

1. Undergraduates should be educated on the use of cell phones and internet in other to teach others to avoid the abuse of social media and cell phones.
2. Undergraduates should be informed about the consequences and danger of using social media negatively and how they can use it can be positively utilized.
3. Social media can be positively utilized in choosing suitable career that befits undergraduate's personality with the assistance of the parents, counselors, religious leaders etc.
4. The school administrations should organize workshops and seminars for the undergraduates and all other staffs on the usage of social media, so that they can properly use social media and the students can be well monitored.

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