

SOCIAL MEDIA ADOPTION FOR LECTURERS WORK ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN RIVERS STATE**BY****Ibinabo, Stephen Koroye:** Department of Educational Foundations, Isaac Jasper Boro College of Education, Sagbama, Bayelsa State, ibinabostephen@yahoo.com**Uchenna-John, Timipah Anne:** Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria**Abstract**

The study investigated social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public universities in Rivers State. There were three research questions and three null hypotheses which guided the study. The study employed descriptive survey design. Population of the study was all the lecturers in the three public universities in Rivers State out of which 300 lecturers were sampled for the study using simple random sampling technique. Instrument adopted for gathering data was questionnaire titled "Social Media Adoption and Lecturers Work Engagement Questionnaire" (SMALWEQ). The questionnaire was face and content validated by three Measurement and Evaluation experts at the University of Port Harcourt. Reliability of the instrument was estimated as 0.81 using Cronbach Alpha statistics. Research questions raised were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study indicated that the lecturers perceived that social media can promote collaboration but requires relevant auxiliary systems to be effective. It was also revealed that social media adoption can make communication seamless and promote knowledge sharing in the process of lecturers' work engagement but challenges such as poor internet services as well as the fact the social media is not usually suitable for all kind of activities carried out by the lecturers. It was recommended that lecturers should be trained especially in the adoption of social media for their various work engagements in the Universities.

Keywords: Social Media, Lecturers, Work Engagement, Universities, Rivers State

Introduction

The growth in technology in recent years has been altering the way businesses are conducted and how people relate in the work environment and the educational sector has not been left out of these changes and innovations as observed in other sectors such as finance, health, agriculture etc. (Aborujila et al., 2016). In a more convincing manner, the COVID-19 pandemic created a disruption the regular manner people carry out their job functions thereby forcing people to switch to the use of technology which is now referred to as the new normal. One aspect of technology that has recorded increased acceptance in recent times is the use of social media for building relationships and conducting businesses for improved service delivery. On his part, Laar (2021:2) stated that "there is an increase in the level at which emerging web technologies are adopted in the educational context" and this has no doubt created a shift in the way educational activities and services are conducted. Several social media platforms such as twitter, Facebook, whatsapp etc. are gaining improved acceptance in the way people conduct businesses. Researchers have established that the rate of adoption of technologies remains very slow when compared to how technologies are evolving as this is so especially in the educational sector where technological innovations remains very slow when compared to how they evolve. These experiences raises questions as to the perception of educational stakeholders especially the teachers on their perception on how these technologies especially the social media will influence their work engagement. Similarly, since these lecturers in universities are slow in the adoption of social media in the discharge of their duties, it is essential to determine how its adoption will affect their work engagements as well as the challenges they experience in the adoption of social media for their work engagement in the 21st century work environment.

The concept of social media has different definition like every other technological concept. According to Esimokha (2021:479), "social media are Internet sites where people interact freely by sharing and discussing

information using a multimedia mix of personal words, pictures, videos and audio". This implies that social media are platforms that give users the freedom of communication irrespective of their location by using audio and visual services to share information with other persons who are connected on the platform. On the other hand, work engagement refers to the act of participating or executing the job functions for which an employee was employed in line with the goals and objectives of the organization. Expanding further, Ogbonnaya et al., as cited in Falola et al., (2018) asserted that work engagement is a process and it focuses on how employees in an organization are economically and strategically inspired participate and show commitment to the goals and objectives of the organization. It is safe therefore to say that only those who are pursuing the goals and objectives of the organization where they work as stipulated in their job description are actually work engaged. Osborne and Hammoud (2017) summarized it by stating that work engagement is a purposeful and enthusiastic and satisfactory appetite for work which is shown by employees in their various lines of duty.

It remains a fact that the social media remains one of the highly discussed technological innovation in the 21st century and this is mainly because users including lecturers have different opinion about the relevance and application of technology in our day-to-day activities. For example, Agbo et al., (2021) noted that maximizing the benefits of social media will require proper training which may sometimes be sector specific and this is because its benefits can be felt across different sectors including education, health, rehabilitation etc. Similarly, Oyelere et al., (2017) noted that with the right assistance, students can actually develop the competence of mobile learning through this form of technology. This is because social media helps to develop the entire competencies of users by enabling them to develop social skills, communication skills and can help to connect individuals across different locations thereby making teaching and learning stress-free.

Supporting the assertion above, Banetoli et al., (2015) pointed out that social media assists to a great extent the process of knowledge sharing which implies that education can take place without borders and teachers and students can communicate irrespective of their present location. However, Mardiana (2016) noted that social media can become addictive which forces users to spend more time on it than what is required just for learning. This means that despite the fact that social media can allow users to develop relevant technological skills (Dunn, 2011); failure to regulate its usage can lead to addiction which may override its objective.

There are several challenges that social media users including lecturers face in the use of the platform for carrying out their job functions and this includes the problem of suitability of the platform and its contents for meeting different job requirements (Sedkowski, 2015). This means that the platform may not be able to support all activities that are required for the teacher to discharge his or her job functions. Similarly, other researchers have shown concern about the lack of privacy in the use of social media for communication, inadequacy of auxiliary tools to support its use, difficulty in integrating it into the curriculum, poor internet, among a host of other challenges (Manca & Ranieri, 2016; Sanusi et al., 2014; Shava & Chinyamurindi, 2018). The difference in the physical, social and cultural orientation of lecturers may therefore make the adoption of social media a difficult tool that can provide solution to all educational issues that the lecturers may intend to use the platform for which if not properly handle may erode the process of quality service delivery.

Several researchers have conducted various studies to investigate the need for social media in the school system and one of such studies was conducted by Zakaria (2017) who investigated the perceptions of faculty members on the adoption and use of social media for teaching, learning and research in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria The result of the study showed that the lecturers were aware of the relevance of social media and believed it was useful, but that the needed facilities to support its use where not available. They also believed the tool can be used for interaction and collaborations. However, security issues, affordability, acceptability were identified as possible bottlenecks.

Esimokha (2021) also conducted another study on the use of social media in teaching by academic staff of Federal Polytechnics in South West and North Central Nigeria. Findings of the study indicated that the

lecturers were willing to embrace social media more for personal purposes than professional or teaching purposes. Laar (2021) also investigated the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the adoption of social media for collaborative learning for knowledge acquisition and dissemination and found that social media plays an important role during the pandemic because it provided opportunities for students to enhance collaborative learning opportunities. Mbodila, et al., (2014) conducted another study on the effect of social media on student's engagement and collaboration in Higher Education focusing on the use of Facebook at a South African University and the result of the study pointed out that the adoption of Facebook significantly increased student's collaboration and engagement. On the other hand, the study by Ngonidzashe (2013) on challenges and perceptions towards use of social media in higher education in Zimbabwe showed that security issues, behavioural challenges, waste of time, abuse of platform and antisocial behaviours and all of these factors negate the gains of social media. These studies therefore substantiate the fact that social media remains vital in both students and teachers work engagement but require some form of regulation for its benefits to be maximized in the school environment.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public universities in Rivers State. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. examine the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State
2. describe the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State
3. ascertain the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State?
2. What are the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State?
3. What are the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State
- Ho₃: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey design since emphasis was on investigating an existing phenomenon. The population of the study consisted of all the lecturers in the three public universities in Rivers State (University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education). There

were 300 lecturers (100 each from the three Universities) sampled for the study using simple random sampling technique with emphasis on lecturers who have social media platform(s). The instrument used for data gathering was questionnaire tagged “Social Media Adoption and Lecturers Work Engagement Questionnaire” (SMALWEQ). The questionnaire was responded to on a four point modified Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree (SA=4), (A=3), (D=2) and (SD=1) respectively and produced a criterion mean score of 2.50 used for decision making. This was arrived at by summing up the weights and dividing by 4. The instrument was face and content validated by three Measurement and Evaluation experts in University of Port Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach Alpha statistics with a co-efficient of 0.81. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher and two Research Assistants and out of the 300 copies of questionnaire administered, 279 copies (University of Port Harcourt = 92, Rivers State University = 96 and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education = 91) which represented 93% were retrieved. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Answer to Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores on the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Male Lecturers n=192		Female Lecturers n=87		Mean Set		
		Mean \bar{X}_1	SD	Mean \bar{X}_2	SD	X \bar{X}	Rank	Decision
1	Social media can be used to promote collaboration in the process of work engagements	2.98	0.78	2.88	0.79	2.93	4 th	Agreed
2	The adoption of social media in work engagement is relevant to better service delivery	2.48	1.03	2.79	0.83	2.64	5 th	Agreed
3	The auxiliary system needed for the adoption of social media is in scarce supply	2.77	0.85	2.94	0.73	2.86	1 st	Agreed
4	Social media users are able to develop technological skills in the area of their work engagements	2.44	1.05	2.77	0.90	2.61	2 nd	Agreed
5	The use of social media in work engagements can become addictive	2.71	0.87	2.47	1.08	2.59	3 rd	Agreed
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		2.68	0.92	2.77	0.87	2.72		Agreed

Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 items were responded to by the male lecturers in table 1 with mean values of 2.98, 2.48, 2.77, 2.44 and 2.71 while the female lecturers responded to the same set of items with mean responses of 2.88, 2.79, 2.94, 2.77 and 2.47. The items with mean score above the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for making decision were agreed while other items with mean scores below the criterion mean score were disagreed. In the table, the male and female lecturers had different opinions on items 2, 4 and 5. Item 1 had

the highest mean score value of 2.93 implying that the lecturers believed that social media can help to promote collaboration in the work place. The grand mean scores of 2.68 and 2.77 from the male and female lecturers align with the average mean set score of 2.72 to imply that the lecturers averagely agreed on the items as the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: What are the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores on the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Male Lecturers n=192		Female Lecturers n=87		Mean Set		
		Mean \bar{X}_1	SD	Mean \bar{X}_2	SD	X \bar{X}	Rank	Decision
6	Time and energy is conserved when job functions are executed across social media platforms	2.48	1.07	2.70	0.93	2.59	4 th	Agreed
7	Social media makes it easy to develop interpersonal relations needed for improved service delivery	2.66	0.84	2.80	0.81	2.73	5 th	Agreed
8	Social media makes it easy to document occupational records for future use	2.46	1.08	2.84	0.77	2.65	1 st	Agreed
9	Work place communication becomes seamless when executed across social media platforms	2.54	0.93	2.62	0.99	2.58	2 nd	Agreed
10	The use of social media promotes knowledge sharing in the process of work engagement	2.75	0.82	2.85	0.77	2.80	3 rd	Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	2.58	0.95	2.76	0.85	2.67		Agreed

Table 2 showed that items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 were responded to by the male lecturers with mean values of 2.48, 2.66, 2.46, 2.54 and 2.75 while the female lecturers responded to the same set of items with mean values of 2.70, 2.80, 2.84, 2.62 and 2.85. All of the items from both respondents were answered with mean scores that were above the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for decision making and as such were all agreed except for item 6 from the male lecturers with mean value of 2.48 which was disagreed. Item 10 with mean score of 2.80 had the highest mean set score and implied that the use of social media helps to promote knowledge sharing as indicated by the lecturers. Averagely, the grand mean scores of 2.58 and 2.76 implied that the male and female lecturers generally agreed on the items raised as the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State and the average mean set score of 2.67 also supported this position.

Research Question Three: What are the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation scores on the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Male Lecturers n=192		Female Lecturers n=87		Mean Set		
		Mean \bar{X}_1	SD	Mean \bar{X}_2	SD	X \bar{X}	Rank	Decision
11	Poor internet services makes it difficult to adopt social media for lecturers work engagements	2.74	0.82	2.78	0.84	2.76	4 th	Agreed
12	There is shortage of support facilities for the adoption of social media for work engagement	2.70	0.82	2.65	0.95	2.68	5 th	Agreed
13	The use of social media can alter planned curriculum to unplanned ones	3.08	0.64	2.40	1.15	2.74	1 st	Agreed
14	There is socio-cultural diversity among users which makes the adoption of social media difficult for work engagements	2.96	0.71	2.93	0.72	2.95	2 nd	Agreed
15	Social media platforms is usually not suitable for all kinds of work engagements	2.74	0.83	2.77	0.88	2.76	3 rd	Agreed
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	2.84	0.76	2.71	0.91	2.78		Agreed

Table 3 showed that the responses of the male lecturers to items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 produced mean values of 2.74, 2.70, 3.08, 2.96 and 2.74 while the same set of items were responded to by the female lecturers with mean values of 2.78, 2.65, 2.40, 2.93 and 2.77. All of the items were agreed except for item 13 from the responses of the female lecturers which had a low mean score of 2.40 and as such was disagreed. Item 14 had the highest mean set score of 2.95 implying that socio-cultural diversity was a major challenge in the adoption of social media for lecturers' work engagements. The grand mean score of 2.84 from the male lecturers and 2.71 from the female lecturers supported the average mean set score of 2.78 to suggest that the lecturers averagely agreed on the items listed as the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Table 4: Summary of z-test analysis on the difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Respondents	n	Mea n	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit	Level of Significanc e	Decision
Male Lecturers	192	2.68	0.9 2	277	0.79	1.96	0.05	Not Rejected
Female Lecturers	87	2.77	0.8 7					

In table 4, the value of z-crit. of 1.96 at 277 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance was above the value of z-cal. of 0.79 and as a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected implying that there was no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the perception of lecturers on the adoption of social media for their work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Table 5: Summary of z-test analysis on the difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Respondent s	n	Mea n	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Male Lecturers	19 2	2.58	0.9 5	277	1.58	1.96	0.05	Not Rejected
Female Lecturers	87	2.76	0.8 5					

In table 5, it was revealed that the value of z-crit. of 1.96 at 277 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance was above the value of z-cal. of 1.58 and as a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected indicating that there was no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the effects of social media adoption for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Table 6: Summary of z-test analysis on the difference between the mean ratings of male and female respondents on the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State

Respondents	n	Mea n	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significanc e	Decision
Male Lecturers	192	2.84	0.7 6	277	0.27	1.96	0.05	Not Rejected
Female Lecturers	87	2.71	0.9 1					

In table 6, the value of z-crit. of 1.96 at 277 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance was above the value of z-cal. of 0.27 and as a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected implying that there was no

significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female respondents on the challenges of adopting social media for lecturers' work engagement in public Universities in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The responses of the lecturers sampled for the study showed that the respondents had different perception about the adoption of social media for their work engagements in the University. Findings of the study indicated that there was no difference in the opinion of the lecturers on their perception of social media adoption for their work engagement but differences existed in their opinions on some of the question items raised in the study. This result agrees with the result of the study carried out by Esimokha (2021) which found that lecturers were willing to embrace social media more for personal purposes than professional or teaching purposes and this suggests that there is yet to be an alignment in the use of social media for personal and/or professional purpose even among lecturers. The male and female lecturers shared the same opinion that social media can be used to promote collaboration in the process of work engagements and that auxiliary systems which are support facilities are required to make the adoption of social media effective in their work engagements. This result aligns with the outcome of the study conducted by Zakaria (2017) which established that faculty members were aware of the relevance of social media and believed it was useful, but that the needed facilities to support its use were not available. However, the lecturers differed in their opinions on whether the adoption of social media contributed to better service delivery, whether social media assisted users to develop technological skills as well as if the adoption of social media for lecturers' work engagements can become addictive. This result points to the fact that the male and female lecturers tend to differ in some of their opinions on the adoption of social media for their work engagements.

It was established from the responses of the lecturers that they both agreed that social media makes it easy to develop interpersonal skills in the line of duty and also promotes seamless communication among users in the course of discharging their duties. This result was in tandem with the findings of the study conducted by Laar (2021) which established that the adoption of social media was relevant for collaborative learning for knowledge acquisition and dissemination and found that social media plays an important role during the COVID-19 pandemic because it provided opportunities for students to enhance collaborative learning opportunities. The lecturers also established that adopting social media can help promote the process of knowledge sharing. This finding also agreed with the result of the study by Mbodila, et al., (2014) which showed that the effect of social media on student's engagement and collaboration pointed out that it significantly increased student's collaboration and engagement. However, there was a difference in their responses on whether time and energy is conserved when lecturers adopt social media in their various lines of duty as well as whether social media makes it easy to keep documents for record keeping process. It therefore means that despite the spread of social media across different institutions including the Universities, lecturers still adopt and benefit from this digital platform differently thereby calling for more exploration on how the benefits of social media can be appropriated to the various functions carried out by lecturers in the University.

Despite the fact that the lecturers had diverse opinion on whether the adoption of social media can shift the lecturers focus from achieving planned curriculum objectives to unplanned ones, the male and female lecturers sampled for the study agreed that poor internet services makes it difficult to adopt social media for lecturers' work engagements. This may not be unconnected with the fact that no social media platform can function effectively without access to internet service which is still unstable and even unavailable in several Universities in the country. The lecturers in their opinion also agreed that there is shortage of support facilities for the adoption of social media for work engagement and that there is socio-cultural diversity among users which makes the adoption of social media difficult for work engagements. This establishes the fact that several challenges still confront lecturers in the process of adopting social media for their work engagements. This is in addition to the challenge of social media platforms not being suitable for all kinds of work engagements. The adoption of social media for lecturers work engagements therefore need to be properly structured in order for lecturers to be able to adopt this technology for more successful and sustainable work engagement in and outside the Universities. The plethora of challenges identified tend to

agree with the result of the study by Ngonidzashe (2013) which showed that the use of social media in higher education faced several challenges such as security issues, behavioural challenges, waste of time, abuse of platform and antisocial behaviours and all of these factors negate the gains of social media including its adoption in lecturers' work engagement across public Universities.

Conclusion

It was concluded in line with the findings of the study that social media has both positive and negative effects on the work engagements of lecturers and that the male and female lecturers have different opinions on the adoption of social media for their work engagements. Furthermore, lecturers face different challenges which make the adoption of social media difficult in their various work engagements.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Lecturers need to be trained on how they can maximize the use of social media in the process of carrying out their various academic and administrative duties as this will help to consolidate the gains of social media adoption while overcoming the challenges.
2. The university needs to make proper legislation on the adoption of social media in the process of work engagement among lecturers as this will help to ensure that the platform is not abused in the process of carrying out their work engagements but adopted in line with global best practices.
3. It is important for the university to provide relevant facilities such as internet facilities as well as subsidized digital tools through collaboration with the government and the private sector that will enable lecturers access these resources at a subsidized cost for the delivery of quality services in their various areas of work engagements.

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