

Effects of Social Media on Trainers' Work Performance at the Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute, Ilorin, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study assessed the effects of social media on trainers' work performance at the Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute, Ilorin, Nigeria. Systematic random sampling procedure was employed in the selection of 91 respondents for the study through the use of structured questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and Chi-square. Results showed that the frequently used media on a daily basis, were Twitter (83.5%), emails (79.1%), WhatsApp (76%), and Facebook (72%) while LinkedIn (29.3%) were used on weekly basis. Trainers used social media to connect with families and friends (64.1%), source for journals (19.2%), collaborative research (18.8%) and as well as for online dating (20.7%). Furthermore, 38.0% of the respondents accessed social media from their personal office (68.4%), individual homes (59.6%) and departmental office (23.2%). Trainers agreed that social media were essential office tools (57.0%), retarded their work (38.2%) as well as wasted their time (11.6%). Chi-square analysis results showed a significant relationship between social media usage and age ($R = -0.212, p \leq 0.05$) as well as work experience ($R = -0.39, p \leq 0.005$). Social media has both positive and negative effects on trainers' work performance. Social media usage should be controlled during working hours to improve the work performance of trainers at ARMTI.

Keywords: Social media, Trainers, Work performance, ARMTI

Introduction

Social media is a broad term that encompasses several types of new media and communication practices. It is difficult to create an exhaustive list of all types of social media, some of the most common social media include, weblogs, microblogs, social networks, Nikis and media sharing sites (Engler, 2019). Social media can be a great tool for researchers, academia, frontline extension workers, farmers, private sectors, and civil societies, etc., to share information and build relationships. Social media platforms such as blogs, Facebook and twitter are great tools for business, which can be easily used to share information about products and services.

More than ever, people want to know what is happening and go around (locally and globally,) where their food is coming from and want to get involved. Several

social media are of importance in updating customers and knowledge sharing among the customers. For instance, blogs can be used to update customers about crop harvests and are also being used for sales. Social media also provides farmers a quick and easy way to seek information, build their capacity, relationships and interact with people in agriculture creating a much broader agriculture community, so obstacles like physical distance and isolation and poor informed decisions are issues of the past. However, it is pertinent that Agriculture and social media fit together, social media is the platform of engagement and agriculture is the content. Social media is giving farmers and rural businesses a voice and providing invaluable networking opportunities for continuous two-way communication with instant feedback.

The popularity of social media has grown as a result of the rapid changes in technology since computers are now more mobile and can be used virtually anywhere. Organisations are increasingly using social media as a new way to reach customers more effectively and to spread news of their activities more rapidly. The widespread use of social media has brought in its stead new challenges to the workplace. One of these is the apparent addiction that the millennial generation has to Facebook and other social media applications like Twitter and Instagram, among others. Emails and the Internet are more commonly used by organisations and many of them have enacted policies regarding their use or misuse at work. The use of social media during work hours, particularly when accessed via a personal cell phone or computers brings a new set of challenges to personnel across the globe (Amedie, 2017).

Social media are seen as a tremendous resource to academia (Choudhary *et. al.*, 2017). For example, it has been credited with helping trainers think outside the box. In the same vein, researchers who utilise social media have been reported to be more productive (Amedie., 2017). The use of social media has aided trainers to become more productive by getting them intimated with contemporary issues. Trainers are therefore better prepared to troubleshoot potential setbacks and are more likely to create good public relations through the work they do with the availability of social media.

The increasing popularity of social networks and their application in the workplace present major concerns for employers, but all indications are that employers cannot hope to prevent social network use during work hours (Engler, 2019). A dilemma therefore arises where employees spend more time on social media engaging in non-work related activities such as creating personal networks, checking on family and friends, streaming and downloading music and video, checking sports results, following social bookmarks among others. This comes at a time when organisations on a global scale have been faced with a multitude of challenges and are looking for different ways to remain competitive. The development of social media policies and internet use policies by most employers

is at an early stage as most employers do not have proper policies while some practices have dictated use of arbitrary control and restrictions. It is against this background that this study was designed to specifically identify the various types of social media used by the trainers; analyse the purpose for the use of social media platforms; describe the various methods used by trainers to access social media; and examine the effect of social media on trainers' work performance.

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between some selected personal characteristics of the trainers and the methods used by trainers to access social media.

Methodology

The study was carried out at the Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI), Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The state which lies between latitudes 7° 45'N and 9° 30'N and longitudes 2° 30'E and 6° 25'E has two distinct seasons (the wet and dry seasons). Kwara state has 16 local government areas (LGAs). Kwara State is bounded in the North by Niger State and by River Niger; to the East is Kogi State, while it shares boundary with Oyo, Ondo and Osun States in the south.

The Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI) was established in 1980 as a parastatal of the then Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (FMANR) now Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMA&RD). The mission of the institute is to improve management training in the agricultural and rural sector, and ultimately improve the quality of rural life. The components of ARMTI's mandate towards achieving this are: provision of management training; provision of consultancy and advisory services; dissemination of management information; contribution to policy development; and conducting applied management research, special and diagnostic studies.

The population of the study was the total number of trainers in the various training departments in ARMTI, which totalled 138. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select Ninety-seven (97) respondents from all the training departments. Primary data were collected through the use of questionnaires to elicit information from the respondents in order to accomplish set study objectives. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics includes; frequency, percentage, and mean scores while the hypothesis was tested using Chi-square.

Table 1: Sample frame of Trainers at ARMTI

Department	Population	Sample Size (70%)
Training Technology	32	22
Rural Development and Gender Issues	54	38
Agricultural Development Management	52	36
Total:	138	97

Results and Discussion

Types of social media used

Results in Table 2 reveal the types of social media used by trainers to include, email (100.0%), Whatsapp (97.2%), Facebook (94.1%), Youtube (73.4%), and Instagram (71.9%) accounted for the most accessed social media tools by the trainers in ARMTI. However, blogs (14.5%), Flickr (9.2), Tumblr (2.6%), and Pinterest (1.8%) accounted for the least used social media tools by the trainers. The high level use of email is very commendable and portends the trainers has been a group of overtly conscientious employees because this type of social media is not distractive (Perry, 2019). Also, it is not surprising that Youtube ranked high in the list of social media used by the trainers considering that Youtube offers trainers the ample opportunity to download relevant videos used for class discussion during training activities. However, the high rate of use of WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram may be worrisome if not dedicated to work related purposes, especially during the office hours (Brown *et. al.*, 2018). The likes of blogs, flickr, tumblr and Pinterest were the least recognised social media in the organisation possibly because their advent into the social media family is more recent and the trainers are just getting to learn them, relative to the other media they were familiar with, which may have satisfied the social need of these trainers to a great extent.

Table 2: Types of social media used

Variables	Yes (%)
LinkedIn	39.2
Twitter	61.8
Youtube	73.4
Email	100.0
Whatsapp	97.2
Skype	22.7
Blog	14.5
Flickr	9.2
Facebook	94.1
Pinterest	1.8
Instagram	71.9
Tumblr	2.6
Snapchat	24.5
Tik tok	30.2
WeChat	19.6

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Reasons for Using Social Media

Table 3 shows the different reasons respondents use different social media platforms. Using mean score to rank the reasons according to their order of agreement as indicated by the information received, respondents have the following as their major reasons for using social media: “Connecting with family and friends (MS = 4.28)”, “Chatting and group discussion (MS = 3.82)”, “Download latest music, videos and comedy skits (MS = 3.71)”, “For collaborative efforts with other trainers (MS = 3.63)”, “Sourcing for journals (MS = 3.60)”, “Read electronic magazines/newspapers (MS = 3.58)”, “Networking with other management development institutes (MS = 3.57)”, and “Transfer files, text and make phone calls to colleagues (MS = 3.54)” as they ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th respectively. The result from table 3 is rather worrisome considering that the first three ranked reasons for respondents’ use of social media were purely personal rather than professional. It can therefore be deduced from the result that the organization will not benefit maximally from their staff’s usage of social media considering their priorities in the usage of social media platforms. The result in table 3 further affirms the stands of Corcoran and Duane (2018) who disagreed that participating in social media at work allowed free sharing of ideas and thus makes employees achieve more as a team. Similarly, Mohamed (2019) argued that when the purpose for using social media during work hours is to socialize, then its usage does not contribute to work productivity.

Table 3: Reasons for using social media

Reasons	Mean	Rank
Knowledge sharing	3.51	10 th
Online dating	2.19	15 th
Video and picture uploads	2.11	16 th
Platform for audio-visual information delivery	2.32	14 th
Publish research findings	2.99	11 th
Transfer files, text and make phone calls to colleagues	3.54	8 th
Video conferencing	1.86	18 th
Mobilize stakeholders in agriculture for scheduled meetings	2.11	16 th
Attending online trainings	2.44	12 th
Reading electronic magazines/newspapers	3.58	6 th
Sourcing for research and training materials	3.53	9 th
Connecting with family and friends	4.28	1 st
Networking with other management development institutes	3.57	7 th
Download latest music, videos and comedy skits	3.71	3 rd
Chatting and group discussion	3.82	2 nd
Online service consultation on social media	2.44	12 th
Sourcing for journals	3.60	5 th
For collaborative efforts with other trainers	3.63	4 th

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Methods Used to Access Social Media

Table 4 shows the methods used by the respondents in accessing social media. Using mean score to rank the methods used to access social media in order of agreement as indicated by the information received, the majority of the respondents' access social media using personal GSM (MS = 4.02) and ranked 1st. Other methods used to access social media are: services from institution's library (MS = 2.39), Patronage of commercial cybercafé (MS = 2.24), and ICT department (MS = 2.21) as they ranked 2nd, 3rd, and 4th respectively.

This finding indicates that many of the respondents in the organisation deployed the use of social media at work mostly in their office using data subscription from their personal phones. This is indicative of the fact the institution has no adequate provision of an enabling environment in the use of social media for improved job disposition and efficiency. This will in turn affect negatively, the performance of these trainers who need to have access to some of these media in order to effectively and efficiently discharge their official duties. This view is in line with Kizgin *et. al.*, (2019) that institutions who create digital platforms to promote knowledge sharing and development through the use of social media are more likely to encourage their staff to achieve organisational goals.

Table 4: Methods used by respondents to access social media

Items	Mean	Rank
Personal office	1.99	6 th
Institutional WIFI	2.02	5 th
ICT department	2.21	4 th
Services from institution's library	2.39	2 nd
Patronage of commercial cybercafé	2.24	3 rd
Departmental office	1.89	7 th
Using personal GSM	4.02	1 st

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Effect of Social Media on Work Performance

Results in table 5 show the perceptions of the trainers about social media. Findings showed that the majority (46.5%) of the trainers strongly agreed that social media was an essential tool used in an organisation to enhance work effectiveness while 50.2% of the trainers agreed that social media enhances their work. Furthermore, table 5 shows that 39.7% of the trainers agreed that Social media promotes moral decadence while about 33.9% strongly agreed that the use of social media gives a sense of fulfilment when used for work and socialisation purposes. Also, 27.1% of the trainers strongly disagreed that social media tends to be a means of distraction to trainers while 38.4% of the trainers strongly disagreed that social media lowers their productivity at work. Furthermore, table 5 shows that 19.2% of the trainers strongly disagreed that using social media for work and socialisation gives them a sense of fulfilment. The result in table 5 implies that respondents viewed social media as very important for their work and this may have positive effects on their work performance such as helping to improve efficiency, increase effectiveness, enhanced staff capacity and skills if managed properly for organisational workforce efficiency in the future. This agrees with the basic findings of scholars who further surmised that social media engenders formation of employees' social capital which further improve knowledge transfer (Cetinkaya & Rashid, 2018). Odoom *et. al.*, (2017) reported in their study that organisations that use social media in the workplace tended to report high satisfaction with their employees' job performance. This further underscores the fact that the importance of social media at the workplace cannot be over-emphasize so long organisations are able to put in a check and balance measure to check the abuse of social media during work hours. Also, Ali-Hassan *et. al.*, (2017) pointed out in their study that social and cognitive use of social media had a positive effect on an employee's routine and on innovative job performance while the hedonic use of social media had a negative effect on routine performance. Social media can therefore facilitate interactions which builds closer friendship and trust as well as commonality of opinion towards improvement of work attitude for organisational development.

Table 5: Effect of social media on respondents' work performance

Statements	Mean	SD
They distract trainers when at work	2.91	1.16
Social media usage can be frustrating	1.99	1.02
It enhances my work as a trainer	3.72	1.33
It is an essential tool in the organisation	4.36	0.89
It negatively influence my concentration at work	1.78	1.14
They lower productivity of trainers	2.69	0.99
I think social media should be blocked by ARMTI's ICT division	1.54	1.06
They give sense of fulfilment when used for work and socialization purpose	3.57	1.27
Improves one's efficiency in computer usage	3.51	1.15
Social media aid in research work	3.54	0.84
Social media promotes moral decadence	3.66	1.02

Field survey, 2021

Test of Hypothesis

The results from table 6 show that there is no significant relationship between sex ($\chi^2=10.22$) and the methods used by trainers in accessing social media. The implies that sex does not determine the usage of social media in the study area. Also, a significant relationship exists between religion ($\chi^2=7.992$), marital status ($\chi^2=17.45$) rank ($\chi^2=19.33$) and the methods used by trainers in accessing social media. The result shows that marital status, religion and rank are highly related to the methods used by trainers in accessing social media in the study area. The rank of an individual has influence on the methods of accessing social media to accomplish organisational goals, lower cadre staff tend to use social media more for job accomplishments (Brown *et. al.*, 2017).

Also, an inversely significant relationship exists between Age ($R = -0.266^*$) and work experience ($R= -0.36^*$) of respondents relative to the methods used in accessing social media. Age and work experience have been adjudged as important factors affecting the methods used in accessing social media in academic organisations (Cetinkaya and Rashid, 2018).

Table 6: Relationship between personal characteristics of respondents and the methods used by trainers in accessing social media

Variable	Chi-square	df
Sex	10.22	4
Marital status	17.45*	8
Religion	7.992*	6
Rank	19.33*	14
	R	
Age	-0.266*	
Work experience	-0.36**	

Source: Field Survey, 2021

* $p \leq 0.05$

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that the use of social media is an essential tool that enhances the work performance of employees in the study area. Factors which affect methods used in accessing social media among trainers are marital status, religion and rank as well as age and work experience. The following suggestions for future undertakings were recommended in light of the study's results and conclusions:

- Policy makers and executives of organisations therefore, need to enhance the work environment with the use of social media to improve trainers' efficiency especially in the area of gathering training materials to training sessions while ensuring that distractions of workers arising from social media usage are reduced to the barest minimum, for improved effectiveness and efficiency of the workforce.
- Furthermore, owing to the importance of social media in the workspace as revealed in the study, it becomes imperative for the management of the institute to work at ensuring every staff of the institute own an official laptop with fully functional internet facility. This will no doubt help to enhance efficiency and improve the effectiveness of work carried out by the trainers.

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