ACHIEVING A KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY VIA ICT AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract

Knowledge is power, and the means to acquire every subset of greatness lie in its acquisition. This dispensation has made it pertinent for anyone who is aspiring to be great to be informed and updated by events going on around their immediate society and the world at large. Information and communication technology and social media are like vehicles to build an inclusive learning society. ICT is an indispensable tool in knowledge dissemination, as are social media. And to have a continuous and stable knowledge society, both components are very crucial. This study thus focused on the impacts that ICT and social media can have on the possibility of achieving a knowledge society. In order to do this, a simple random selection process was used to pick the study participants. A questionnaire was used to gather the data. Descriptive statistics, such as percentages and frequency counts, were used to analyze the data. 300 staff and students of the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro were chosen to represent the sample for the study. It became evident through the study that the value of ICT and social media in enhancing learning possibilities throughout life is well acknowledged; in fact, there are numerous successful innovations. However, the potential has rarely been systematically tapped to provide inclusive and cohesive learning. A significant aspect in recent years has been the development in the usage of ICT and social media, including Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Telegram. It is an illustration of technical innovation that, by virtue of its potential, has sparked enormous and quick social innovation. It enables the exchange of information, human interaction, support for collective action, and social activity.

***Keywords:** Knowledge society, Learning, Information and Communication Technology, Social Media*

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Emily (2018) argues that the emergency of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the 21st century has affected different aspects of life in society, including agriculture, climate, health, and the economy, among others. The influence of ICTs has not spared the education sector. However, the progress in this sector is still inadequate. Technology affords new ways of learning using a variety of tools, which traditional learning approaches do not offer. Technology addresses the different needs of learners and provides the various skills required. It offers different opportunities for learning differently through the use of various media such as chats, blogs, wikis, and Facebook. Emily (2018) notes that technology provides knowledge sharing opportunities where students and educators can access content and network with peers to share best practices from within and outside of educational institutions. This capability is likely to develop deep learning approaches amongst students, leading to the production of new knowledge and artifacts and transforming educational institutions and society. Therefore, to increase learning motivation, desire, and interest, it is important to design meaningful learning tasks that use new educational technologies. These technologies should be continuously explored by educational institutions, educators, and learners for teaching and learning in this digital era.

According to Swati (2019), information and communication technology (ICT) and social media are valuable tools for aiding communication and collaboration and enhancing the teaching and learning of society. ICT and social media provide society with numerous benefits and opportunities to improve their quality of life. The primary goals of this paper are to investigate the impact of using social media and ICT to build a knowledge society. ICT technologies have played a significant role in the development of many fields around the world since their inception three decades ago. ICT demands result in computer functionality and related services or software. The social dimension of ICT is seen in response to its power and influences it in the different areas and new social structures that are emerging, producing a constant and two–way interaction between technology and society. The new social networks, such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc., can affect behaviour and academic performances. Swati (2019) stated further that the social networks are considered another communication channel that enables people to communicate and share resources. The technologies of information and communication (ICTs) are the main lever for unprecedented transformations in the contemporary world. It's important to know the features that are included in these social networks, which can add benefits to the educational environment, encourage a more interactive society, and add value for progressive performance.

With the emergence of social media and innovative information technologies, learners and teachers can collaborate, communicate, and exchange knowledge anywhere and anytime. However, despite these new learning opportunities, it is also commonly recognized that this new generation of internet-based social media and technologies has drastically grown and become more complex (Bernd and Aurelie, 2015). Social media and information and communication technologies complement each other in numerous ways. And to promote, achieve, and establish a sustainable knowledge society, those two components must be championed, campaigned for, and properly implemented. The benefits of being social media and ICT savvy must be promoted to society. Quick message delivery and uploading videos of events, among others, are not the only obvious features and functionalities of ICT and social media. The advantages include business and enterprise promotion, advertisement, real-time and timely updates on situations and events, educational tutorial sessions, the provision of solutions to difficult questions in live and academic settings, and so on. This research sheds light on the impacts of ICT and social media in obtaining a knowledge society, among other things.

1.1   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"A society without knowledge is a society in chaos." And people perish for lack of knowledge. Many more things can be said about the necessity for the acquisition of knowledge and what a knowledgeable society can bring. Attaining a wider, more knowledgeable community is never an easy task. Knowledge is never a piece of cake, but it can be made a piece of cake if the right thing is done. A lot of obstacles have faced the actualization of a sustainable digital society, and inconsistency in the digital world is a huge setback in the usage of ICT and social media. The benefits and drawbacks of social media and ICT have been widely discussed. Some parents are of the opinion that social media contents are corruptible for youths (infants), and the negative effects are affecting the future generation. A lot has been said and heard of infants engaging in disheartening deeds on the internet—on social media, to be precise. However, the essentiality of social media and information and communication technology shouldn't be derailed due to this. Handing over internet-enabled gadgets to infants should involve installing parental guidance software on them, which will prevent their access to contents that are immoral. The impact of ICT and social media on the same youth is undeniable. We have a lot of youths engaging in a lot of activities on the internet, which are improving their intellectual capacity and also their input into society. A lot of youth engage in online businesses and commercial activities. This study thus stands to champion the impacts that ICT and social media can have in Nigeria in attaining a more knowledge-rich society while providing solutions to the challenges faced by it.

1.2   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study's main goal was to champion the impacts that ICT and social media can have in Nigeria in attaining a more knowledge-rich society as perceived by the staff and students of the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro (FPI) in Ogun State. The specific objectives were as follows:

1. To determine the level of adoption of ICT and social media among the staff and students of FPI
2. To ascertain the benefits of ICT and social media in attaining a knowledge society
3. To look into the challenges that ICT and social media users face
4. To determine the possible solutions to the aforementioned challenges

1.3   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is primed to make obvious the impacts that information and communication technology (ICT) and social media can have on society's attainment of sustainable knowledge intake. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing related literature, solidify the importance of ICT and social media in society, and provide solutions to challenges faced in the full implementation of ICT and social media usage.

1.4   SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro, Ogun State community will serve as the sole source of data for this study, which will also include information gathered from the chosen institution.
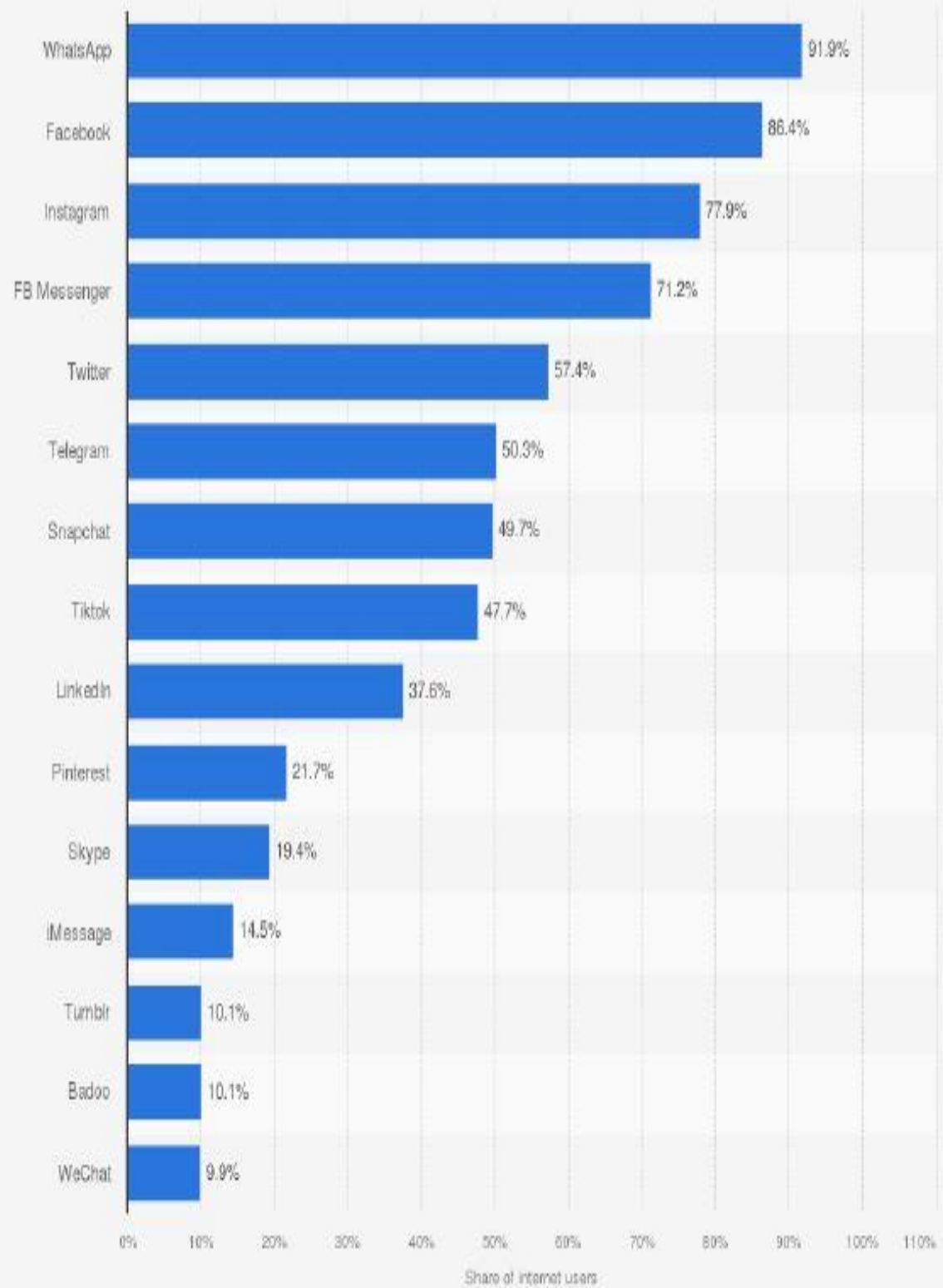
1.5   REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

According to Swati (2019), it is helpful to first educate ourselves on what ICT and social media are and how they interact in order to comprehend how they are studied in relation to social change. A broad range of technologies that allow users to generate, access, distribute, store, manage, and convey information in a digital format are collectively referred to as "ICT." Mobile phones, computers, and

network hardware are all examples of ICT, which also includes computer hardware and software applications. We should quickly become informed about what ICT and social media are and how they relate. A broad range of technologies that allow users to generate, access, distribute, store, manage, and convey information in a digital format are collectively referred to as "ICT." Mobile phones, computers, network gear, the internet, telecommunication networks, and other devices are all included in the definition of ICT, along with a number of services and applications that are associated with it. A surge in interest in recent years in how computers and the internet can be used to enhance social communication at various levels has sparked research and innovation in the field of ICT and social digital media (SDM), which has resulted in the emergence of what are now referred to as "participatory technologies" like 2.0. Social media are a new phenomenon that serve as platforms for interpersonal communication. Mobile technology, participatory technology, ubiquitously available communication technology, and web-based applications all contributed to their emergence. They use social interaction and technology to co-create value, and one result is user-generated content, which can include ideas, text, videos, photographs, and more (Swati, 2019). Kaplan & Haenlein (2011) define social media as a set of internet-based applications built on the technological foundations of Web 2.0 that enable user-generated content to be created and exchanged. Web 2.0 participatory technologies facilitate information sharing, participation, and collaboration. Indeed, one key element of Web 2.0 is the social web, which involves a number of online platforms where people are active participants, pool resources, and share their perspectives and experiences. This is enabled by the different forms social media can take, such as social networking sites, content communities, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, collaborative projects, etc.

According to Emily (2018), employers have criticized graduates for not being able to put their knowledge into practice. One of the causes of this challenge is the traditional teaching and learning methods, which concentrate more on theory than practice. Technology affords several teaching and learning tools, like social media, which students are already motivated to use. Social media aids in sharing learning experiences, research, academic events, and getting the latest information. However, there is a paucity of research on its use for learner-centric teaching, learning, and academic purposes in Africa. The study employs Facebook (FB) technology to facilitate a task in which students use their operating system knowledge to record and upload a video installing a virtual machine and operating system onto a group; to promote content access and interactive and cooperative learning. Bowers Affordance analysis to match the requirements of this task with the affordances of the Facebook tool, an eLearning design methodology framework was used. A previously validated questionnaire was used to determine students' attitudes and perceptions about using Facebook to complete the video upload assignment task. The results show positive effects of Facebook on students' learning process and experience, including students' putting knowledge into practice, sharing, collaboration, interaction, flexibility, and learner-centered activities, among others. In this light, we recommend that Facebook be integrated as a tool for learning at the university since students appreciate it, find it easy to use, and are familiar with it.

Social media usage in Nigeria has drastically increased over the years. And it is important to harness the advantages that come with it by implementing policies that will support positive content on the social media platforms, encouraging online classes, orienting students right from the grass roots on how to be conversant with the digital age, and also providing ICT-enabled gadgets for them. Without those gadgets, there wouldn't be any reason for social media.

Most used social media platforms in Nigeria as of the 3rd quarter of 2021

Platform	Share
WhatsApp	91.9%
Facebook	86.4%
Instagram	77.9%
FB Messenger	71.2%
Twitter	57.4%
Telegram	50.3%
Snapchat	49.7%
Tiktok	47.7%
LinkedIn	37.6%
Pinterest	21.7%
Skype	19.4%
iMessage	14.5%
Tumblr	10.1%
Badoo	10.1%
WeChat	9.9%

Share of internet users

Source: Statista, 2022

2.0   METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study was a descriptive survey. Informational data were first-hand (from the administration of a questionnaire). A well-structured questionnaire titled "creating a knowledge society via ICT and social media" was used to choose 300 employees and students from the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro to represent the study's sample. 250 people (83.3%) in total answered the questions on the survey. Research assistants distributed and gathered the questions. A frequency table and percentages were used to assess the findings. The three options on the survey were "agree," "disagree," and "undecided"—ADU. The outcome analysis is carried out using the output of the aforementioned parameters.

3.0   RESULTS

Table 1: The level of adoption of ICT and social media among the staff and students of FPI

S/N	Items of the Questionnaire	Alternative Responses					
		A		D		U	
1	I use ICT and social media on a daily basis	200	80%	19	7.6%	31	12.4%
2	I spend 6 hours or more per day using ICT and social media	197	78.8%	34	13.6%	19	7.6%
3	I use ICT and social media once a week	242	96.8%	5	2%	3	1.2%
4	I use at least three social media platforms	185	74%	20	8%	45	18%
5	I prefer online materials to hardcopy ones	207	82.8%	33	13.2%	10	4%

Table 2: The benefits of ICT and social media in attaining a knowledge society

S/N	Items of the Questionnaire	Alternative Responses					
		A		D		U	
1	I use ICT and social media to find solutions to assignments and tasks I can't handle on my own	233	93.2%	7	2.8%	11	4.4%
2	I use ICT and social media to share vital information	196	78.4%	22	8.8%	32	12.8%
3	I use ICT and social media to connect, interact, and chat with friends	246	98.4%	1	0.4%	3	1.2%
4	I use ICT and social media to access news, videos, music, photos, etc.	243	97.2%	4	1.6%	3	1.2%
5	I use ICT and social media for business, shopping, advertisements, etc.	181	72.4%	23	9.2%	46	18.4%

Table 3: The challenges that ICT and social media users face

S/N	Items of the Questionnaire	Alternative Responses					
		A		D		U	
1	Unreliable power supply	241	96.4%	7	2.8%	2	0.8%

2	High cost of establishment	179	71.6%	29	11.6%	42	16.8%
3	Cybercrime/Fraud	227	90.8%	11	4.4%	12	4.8%
4	Poor network bandwidth	213	85.2%	20	8%	17	6.8%
5	Privacy infringement	200	80%	33	13.2%	17	6.8%
6	Fostering of immorality and corruption	243	97.2%	5	2%	2	0.8%

4.0   DISCUSSION

According to the information in Table 1 above, 80% of the respondents believed they used ICT and social media every day, whereas 7.6% disagreed and 12.4% were unsure. In addition, 78.8% of the respondents agreed that they use ICT and social media for 6 hours or more every day, while 13.6% disagreed and 7.6% were unsure. ICT and social media were mentioned by 96.8% of the respondents as being used once a week. 1.2% of respondents were unsure, while 2% disagreed with the statement. In addition, 74% of respondents said they use three or more social media sites, while 8% disagreed and 18% weren't sure. While 13.2% and 4% of respondents disagreed and were unsure, respectively, 82.8% of respondents preferred online resources to those in hard copy. The results demonstrated widespread ICT and social media usage, and the respondents demonstrated their readiness for the global change to a digital paradigm. They are also fully aware of the technological advancements taking place all around them.

The regularity with which respondents utilize ICT and social media to find solutions to assignments and projects they can't complete on their own is shown in **Table 2** above, with 93.2% of respondents agreeing, 2.8% disagreeing, and 4.4% being unsure. The respondents also expressed their opinions on the use of ICT and social media to disseminate important information; 78.4% of them agreed, 8.8% disagreed, and 12.8% were unsure. 98.4% of respondents said they use social media and ICT to connect with friends and converse, whereas 0.4% disagreed and 1.2% were unsure. As for using ICT and social media to get news, videos, music, images, and other content, 97.2% of respondents agreed with this statement, while 1.6% disagreed and 1.2% were unsure. Finally, 72.4% of the participants said they use social media and ICT for work, shopping, advertisements, etc. demonstrating the extent to which ICT and social media have a strong presence in the academic community which can be promoted and supported in a bigger society.

Table 3 depicted the challenges and obstacles encountered when using ICT and social media. Unreliable power supply (96.4% agreed, 2.8% disagreed, and 0.8% were undecided); high cost of establishment (71.6% agreed, 11.6% disagreed, and 16.8% were neutral); cybercrime/fraud (perhaps due to personal experiences, 90.8% agreed to the statement, 4.4% disagreed, and 4.8% were undecided); poor network bandwidth (85.2% agreed, 8% disagreed, and 0.8% were undecided); The findings demonstrated how to address the challenges that ICT and social media face in Nigeria. This study grinds out possible solutions to the aforementioned challenges.

5.0   Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1   Conclusion

These days, people all across the world see the opportunity and necessity of using ICT and social media to build a knowledge society. The country's broader issues are impacted by ICT and social media difficulties and challenges (epileptic power supply, poor network bandwidth, among others). Even if there is still much to be done, it is not insurmountable. The residents of Nigeria nevertheless find ways to get online in order to keep informed and aware of events in their community and the wider world, despite obstacles to the sustainable use of ICT and social media in Nigeria. However, if optimism doesn't develop over the clear difficulties facing ICT usage, time will simply serve to discourage. Programs that teach pupils about and give them access to ICT equipment are required. And a welcoming environment where students may properly use these tools, learn from them, and in turn have a beneficial impact on society. A knowledge society can only be achieved if today's youth, who are tomorrow's leaders, are equipped with digital and technological skills.

5.2   Recommendations

Consequently, this study suggests that:

- To encourage ICT development, the government should improve our power supply.
- Schools of learning should promote effective ICT use and the educational usefulness of social media platforms.
- Employers should provide their staff with training on ICT trends; seminars and international ICT programs should be taken into consideration.
- For convenient delivery of lecture notes and accessibility, tutors should welcome the idea of implementing ICT and social media apps.
- People should use caution when supplying information to websites and social apps to prevent a breach of privacy.
- If children must access the internet, they should do so under adult supervision.
- To prevent too much light from entering the eyes, computers and mobile devices shouldn't be used in dimly lit spaces. In order to prevent eye pain, screen time should be kept to a minimum. While using a computer, the neck should be massaged periodically. Use of an earpiece shouldn't be prolonged.
- Any person suspected of engaging in cybercrimes or duping should be reported to the authorities right once.

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