

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACTS ON UNDERGRADUATES' INVOLVEMENT IN DIGITAL MARKETING IN UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN

Nasiru Issa OLOKOOPA
olokooba.in@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract

The rate at which undergraduates involve in digital marketing through social media called for rapid attention as many of them do not see the opportunities as economic advantages over personal contact market. The study investigated social media impacts on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing in University of Ilorin. The objectives of the study were to investigate prevalent social media, extent of using, undergraduates' attitudes towards digital marketing and impacts of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, 200 undergraduates were selected using simple random sampling technique. A researcher-designed questionnaire titled "Social Media Impact on Undergraduates' Involvement in Digital Marketing Questionnaire" was used for data collected. The reliability value of 0.82 was obtained for the instrument using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical technique. The findings of the study identified the prevalence of social media among undergraduates and the extent of social media usage as tools in digital marketing. The finding of the study also revealed that undergraduates had positive attitudes towards digital marketing, there were impacts of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing. It was therefore, recommended among others that dynamics of social media marketing for conversion should be unraveled to undergraduates to help them make the best use of digital marketing transaction and there should be more awareness and education for undergraduates on the best use of social media for digital marketing to enhance more engagements and transaction.

Key words: Impacts, social media, Digital marketing, Prevalence, Attitudes

Introduction

Globally, academic institutions have been influenced by social networks which has changed the faces of the Nigerian tertiary institutions. University communities apparently are exceedingly growing in the web of technological advancement. With the advent of technology, various available information becomes more prominent in the public through a wide range of media and users could have access to information that goes beyond traditional, printed sources, and other sources in various dimensions through the Internet (Kim, Yoo- Lee & Sin, 2011). Recently, social media are used by teachers and students as teaching-learning, communication, research, and business transaction tools. Social networking activities could be seen as electronic application, platform, service, or site used by people who have similar beliefs, attitudes, interest, and cultural activities in relation to socio-economic principles. Social networking is used directly to contact and interact with individuals for certain purpose. Perfect illustrations of social media applications as stressed by Zeng and Gerritsen (2014) are social networking content, community, sites, location-based, wikis, internet forum. Furthermore, social media as novel technological media facilitate interaction and recreation which for the sharing and development of user-generated content within organisations for examples government agencies and teams, individuals, and media groups such as customers, journalists, and athletes among others.

Truly, the concept of social media has been accepted over a wide area in various situations. Despite this, as the focus of the present study is the configuration of media in the marketing context, there is therefore the need to focus on it from marketing perspectives. A market is a place where sellers and buyers meet daily or in special days to transact services and goods. It is a contract between sellers and buyers on the goods and services. It is also a centre for the exchange of goods and ideas about current issues in the society. With the world turning into a global village due to technological advancement, market has gone beyond the personal contact of buyers and sellers meeting in a particular place to transact business. Market embraces all contacts whether personal or through e-commerce which goods and services can be bought and sold. There are two types of contact in market: personal and non-personal contact. Personal contact occurs when the buyer and seller have face to face interaction on business transaction while it is non-personal contact when the transaction is done through communication channels like text messages, written letters, telephone

calls, e-mail messages, Facebook, Telex, and Telegram among others (Olokooba, et al., 2017). One of examples of non-personal contact is digital marketing.

A dialogue often caused by a service/business/product and consumers/audiences that distribute among individuals' information about the products, price, packages, new brand, uses of products as well as qualities that will attract people and arouse their interest in business transaction is digital marketing. Tuten et al. (2015) stressed that the employment of social media channels, technologies, and software to produce, message, handover and transfer products add economic values to organizations, government, and individuals in the society. Social media are an online channel used by undergraduates to transact businesses globally. They focus on building socio-economic relations among people who share common interests and working towards achieving a goal as it happens in tertiary institutions. It has opened students to e-transaction and businesses that promote non-contact business on campuses. It has changed the method and way with which students address, react, and transact businesses in a global world. Digital marketing is honestly about being real. Marketers require to make sure that information to the audience is perfect and reliable. It creates two ways communication where the customer is cardinal part of the marketing unit. Consumer or buyer requests are as influential as the marketer's genuine of the packages, characteristics, and advantages. This prepares the stage for the brand to address consumers' expectations. Social media marketing gives marketers some great opportunities to reach a wider places and customers with more imaginable gains in a reduces time and at minimal prices. Control is the biggest problem in social media marketing. The internet gives the global world advantages to report what they view as they view it in real time. All conclusions, facts, attitude, customer expectation and issues can deliver at any time. This information is neither often appropriate nor in full control of the seller and the challenge to the marketer is to react to these messages in a professional way. More importantly, many business organisations have delivery points on campuses to facilitate and enhance the business transaction.

Social media are largely taken into consideration by the contemporary business as sustaining the platforms to manage the business transactions as to communicate effectively with the targeted buyers (Popp & Woratschek, 2016). Facebook for instance, was able to generate in 2020 more than 5.5\$ billion from advertising with higher percent up to 68%. More so, Facebook income from advertising has raised by 65 per cent during the before over \$5.7 billion in 2021. This is a testament to the change in traditional media advertising to digital communicative media way by business organisations (WebDam, 2021). Such growing effect could be replaced to the high level of conspicuous and interactional social media existing in platforms (Wu, 2016). Undergraduates derive a lot of advantages from digital marketing through social media. University of Ilorin is not exceptional in the involvement in digital marketing as majority of undergraduate leverage on free, adequate, and sufficient internet facilities on the campus to transact businesses.

Many studies have agreed to the function of social media in promoting the digital marketing on the customer's view and orientation. Duffett (2015) for instance, stressed that the effectiveness and efficiency of social media advertising business transaction largely focused on how buyers could view and create their attitudes towards such transaction. In relation to this, Chen (2015) opined that to get such advantage customer's attitudes, different aspects must be carefully addressed in social media business transaction to give customer more awareness and positive experiences. Furthermore, Tiago and Veríssimo (2014) reported that attitudes that are favourable were created by marketers like description of product qualities and detail notes on delivery via social media templates. They may add to online market buying behaviour. A study conducted by Chandra et al. (2012) who investigated the postgraduate and undergraduates' attitudes towards buying behavior of online products and business transaction and showed that advertisements through social media networks have an advantage implication on the customers' behaviour which led to further rivalry costs, such advertisements have negative effect on all various parts of customers believe and effectiveness. Kodjamanis and Angelopoulos (2013) discovered that advertising reservations via through Facebook could not have any influence on the behavioural orientation to buy or the purchasing power of individuals.

Researchers like Dwivedi et al., 2015; Filo et al., 2015; Okazaki and Taylor, 2013 paid a specific notion in identifying and assessing the fundamental variation and dimensions of social media applications at different regions, cultures, contexts, and from different point of view. Visibly, the increase majority in social media studies were seen to have been with the business area. Worthwhile, various ways and on many occasions have been captured by researchers who have accepted the digital transaction. Furthermore, in the steps to examine and explore such areas, studies have claimed various way and strategies. This study, therefore, was conducted on impacts of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing to have a critical view about the vital concepts covered as well as which areas need more attention. From the foregoing, the objectives of the present study were to investigate prevalent

social media, extent of using, undergraduates' attitudes towards digital marketing and impacts of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing in University of Ilorin.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the impact of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing in University of Ilorin. Specifically, the study examined the following:

- a. Prevalence of social media among undergraduates involved in digital marketing.
- b. Extent of social media usage as tools in digital marketing by undergraduates.
- c. Undergraduates' attitudes towards digital marketing in University of Ilorin.
- d. Impact of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

- a. What are the prevalence of social media use by undergraduates for digital marketing?
- b. To what extent do undergraduates use social media as tools in digital marketing?
- c. What are undergraduates' attitudes towards digital marketing?
- d. What are the impacts of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing?

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Questionnaire was administered to generate data to determine the prevalence of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing, extent to which undergraduates use social media as a tool in digital marketing, undergraduates' perceptions towards digital marketing and impact of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing in University of Ilorin. The population of this study comprised all the undergraduates of University of Ilorin. University of Ilorin has 15 faculties and 90 departments with over 48,000 undergraduates. Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin comprises nine departments: Department of Adult and Primary Education, Arts Education, Counselor Education, Educational Management, Educational Technology, Health and Environmental Promotion Education, Human Kinetics Education, Science Education and Social Sciences Education with the total students of 12,000. The targeted population for this study was all undergraduate students in the Department of Social Sciences Education and Educational Management, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. One hundred undergraduates from each of the two selected departments in Faculty of Education in University of Ilorin were selected using simple random sampling technique. Thus, the total sample for this study was one two hundred undergraduates. The instrument of data collection in this study was a researcher-designed questionnaire. The questionnaire was titled "Social Media Impact on Undergraduates' Involvement in Digital Marketing Questionnaire (ISMUIDMQ)". The questionnaire had five main parts; Section A, B, C, D and E. Section A comprised demographic information of the undergraduates. While section B contained items structured to elicit information on "Prevalence of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing" with a three-point rating scale of Prevalent (P), Slightly Prevalent (SP) and Not Prevalent (NP). Section C contained items structured to elicit information on "Extent of undergraduates using social media as a tool in digital marketing" with questionnaire had a three-point rating scale of Often Used (OU), Rarely Used (RU) and Not Used (NU). Section D elicited information on items structured to elicit information on "Undergraduates' attitudes towards digital marketing" with a Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Section E contained items structured to elicit information on "Impact of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing" with questionnaire has a Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Construct validity of the instrument was determined for this research questionnaire. The questionnaire was presented to two experts in test construction, measurement, and evaluation to go through it and make relevant corrections, modifications and suggestions which were reflected on the final version before the administering of the questionnaire for the research study. Reliability implies that results obtained from the questionnaire were the same for different number of time if it is administered. To determine the reliability of the instrument test-re-test was adopted. The researcher went ahead to administer the questionnaire in another department outside the sample with the population of fifty (50) undergraduates after a period of two weeks. The two scores that were attained and analyzed using PPMC at 0.05 level of significance. The reliability co-efficient of 0.82 value was obtained. Data collected for this study was analyzed research question one to four were analyzed using mean decision and descriptive statistic of percentage.

Results

Research Question One: What is the prevalence of social media use by undergraduates for digital marketing?

Table 1: Prevalence of Social Media Use by Undergraduates for Digital Marketing

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Facebook	2.56	0.62	1 st
2	Instagram	2.46	0.53	2 nd
3	WhatsApp	2.45	0.64	3 rd
4	LinkedIn	1.83	0.72	5 th
5	Telegram	2.03	0.78	4 th
	Mean	2.26		

The prevalent social media used by undergraduates for digital marketing include Facebook which was ranked higher than any social media platform followed by Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram and LinkedIn. This implies that the mainly employed social media platform for digital marketing is Facebook while the least being LinkedIn.

Research Question Two: To what extent do undergraduates use social media as a tool in digital marketing?

Table 2: Extent of Undergraduate Use of social media as a Tool in Digital Marketing

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Facebook	37	18.5%
2	Instagram	30	15.0%
3	WhatsApp	112	56.0%
4	LinkedIn	11	5.5%
5	Telegram	10	5.0%
	Total	200	100.0%

Table 2 showed that undergraduates make use of the following social media platforms as a tool for digital marketing in this order: Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Telegram.

Research Question Three: What are undergraduates' attitude towards digital marketing?

Table 3: Undergraduates A towards Digital Marketing

S/N	Items	Min	Max
1	Social media encourages undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing	1.12	3.89
2	It attracts and arrests the interests of students using social media	1.06	3.67
3	Everybody who uses social media purchases their material needs online	1.08	3.02
4	Social media enhances digital marketing advancement	2.23	3.23
5	Social media marketing enables social interaction	2.25	3.91
6	Social media marketing is not trustworthy	1.19	3.62
7	Network Issues discourages digital marketing	1.18	3.57

Table 3 shows that undergraduates perceive that social media encourage them to get involved in digital marketing, it attracts and arrests the interests of students using social media, helps in online purchases, enhances digital marketing enhancement to enables social interaction. Although respondents also agreed that social media marketing is not trustworthy and network issues discourages digital marketing. To answer research question three, students' responses were summed and analysed using descriptive statistics. The instrument was on a four-point scale of 1 to 4 with 7 items. The minimum obtainable score is 7 and maximum score of 28. With a cut score of 10.5 (28-7/2), a mean response of 7 to 17.5 indicated a negative attitude while a mean response of 18 to 28 indicates a positive attitude as shown on Table 4.

Table 4: Percentage on Attitude of Undergraduates towards Digital Marketing

Attitude to Digital Marketing	Range	Frequency	Percentage
Negative	7 - 17.5	41	20.5
Positive	18 - 28	159	79.5
Total		200	100.0

As shown on the Table 4, with a percentage response of 20.5 within the range of 7 to 17.5, the attitude of undergraduates towards digital marketing was negative while a percentage response of 159 (79.5%) within the range of 18 to 28, shows that the attitude of undergraduates towards digital marketing was positive. This implies that the attitude of undergraduates towards digital marketing was positive.

Research Question Four: What are the impacts of social media on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing?

Table 5: Social Media Impacts on Undergraduates' Involvement in Digital Marketing

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Social media has a negative impact on students with special needs	2.89	1.04	10th
2	Social media marketing gives room for laziness	3.00	0.70	8 th
3	Social media marketing allows fraudulent operations	3.22	0.68	3 rd
4	It expands undergraduates' knowledge on things they don't know before about marketing	3.25	0.63	1st
5	It discourages physical marketing	2.89	0.70	9th
6	It promotes social relation and interaction	3.07	0.68	3rd
7	It is self-sufficient and self-educating	3.07	0.64	5th
8	It aids the recommendation of products to others	3.24	0.76	2nd
9	It enhances the connection between buyers and sellers	3.06	0.75	6th
10	It reaches out to bigger audience	3.02	0.85	7th
Average Mean		3.07		

The social media impacts on undergraduates' involvement in digital marketing include a negative impact on students with special needs, giving room for laziness, allowance of fraudulent operations, expanding undergraduates' knowledge, discourages physical marketing, promotion of social relation and interaction, self-sufficiency and self-education, aids recommendation of products, enhances connection between buyers and sellers and reaching out to bigger audience.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study indicated that the prevalent social media used by undergraduates for digital marketing include Facebook which was ranked higher than any social media platform followed by Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram and LinkedIn. This implies that the mainly used social media platform for digital marketing is Facebook while the least being LinkedIn. This is consistent with the findings of Tiago and Verissimo (2014) whose findings revealed that social media networking sites include Facebook, LikedIn, Twitter etc. with the mostly used being Facebook and the least used, being LinkedIn because it is used professionally. The findings of Webdam (2014) also revealed that digital marketers get customers using Facebook which accounts for the reason for its wide use. The result on the extent of use of undergraduates of social media platforms for digital marketing indicated that social media is used to create a broad awareness of a product, generate new business ideas, used to get needs and used to get products across the public at large in their order of agreement by the respondents. The average mean value shows that undergraduates make use of social media as a tool in digital marketing to a large extent. The findings of Muntean (2015) and Coulter and Roggeveen (2012) revealed that social media is the major tool for social media marketing as it contains a lot of information that can be used to target potential customers and aid conversation. The finding of the study revealed that undergraduates' attitudes towards digital marketing is positive. This implies that students involve, transact business in digital marketing, it attracts and arrests the interests of students using social media, helps in online purchases, enhances digital marketing and social interaction. Although respondents also agreed that social media marketing is not trustworthy and network issues discourages digital marketing. The average mean of undergraduate responses showed that undergraduates had a positive attitude towards digital marketing. this is consistent with the findings of Chen (2015) who reported that social media users had positive attitudes, but hedonic concepts have to be selected

carefully in social media business transactions in order to create a customer friendly and interesting experience. This indicates that not only undergraduates show a positive attitude towards digital marketing using social media but also all users of social media.

In the study, the finding also showed that the average mean shows that there is a high impact of social media on undergraduate involvement in digital marketing. This is also consistent with the findings of Okazaki and Taylor (2013) who discovered that impacts such as the ability of social media to give the posted content textually, verbally, visually, or employing a diluted of verbal, visual and textual contents. The students of various degrees' attitudes towards buying behaviour of online products and business transaction and showed that advertisements through social media networks have an advantage impact on the buying behaviour which led to further competitive costs

Conclusion

Since the presence of the digital world, social media platforms allow socialization among individuals. The volume of information gathered by these social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, LinkedIn, and Instagram among others allow these information to be useful for marketing. the kind of marketing done through social media platform is referred to as social media marketing. Since most undergraduates spend most of their time online, it makes it easy for them to involve in digital marketing to reach to some business organisations. The finding of the study also revealed that undergraduates made use of social media as tools for digital marketing since they have a positive attitude towards digital marketing and there is a high impact of social media on undergraduates towards involvement in digital marketing

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Undergraduates should be trained in the use of social media platforms for digital marketing.
2. Internet facilities should be provided on campus to facilitate and enhance undergraduates' full engagement in digital marketing.
3. Dynamics of social media marketing for conversion should be unraveled to undergraduates to help them make the best out of digital marketing transaction.
4. There should be more awareness and education for undergraduates on the best use of social media for digital marketing to achievement more engagements and transaction.

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