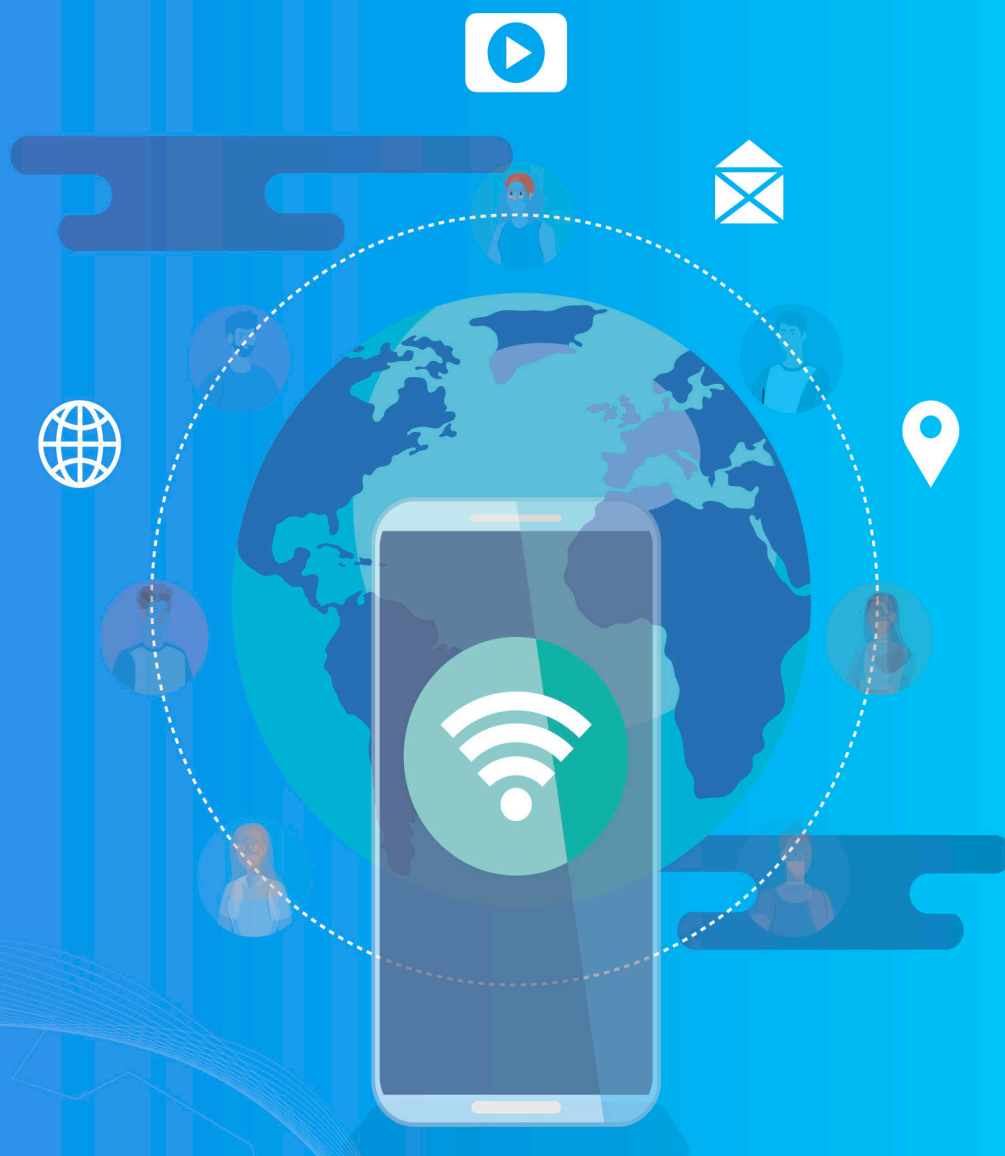




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Nigerian Youth Engagement on Social Media and its Influence on the Country's Unemployment Rate

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ABSTRACT

Research journal aims to investigate the engagement of Nigerian youth on social media and its impact on the country's unemployment rate. The study explores the definition of social media and the methodology used. Findings indicate that social media helps youth feel more connected and exposed, providing opportunities for self-employment through online jobs. It also enhances their marketing skills, leading to faster growth in their online sales. Sharing ideals through content creation is increasingly popular. Research shows that most youth in Nigeria no longer rely solely on office jobs. Instead, they leverage their talents to showcase what they do, marketing their work and success via social media platforms such as Facebook, Tiktok, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter, and YouTube. Research shows that social media platforms positively impact Nigerian youth by providing opportunities for self-employment through content creation, online marketing for productive companies, blogging, and showcasing their products online. This reduces face-to-face interactions among individuals. It was therefore recommended that the social media are integrated into identity interpersonal relationships, institutions and political economy. Social media blur the line between public and private works and leisure, online and offline.

INTRODUCTION

Social media websites are most popular among children and adolescents. Adolescents frequently use social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, and WhatsApp, which serve as platforms for social interaction. These platforms are popular for entertainment, communication, advertising, and marketing, and their growth has been exponential in recent years.

Definition of social media: According to psychological research from Aston university (2026) said social media is broadly define as an online platform to share digital media in a social capacity.

According to Margaret Rouse (2020), social media is a collective term for websites and applications like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, .etc. which focus on communication, community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. Amongst the different types of social media one can also include forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis ,as they are shared social spaces for team members who work remotely.

According to Maya E. Dollarhide (2020) ,by its design, social media is an online tool that provides users with quick electronic communication of content. Content include personal information, document, videos and photos. User engaged with social media via computer, table or smart phone and often using it for messaging.

Katharine plague (2026) said social media platform are digital interaction by enabling users to connect, communicate and engage with each other over the internet.

Social behaviour: Currently, many young Nigerians and adults use social media to communicate, share community content, and exchange ideas. All activities, including news, business profile pages, and targeted advertising for specific audiences, initially occur on social media platforms. This approach makes the platforms more business-friendly and helps increase revenue.

Many researchers have been delving into a considerable amount of research on how social media influences Nigerian youth and their employment rate. Most often spend time scrolling through feeds and consuming daily news and commentary current events, By 2025 just over half (53%) of youth in Nigeria says they get their news from social media while some adult says they watch tv and listen to radio to get their news which means the youth mostly get their news on social than the older adult. Social media has profoundly changed how most Nigerians think and communicate, with various platforms serving different purposes. These include social networks like Facebook, Tiktok, Instagram, and Telegram; microblogging sites such as X, Blue Sky, and Mastodon; long-form blogging platforms like Substack, Ghost, and Research gate; professional networking sites like LinkedIn and Behance; messaging apps such as WhatsApp, Signal, WeChat, and Marco Polo; and community forums like Reddit, Discord, and Clubhouse. These platforms are widely used in Nigeria for socialising, professional networking , and career development. They have also helped Nigerian youth connect, earn income, and reduce unemployment.

Business and economic growth: Dollarhide(2020) argues that social media originated as away to interact with

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friends and family but was later endorsed by business which wanted to take advantage of a popular new communication method to reach out to their current and future customer.

According to Katharine Paljug (2026) many social media users are acting in a professional capacity, actors and writer's especially use social media to connect with fans of their work in Nigeria through the use of YouTube social media platform. Non profit organization use them to promote charitable cause or collect donation. Also government agencies uses social media to communicate with the public during emergencies.

Several content are on social media which was posted for a sponsored business reason or funded through a follower support and its a job itself that bring in money, this type of social media are generally refer to as influence or content creator. One in five social media users consider themselves as professional content creator

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The extensive literature analysis uses academic articles, descriptive research, and real-world examples to explain how social media influences Nigerian youth engagement on social media and its impact on the country's unemployment rate. The approach include these steps

What is the impact of social media on Nigerian youth? Social media has added significant advantages to the youth, including connectivity, building the community at large, and creating a room for affordable advertising.

Number of studies considered: According to the Nigeria Data Protection Commission (NDP), as of 2026, over 40 million Nigerians spend an average of six million hours daily on social media. And also Nigeria has been ranked the number one country who spend more time on social media, average of 04:02 of every social media platform visited are What sApp, Facebook twitter and among others. The ranking was released by online media organization on twitter know as "state feed also refer to as world statistic"

According to Clement (2020), as of 2019, the average daily use of social media per user amounted to 144 minutes (2 hours 24 minutes). Although this average was taken from a worldwide perspective,

Wendy (2020) explains that when the comparison is made with different individual countries, the average time on social media differs from one to the other.

According to Wendy (2020) out of the population of nearly 8 billion people, 2.2 billion were active on Facebook in 2019. On average, people from across the planet spend 58 minutes per

According to Dean (2020), there are 3.81 billion people who use social media worldwide in 2020, up almost double from 2.07 billion in 2015 day on Facebook.

Justification for selecting the study: internet freedom in Africa. Based on an analysis of three main categories—obstacles to access, content limitations, and user rights violations—Nigeria ranks sixth in Africa.

Source identification: relevant studies were located using

data base such as googles scholar, JSTRO and pub med , focusing on peer- reviewed articles and conference proceeding. The search studied from 2020- 2026 to ensure the inclusion of relevant and relevant research.

RESULTS AND DICUSSION

Connectivity: Social media platforms allow people to access global information and connect with friends and family at a distance. It can allow users to find niche communities around their interests or current needs, such as neighbourhood forums or job searching.

Build community: Using social media is correlated to having more friends and a personal network with greater diversity, especially in emerging economies. Social media users are more likely to interact with those who are different from them across categories of income, political party, religion, or ethnicity.

Affordable advertising: Small businesses and creators can reach potential customers at low price points through targeted ads and influencer marketing. More than 200 million small businesses use Facebook.

In 2024, online advertising, including social media and search advertising, accounted for 59% of global ad spending; that number is projected to grow to 61% in 2026.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion This analysis and discussion section highlights the profound and multifaceted impact of social media on various aspects of society. While social media platforms offer significant benefits, including enhanced connectivity, democratization of information, and support for social movements, We may use social media for good by knowing and reducing its drawbacks. Future research should examine these processes and propose ways to maximize social media's benefits and minimize its drawbacks.

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