

**ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG UNEMPLOYED YOUTHS IN
IBADAN NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OYO STATE,
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Social media networks are increasingly open venues for public gatherings, business transactions, coordination, and education. They are no longer only places to communicate, share information, and play games, thanks to the internet. This study examined how young people in Nigeria who are unemployed use social media for a range of purposes, including job searching, in light of the country's growing unemployment rate. The research technique used for the study was a descriptive survey, which was carried out using quantitative data-gathering tools and multi-stage sampling. The Ibadan North Local Government region is divided into seventeen (17) zones using the cluster sampling method. Equivalent participants were then selected from each zone to produce the survey sample of 510 selected. The finding of the study revealed that young people mostly use social media for messaging, conversing, and staying in touch with both local and distant relatives and friends. It is recommended among others that youths be given more guidance on how to use social media to cut down on the time they spend chatting and doing other pointless activities that won't have a big impact on their future lives or their ability to obtain employment.

Keywords: Social media, web, unemployed youths, usage, social media perception

Introduction:

The National Bureau of Statistics in 2022, projected the population of Nigeria to be 216,783,381, with 108,350,410 males and 108,432,971 females. The quarter two (Q2), 2020 survey recorded a total of 116,871,186 individuals in the financially independent or working-age population, which includes individuals between the ages of 15 and 64. This represents a 1.2% increase compared to the figure of 115,492,969 recorded in quarter three report (Q3), 2018. The number of

persons in the labour force (i.e. people between ages 15 -64, who are able and eager to work) was predicted to be 80,291,894. This was 11.3% smaller than the number of individuals in quarter three (Q3), 2018. Of this number, people aged 25-34 were the greatest, with 23,328,460 or 29.1% of the workforce.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2020), 58,527,276 persons were employed (i.e., had jobs) overall during the reference period. 35,585,274 of the totals had full-time employment, meaning they worked 40 hours or more a week, while 22,942,003 had part-time jobs, meaning they worked 20 to 29 hours a week. Compared to the number of people employed in Q3, 2020, this figure is 15.8% lower. Youths are defined as those between the ages of 15 and 34, which make up roughly half of the population, according to the National Population Commission (NPC, 2013). The unemployment rate rises in tandem with the growth of the youth population. According to the report, 11.1 million young people were unemployed in 2012. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, as of the third quarter of 2016, the rates of unemployment and underemployment were 13.9%, 19.7%, and 45.65%, respectively, among the youths.

According to the International Labour Organisation (1982), unemployment or joblessness is the state in which an individual does not have a job despite having looked for one for at least the previous five weeks. The number of jobless people divided by the total number of people now in the labour force yields the unemployment rate, which is a percentage that represents the prevalence of unemployment. Approximately 73.6% of Nigerians who were of working age held jobs as of the fourth quarter of 2022. This ratio rose to 76.7% in the first quarter of 2023. This suggests that most of the population worked for at least one hour a week in some capacity in exchange for pay or other benefits (NBS, 2024).

Social media use has profoundly altered personal routines and communication methods, particularly for younger people. The youth are significantly impacted by these developments (Olayemi, 2022). Social media networks vary in terms of their functionality. They have a shared characteristic in that they facilitate users in communicating and exchanging material within the community (Podhorcová & Balková, 2023). Social networking sites, or SNSs, are extensively used throughout social classes, age categories, and social statuses. Talking about corporate use is intimate. SNS is issued during various HR procedures, and job searches, including recruiting, hiring, education, and improvement (Khan, Raj, and Kumar, 2024).

The focus of this research is to survey the uses of social media among unemployed youths, and users' preferences of graduate students in universities, and polytechnics, in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Ibadan, and Oyo state. As a large metropolis with a large number of formal educational institutions, research institutes, government MDAs, manufacturing industries, and white-collar firms, Ibadan is seen to have the highest number of graduates seeking jobs,

According to Ridwan (2024), the University of Ibadan (UI), Oyo state, has the highest number of employable graduates in Nigeria who make the city their base from where they seek out job opportunities in nearby states, nationally or globally.

Web and Social Media Use

The web and social media have emerged as widely accessible and user-friendly mediums for rapidly distributing timely data. Social media is a very efficient platform for creating and disseminating information. However, unlike conventional news sources like news channels and newspapers, the reliability of information shared on social media platforms is uncertain because of the unrestricted liberty of speech (Meel et al, 2020). By 2024, it is projected that the global number of social media users will reach 5.17 billion, with each individual using an average of 6.7 distinct social networks every month (Chen, 2024). Organizations for businesses are increasingly adopting the integration of social media into their operations and business management. This is because it is widely acknowledged that utilising social media may provide them with significant performance benefits, particularly in the age of technology (Liu, Geng, Tse, Mike, & Han 2023).

Recent research (Kircaburun, 2020) indicates that users' preferences for social media usage vary based on their characteristics and motivations. These factors can contribute to a small portion of users' inappropriate use of social media. Also, Social media platforms offer a controlling tool for organisations to control data exchanges and consequently bring about modifications to their knowledge management systems (Nisar, Prabhakar & Strakova, 2019). Also, the study of Urhan, Yeniçıktı, Şimşek, Albayrak, Güdekli, Hoştut, & Arslan (2024) shows how school administrators' social media usage patterns and beliefs differ and how using social media can help them fertilise their networks and develop a healthy workplace. According to the findings, social media usage habits are classified into four categories: research/information, enjoyment, recognition, and development. These satisfied demands are essential components of developing one's reputation. Furthermore, according to Pivec & Maček, (2019), social media plays an essential part in project management. Social media platforms facilitate contact with and among those involved, diffusion, contributing to the project's long-term success.

This study aims to survey the use of social media by unemployed graduate youths in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State, for various purposes, including job seeking. The specific objectives to achieve this goal are to explore the extent, devices, and purposes for which young unemployed graduates in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State, utilize social media in their daily lives; examine the predictive relationships between the level of social media usage and (a) perceived ease of use, (b) perceived usefulness, and (c) perceived challenges in using social media for job searching among young unemployed

graduates; analyze the extent of social media usage for job searching among unemployed young graduates.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

1. How extensively do unemployed young graduates in Ibadan North local government use social media and for what purposes and devices are used?
2. What is the level of social media usage, usefulness, and perceived challenges in using social media for job seeking?
3. What is the extent of social media usage for job searching among unemployed young graduates?

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used for this study and implemented using a quantitative data collection approach. Relevant quantitative data was collected through the use of a structured questionnaire and analysis was carried out using a statistical package. The location of this study was Ibadan North Local Government Area (INLGA) of Oyo State. The area is situated in the urban core of the Ibadan metropolis, which is the capital of Oyo State and the third largest city in Nigeria after Lagos and Kano. Ibadan was chosen as the study area because it is an urban area that drains both educated and uneducated youth from various parts of the South West and because of convenience. Ibadan hosts numerous tertiary institutions including the University of Ibadan, Open University, and The Polytechnic Ibadan, to name but a few. Ibadan was also once the headquarters of the defunct Western Nigeria region, boasts of many industrial and manufacturing companies, and several large local and modern markets.

The study used a sample size of 510 respondents. Due to the lack of a sampling frame and the inability to obtain simple random samples of youths, convenience sampling was employed to choose young people to approach and solicit their participation in the survey.

Results and Discussion

A questionnaire was used to gather data in the study. The questionnaire was distributed to 510 educated unemployed youth respondents. Out of the 510 questionnaires, 448 were retrieved, made up of 214 males and 234 females, and used for the analysis. This represented an 81.84% response rate. According to Babbie (2002), a response rate of more than 50% is sufficient for analysis; thus, the 81.84% response rate was regarded as exceptionally good for analysis.

Research Question 1: What is the extent of device use, and purpose of social media usage among young unemployed graduates in Ibadan North Local Government Area?

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employed	29	6.5	6.5	6.5
Self-employed	29	6.5	6.5	12.9
Unemployed	54	12.1	12.1	25.0
Student	336	75.0	75.0	100.0
Total	448	100.0	100.0	

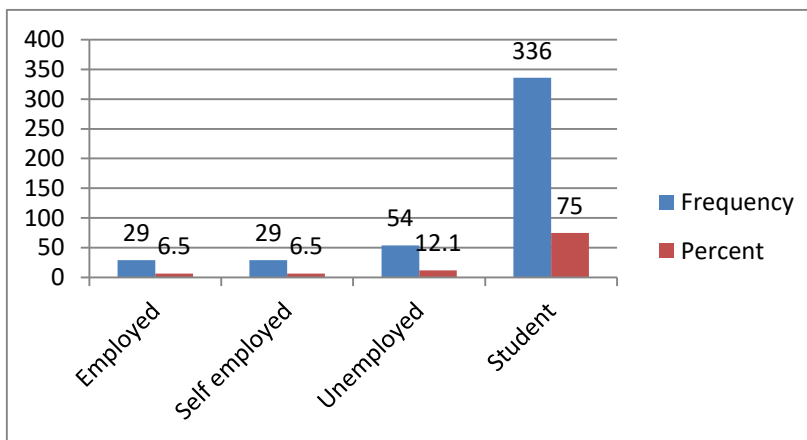


Fig 1: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Fig. 1 shows the Occupational responses showed that the majority 336 (75.0%) are still students, 54 (12.1%) are unemployed, while those who are employed and self-employed were 29 (6.5%) respectively.

Table 2
Device used to connect to social media

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Phone	402	89.7	89.7	89.7
Tablet	34	7.6	7.6	97.3
Computer	12	2.7	2.7	100.0
Total	448	100.0	100.0	

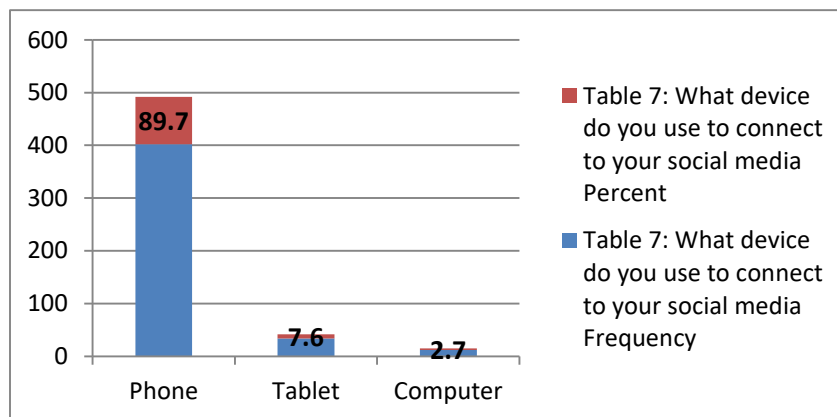


Fig 2: Device used to connect to social media

Figure 2 shows that the majority of respondents (89.7%) used phones to connect to social media, followed by tablets (7.6%) and computers (2.7%). According to Laura's (2024) report, mobile phones account for more than 50% of our internet time. This demonstrates that the majority of individuals are constantly utilising their phones for various tasks.

Table 3
Social media activities mostly used

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Posting messages and chatting	258	57.6	57.6	57.6
Updating profile and status update	82	18.3	18.3	75.9
Posting and viewing photos	18	4.0	4.0	79.9
Writing Notes	29	6.5	6.5	86.4
Playing games	7	1.6	1.6	87.9
Creating Applications	9	2.0	2.0	90.0
Looking for old friends	2	0.4	0.4	90.4
Searching for online jobs	5	1.1	1.1	91.5
Online Banking	4	0.9	0.9	92.4
Commercial, buying, selling	3	0.7	0.7	93.1
Reading books, educational materials	31	6.9	6.9	100.0
Total	448	100.0	100.0	

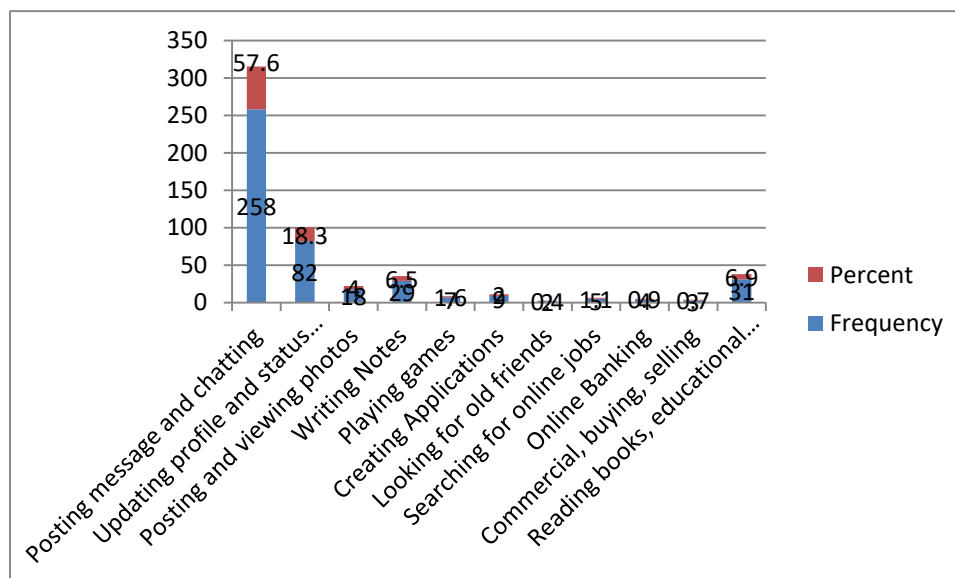


Fig 3:

Frequency of self-reported engagement in activities on social media

Fig. 3 shows that 57.6% of respondents use social media mostly for posting messages and chatting, while only 1.1% spend their time on social media for online job searching. Other purposes include updating profile and status (18.3%), reading books and educational materials (6.9%), writing notes (6.5%), and posting and viewing photos (4.0%). The study (Zhao, 2021; Chang & Zhu, 2011), includes three items: "I can establish new acquaintances via social media," "I can find old friends through social media," and "I can remain in contact with my friends through social media." We can say that, what most people use social media to do is mostly post messages and chat with colleagues, family members, or friends as the case may be.

Table 4
Preferred social media platform used

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Facebook	142	31.7	33.8	33.8
Instagram	21	4.7	5.0	38.8
Telegram	68	15.2	16.2	55.0
Whatsapp	180	40.2	42.9	97.9
2go	5	1.1	1.2	99.0
Imo	4	0.9	1.0	100.0
Total	420	93.8	100.0	

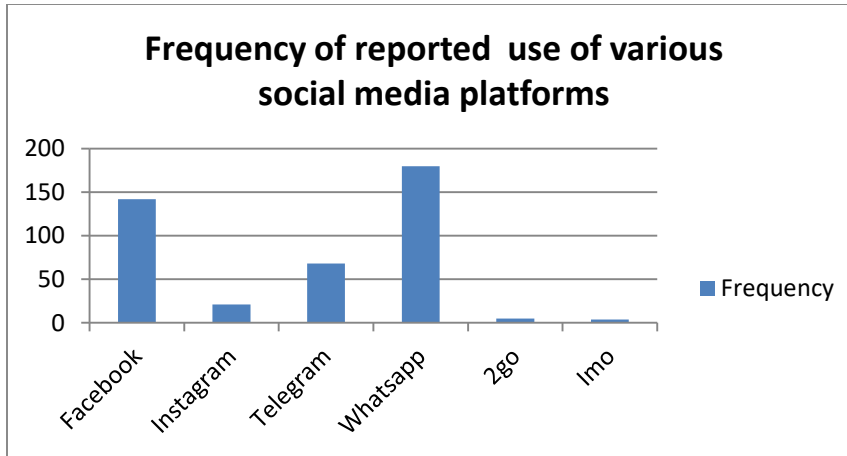


Fig. 4: *Frequency of reported use of various social media platforms*

Fig. 4 shows that 40.2% of respondents preferred using What Sapp as their social network site, followed by Facebook (31.7%), Telegram (15.2%) Instagram (4.7%) and least were Imo (1.0%). According to the data report published by Simon (2024), Facebook is considered to have a large number of users followed by WhatsApp and Instagram which from our study, WhatsApp is seen to be the most preferred.

Research Question 2: What is the level of social media usage, usefulness, and perceived challenges in using social media for job searching?

Table 5
Challenges to Access and Use of Social Media

Perceived Challenges	Never	Rarely	Often	Very Often	Always	Total	Mean
Poor Internet Network	29 6.8%	142 33.3%	146 34.2%	68 15.9%	42 9.8%	427 100%	2.93
My lack of finance to buy megabyte/Data	33 7.6%	159 36.8	153 35.4%	74 17.1%	13 3.0%	432 100%	2.71
My lack of finances to buy a smartphone	189 43.8%	126 29.2%	64 14.8%	41 9.5%	12 2.7%	432 100%	2.00
Poor mobile provider network	33 7.6%	141 32.6%	178 41.2%	57 13.2%	23 5.3%	432 100%	2.80
Inadequate electricity to charge my phone	53 12.6%	202 48.0%	118 28.0%	26 6.2%	22 5.2%	421 100%	2.43
My problem with time management when online	72 16.7%	136 31.5%	138 31.9%	83 19.2%	3 0.7%	432 100%	2.56
My lack of literacy on device use	302 67.5%	144 28.3%	13 2.5%	3 0.6%	6 1.2%	432 100%	1.36
My inadequate level of education	353 84.0%	48 11.4%	10 2.4%	9 2.1%	0 0.0%	420 100%	1.23
My poor computer literacy	325 77.8%	74 17.7%	13 3.1%	1 0.2%	5 1.2%	418 100%	1.29
Fraud on the internet	262 62.4%	93 22.1%	45 10.7%	20 4.7%	0 0%	420 100%	1.60
My lack of time to engage in social media	186 44.1%	105 24.9%	107 25.4%	8 1.9%	16 3.8%	422 100%	1.96
My lack of interest in social media use	212 50.5%	157 37.4%	31 7.4%	15 3.6%	5 1.2%	420 100%	1.68
Bulling, trustworthiness, privacy rights	300 71.4%	98 23.3%	22 5.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	420 100%	1.34

Table 5 shows the frequency distribution of respondents by barriers and challenges of Use of social media. The responses “Never” and “Rarely” were considered low, while the options “Often”, “Very often” and “Always” were considered high. Therefore, the addition of frequency values for “Never” “Rarely” “Often”, “Very often” and “Always” gives the total number of respondents who rated each challenge/Barriers. The respondents challenges and barriers were mostly ‘Poor Internet Network’ (256,59.9%), ‘Poor mobile provider network’(258, 59.7%), followed by ‘My lack of finance to buy megabyte/Data’ (240, 55.5%), ‘problem of time management when online’ (224, 51.8%), ‘Inadequate electricity to charge phone’ (166, 39.4%), ‘lack of finance to buy smartphone’ (117, 27%), are the problems mostly facing their use of social media. While the least was “My inadequate level of education” with a value of (19, 4.9%).

Research Question 3: To analyze the extent of social media usage for job searching among young unemployed graduates.

Table 6

Distribution of respondents who use social media for Job search

I use social media for job search	Frequency	Percentage
Never	116	26.6%
Rarely	188	43.1%
Often	109	25.0%
Very Often	5	1.1%
Always	17	4.1%
Total	436	436

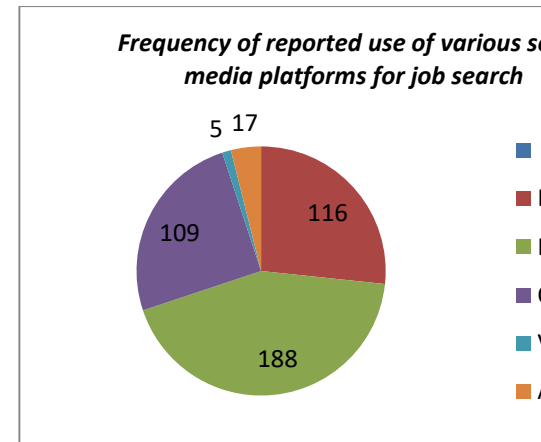


Fig. 6: Frequency of reported use of various social media platforms for job search

From Table 6, the results show that the majority (188, 43.1%) of the respondents rarely used social media for job search, closely followed by 116 (26.6%) who never used social media for job search. Nevertheless, a quarter of them (109, 25.0%) often used social media for job search, while 5 (1.1%) use social media ‘very often’ for job search, and 17 (4.1%) always used social media for job search.

Table 7

*Social Media for Job Search *Occupation Cross Tabulation**

Social media for Job Search	Occupation				Total
	Employed	Self Employed	Unemployed	Student	
Never	21 (6.9%)	17 (5.6%)	21 (6.9%)	245 (80.6%)	304
Often	6 (5.3%)	11 (9.6%)	26 (22.8%)	71 (62.3%)	114
Always	0 (0.0%)	1 (5.6%)	6 (33.3%)	11 (61.1%)	18
Subtotal	27	29	53	327	436
	(6.19)	(6.65%)	(12.15%)	(75.00%)	(100%)

From Table 7, the results disclosed that the majority (245, 80.6%) of the respondents who are Students Never used social media for job search, closely followed by the 21 (6.9%) who never used social media for job search. Nevertheless, (11, 61.1%) who are students always used social media for job search, while 26 (22.8%) who are unemployed use social media ‘often’ for job search, and 6 (33.3%) always used social media for job search.

Combining the assessments of all the tables, we can infer that the suggested system was widely approved and provided its users with the maximum level of pleasure. Social media has a positive impact on youth because it promotes communication and connectivity while also instilling a sense of belonging (Sumadevi, 2023). According to Sharma, Joshi, and Sharma (2016), resource sharing was the most important factor influencing social media usage, followed by perceived usefulness, perceived fun, partnership, and social impact, which agrees with the findings of this study.

Conclusion

By staying online, social media has given people the chance to form communities with other people. These folks consequently get closer to their audience. The aforementioned summary underscores the critical function of social media in engaging unemployed youth. It has emerged as a crucial platform for communication, facilitating networking, information sharing, and access to employment resources. Social media is mostly used by young people for networking and communication with friends and family, both local and distant. Utilizing social media platforms for job searches by unemployed grads may be beneficial since it will provide them the chance to be hired while still utilizing social media for other purposes.

Recommendations

Sequel to the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. To reduce the amount of time wasted on talking and other unimportant activities on social media, youths need to be taught better usage techniques such as youth orientation on productive social media usage: It is suggested that youths receive education on how to utilise social media efficiently to reduce their time spent on non-productive activities such as chatting. This will allow them to concentrate more on career-related activities, such as online study or job searches.
2. Enhance Social Media Literacy Programs: Teach youth how to use social media effectively for personal development, including job searches and skill acquisition.
3. Improving internet connections in Ibadan North is crucial to enable youths to use social media for beneficial activities like education and job hunting, as inadequate connectivity has been cited as a barrier to access.
4. Further Study on Socioeconomic Factors: More studies are needed that investigate psychosocial variables connected to social media use, for example, its impact on mental health and job opportunities, and how it may be optimized for good outcomes.

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