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SOCIAL MEDIA PREFERENCES OF YOUTHS ATTENDING HIV/
AIDS AWARENESS AND PREVENTION CAMPAIGN IN ENSACA

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ABSTRACT

Background: The Social Media has become part and parcel of everyday life. In the last decade a number of Social media networks has emerged. With the emergence has come changes in the way of doing things especially as regards social interaction, information dissemination as well as formal and informal collaborations; with people making choices from the wide array of the available networks.

Aims and Objectives: To determine the social media preferences of the study population and reasons behind the choices.

Methodology: Statistical analysis was done with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Results was presented in tables.

Results: Majority of the Respondents had what's App as preferred network 168 (51.38%). However the respondents visited other social media networks as well. Reasons for preference varied from affordability 149 (45.57), to reliability 80 (24.46) to speed of the social media networks 60 (18.35).

Conclusion: The Social Media has come to be part of everyday life; especially of young people with great potentials for positive applications.

Recommendations: The application of this predilection to the Social Media of the youths, should be fashioned to application for positive gains in the areas of breakthrough discoveries, accessing of International Scholarship and sponsorship opportunities to their education among several other positive areas. In achieving this, activities to capacity building of the youths become central.

Keywords: *Social Media; Preferences; Youths; HIV/ AIDS Awareness; ENSACA*

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a basic human need and for that reason, man has always found a means of meeting this need either through interpersonal or mass communication.

The Modern world is now looked on as a global village. The speed at which people thousands of miles apart could reach themselves with information and

interaction is sometimes many times faster than those who were physically by themselves.

The pace, wide and easily accessible nature, average affordability of virtual networks cannot be over-emphasized. In the world of today, it is now regarded as social networking where people now freely

communicate with information and awareness dissemination much improved.

Social network is a social structure made up of individuals or organizations called “nodes” which are tied (connected) by one or more specific type of interdependency such as friendship, kingship, common interest, financial exchange, sexual relationships or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige.⁴ Social networking sites are web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system to articulate a list of other users within whom they share a connection and view, and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

Different social media sites exist. They include what’s app, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snap chat amongst many others. LinkedIn took a totally more professional and business approach to social networking. Facebook on the other hand came into the social networking scene in 2004 with the initial primary intent of connecting US college students.

This study looks at the Social Media preferences of youths attending an awareness and sensitization exercise on HIV/ AIDS

The research questions take an insight into the youth’s knowledge and use of the social media and their preferred social networking sites with the aim being to determine their knowledge and use as well as sites preferences.

METHODOLOGY

STUDY AREA AND POPULATION

The study was done in Enugu Nigeria. Enugu is in the South-eastern part of Nigeria. The study was done among youths attending an HIV awareness Campaign at the Enugu State Agency for the Control of AIDS (ENSACA). The Enugu State Agency for the Control of AIDS is the Government Agency with the mandate of the multisectoral coordination of all activities to HIV/ AIDS control in the State. It holds different programs for preventive campaigns and populace sensitization on various health concerns.

STUDY DESIGN

It was a cross-sectional descriptive study.

INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

The youths attending the exercise that were available and willing were made part of the study while those not available at time and those available but unwilling were excluded.

SAMPLE SIZE

Sample size determination formula as used in a related study looking at social media impact on students was applied. With this formula application an approximate sample size of 370 was determined. 370 respondents were therefore shared questionnaires.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The Study area and population was conveniently chosen while simple random sampling was employed in selecting respondents for the study.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was achieved using a pretested self-administered questionnaires.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was achieved using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences with results presented in tables.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Informed verbal and written consent was sought and obtained from participants prior to the study.

RESULTS

Table 1: All the respondents (100%) had knowledge of Social Networking sites; however, 301 (92.05%) internet access.

The most visited social media site was what's app 300 (91.74%).

Table 2: What's App (66.47%) proved the most preferred Social Media network. The principal reason to this choice appeared to be for its affordability 149 (45.57%). On the other hand the least preferred was the Twitter network.

DISCUSSION

A total of 327 respondents participated in this study. All the respondents, 327 (100%) were aware of social networking sites with majority 301 (92.05%) having access to the internet. These findings are in conformity with earlier studies where majority of students of a tertiary institution were found to be aware of the internet as well as have access. The youths today live in a different world as obtainable a few decades ago. The internet has come to be principally the centre or fulcrum of activities especially following the post COVID-19 era where several meetings, conferences have come to be virtual.

In this study as well, there was multiple responses on the various social networks used by the youth respondents. It reflected 292 (89.30%) patronized the facebook, 300 (91.74%) the what's app, while 242 (74.01%) use the Instagram, 70 (21.41%) the Twitter, and 103 (31.49%) use others

(like the LinkedIn, skype, snapshot, etc.). This observation is however not in conformity with the results of a similar but earlier study that posited majority of respondents (71.4%) used a particular social media network unlike in this study where utilization is about evenly spread across varied networks.

The findings of this study proved that the most sought/ trafficked social network among the respondents was what's app 168 (51.38). The reasons were essentially for its affordability reliability and speed. These findings are actually in contrast to that of a similar study which expressed Facebook as the most commonly used social network among a student respondents' group.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that What's App and Facebook remained the most sought for and used Social Media network amongst the studied youth population, and these networks they have access to.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The application of this predilection to the Social Media of the youths should be fashioned to application for positive gains in the areas of breakthrough discoveries, accessing of International Scholarship and sponsorship opportunities to their

education among several other positive areas.

It is recommended that a capacity building training be explored to view of exposing the youths to the great potentials and opportunities that this access to the internet hold.

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Table 1: Knowledge and use of Online Social Media

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
<i>Internet Access</i>		
Yes	301	92.05
No	26	7.95
<i>Awareness of social networking sites</i>		
Yes	327	100.0
<i>Social Network sites visited</i>		
Facebook	292	89.30
WhatsApp	300	91.74
Instagram	242	74.01
Twitter	70	21.41
Others	103	31.49
<i>Participants on networks with Registered Accounts</i>		
Facebook	290	88.69
WhatsApp	297	90.83
Instagram	80	24.46
Twitter	82	25.1
Others	57	17.4

Table 2: Respondents Preference of Social Networks

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
<i>Preferred Network</i>		
Facebook	101	30.89
WhatsApp	168	51.38
Instagram	25	7.65
Twitter	2	0.61
Others	5	1.53
<i>Reasons for Preference</i>		
Speed/ Connectivity	60	18.35
Affordability	149	45.57
With variable options	8	4.45
Reliable network	80	24.46
Others	6	1.83
<i>Reasons for Non-preference</i>		
Time consuming	6	23.08
It is expensive	3	11.54
Addictive nature	8	30.77
I just don't like it	7	26.93
Others	2	7.69

DECLARATIONS

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Written informed consent was obtained from the participants after the participants were duly updated of confidentiality. Furthermore, participants were clarified they were free to pull out at any point during the study with no consequences.

Consent for publication

The Authors duly grant consent for publication.

Availability of data and material

The materials and data for this study is available and retrievable.

Competing interests

The material and data for this study is available and retrievable.

Competing interests

There are no competing interests.

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Author's contributions

Chinedu Idoko supervised the study and made intellectual input. Obiora Onowu was involved in editing and intellectual corrections of the works, Chuka Obienu made intellectual input to the work.

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