

Impact Analysis of Social Media Platforms on Organization of Sports in North Central Zone Sports Councils, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The use of social media has gained wider acceptability in different aspects of human endeavours. However, the level of usage by sports administrations, coaches, association secretaries and clerks in Nigeria seems to be relatively low. It is against this background that this study examined the impact analysis of social media usage on organization of sports among sports councils in North Central States, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to: (i) determine if the use of social networks (Twitter and Facebook) have impact on the organization of sports in sports councils in North Central States, Nigeria, (ii) ascertain whether the use of mobile applications (texting and webcasting) influence organization of sports in the study area. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of all 856 sports council staff in the North Central States, Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was adopted, 49 management staff, 273 coaches, 264 association secretaries and 220 clerks were used for the study. Researchers designed structured questionnaire validated by three experts in related disciplines was used for data collection. Reliability co-efficient of $r=.86$ was obtained through test re-test method using percentages and person's product moment correlation were used to test the research questions and hypotheses respectively. The findings revealed that Social networks (Twitter and Facebook) have significant impact on the organization of sports councils in North Central States, Nigeria ($F(4,802)=8.3135p<.05$). In addition, mobile applications (texting and webcasting) have significant impact on the organization of sports councils in North Central States, Nigeria ($F(4,802)=11.4338 p<.05$). The study concluded that social media platforms contribute immensely to organisation of sport in North Central Zone sports councils, Nigeria. The implication of the findings was that sports administrators need to utilize social media in order to promote sports development. It was therefore, recommended that sports councils in the study area should embrace varieties of social media platforms for the organisation of sports. Management staff, coaches, association secretaries and clerks of the sports councils in the North Central States should be encouraged to acquire knowledge and skills in the use of social medial tools for their administrative operations.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a vital means of disseminating information to a targeted audience. It is so crucial in life that even before the advent of new technology, the traditional methods of communication played a vital role in getting information to the intended audience with ease. With the coming of new technologies in communication, the traditional methods have been relegated to the background, if not totally forgotten. According to Akpabio (2000), modern means of communication play a key role in relation to effectiveness and efficiency in the business world today. Along the line, a new means of communication surfaced known as "social media". Social media has become a household information agent across the world, the users cut across ages, tribes and nations. Its prompt delivery of information has endeared it to millions of users all over the world. In spite of its numerous advantages, it is bedeviled with problems of electricity shortage, poor internet connectivity, poverty to mention a few, but all the same its quick information dissemination cannot be overemphasized (Coleman, 2014).

Sports communication lies at the heart of the sports industry. Pedersen, Miloch and Laucella (2011) defined sports communication as the process by which people in sports or through a sports endeavour share symbols as they create meaning through interaction. Sports communication

stresses the relationship between development and organizations, players, fans, and third parties. Ultimately, these relationships are vital to the success of each individual team.

Social media has proven to be a game-changer in the way people communicate with others. It has been growing tremendously and has delivered astronomical numbers of users in less than 10 years (Makayla & Frauke, 2014). With the development of internet-based life, it is currently workable for one individual to speak with hundreds or even a huge number of other individuals about items and the organizations that give them.

The major benefits of social media are convenience; social media tools such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are all free and do not require special software (Williams & Chinn 2010). The number of social media sites has grown tremendously over the past decade and there are multitudes of these sites that sports organizations could use for their communication campaigns with over 200 popular social networking sites (Abeza & O'Reilly, 2014). a large number of the most well-known sites, for example, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are particularly prominent among youth customers. A standout amongst the most prominent, Facebook has more than 500 million overall clients in 2012 with the centre of the 18-24 years of age base developing at 74% every year (Digital, 2012).

According to Rebecca (2016), some of the most popular social media platforms utilized in sports organizations include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram. The author identified Facebook as being the most popular social networking site and YouTube as the second most popular social media platform. In 2014, Facebook was rated to be the largest online social network with over 1.31 billion users with many communications and integration options available for its users (Statisticbrain.com, 2014). Facebook has a wide variety of options that consumers can use such as chat, tagging photos, creating an event and adding users as friends (Curran, Morrison & McCauley, 2012). Facebook is not just a device for individual clients; it tends to be a successful choice for associations to enhance correspondence. A "like" for a business on Facebook can be worth roughly \$8, demonstrating that Facebook nearness is imperative for any business needing to enhance pay and marking (Carter, 2013). With its assortment of strategies to speak with clients, Facebook can be perfect for sports organizations to improve their image.

According to Peate (2012), if Facebook is leveraged properly, it would allow sports organizers to build fans participation and interaction, drive traffic to their official website and even develop sponsorship programmes to increase revenue. It was further stressed that the average sports fan now spends between one to two and a half hours a week following their teams via social media. These statistics would appear that sports organizations around the world should implement social media campaigns to interact with their fans.

Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service where users can send and read messages known as "tweets". Tweets are text-based characters of up to 140 characters displayed on an author's profile page, known as followers (Thomas, 2017). According to Wright and Hinson (2007), irrespective of the type of organization, communication is of utmost importance as it maintains and sustains relationship within the organization.

Richard, William and Larry (2017) opined that a newer opportunity for sports promotion specialists is the distribution of game content via a live webcast of major sporting events. They observed that year 2000 Paralympics in Sydney was one of the first major world sporting events to experiment with live webcasting. There were 12 hours a day live coverage for the duration of the game. This is in contrast to the coverage the Paralympics received in 1996 when they were televised in the United States for a mere 4 hours on CBS and 9 hours on regional cable. Alexa (2017) submitted that sports organizations and leagues can greatly benefit from incorporating Short

Message Service (SMS) into their marketing plans because with the two-way text messages this will allow teams to draw more fans and expand its database. The administration is the guidance, leadership and management of affairs through essential functions and responsibilities necessary for the achievement of sports goal. Since their creation about 40 years ago, the National Sports Commissions and the States Sports Councils have made bold efforts to transform sports organizations and administration in Nigeria (Orunaboka, 1998). Adesoye (2003) stated that a desirable sports programme can be effectively managed or implemented in our institutions and other establishments usually depend on adequate and well-managed funds released in running the affairs of a sports organization.

Based on the above submissions, the researcher carried out an analysis of the influence of social media on the organisation of sports in North Central States Sports Councils of Nigeria. The following states are in the North Central Zone; Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Nassarawa, Plateau and Federal Capital Territory. Each of these states has its state sports council. The zonal headquarters is in Ilorin, Kwara State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Sports has been a major tool that unites individuals, communities, nations, and the world at large. Sports organizers and administrators need to work with modern day technologies, demonstrate competence and high level of professionalisms in their approach to work considering the competitive environment in which sports operate globally. Many of the sports personnel in the north-central zone still relay information via the common and traditional means (radio, television, newspaper, post office, athletes, official or inter-state buses. Traditional media are means of communication and expression that were in existence before the advent of the new media of the internet. Despite the potency of traditional media, there is a number of factors that have rendered them ineffective in Nigeria. Such factors include (delay in delivery of messages, the one-way mode of communication, lack of instant feedback to mention a few).

The rise in the use and popularity of the internet has dramatically changed the way sports organizations communicate with their stakeholders (Pedersen, Miloch & Lauella, 2007). The world is technology-driven; there is need for our sports organizers and administrators to tap into utilizing media devices that could enhance prompt and accurate information dissemination in order to improve service delivery. In sports, proper use of social media leads to increased attendance, merchandise sale, lower communication cost and immediate feedback from stakeholders (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Hopkins, 2013). Social media (Youtube, Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter and others) are relatively cheap, easy to use and faster compared to traditional means (Radio, TV, Newspaper, Post Office, inter-state buses).

It is observed by the researcher that over the years teams in Kwara and Kogi states in the north central states had experienced disappointment as a result of communication gap between the organizers and participating teams due to sudden changes in the programme of events. In 2017, a clear example was the table tennis team of Kwara State that left for Lagos to make a date for competition only to get to the venue to discover that the competition has been postponed. Paucity of information relating to this study also motivated researchers' interest in area of study. It is on this premise and among other reasons that this study is designed to assess the influence of social media platforms on organization of sports among the States Sports Councils of North Central States of Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Will the use of social networks (Facebook and Twitter) have any relationship with the organization of sports in the North Central Zone sports councils, Nigeria?
2. Will the use of mobile applications (texting and webcasting) have any relationship with the organization of sports in the North Central Zone sports councils, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between social networks (Facebook and Twitter) and organization of sports in the North Central Zone sports councils, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between mobile applications (texting and webcasting) and organization of sports in the North Central Zone sports councils, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study design was a descriptive research design of survey method. The researchers only collected and presented the data the way they were recovered. The design was considered appropriate for this study as it assessed the relationship between social media platforms and organization of sports in the North Central States Councils, Nigeria.

The population for this study were the officials of all the States Sports Councils in the North Central States of Nigeria. They were 856 personnel which comprised the management staff, coaches, association secretaries and clerical officers in the six (6) Sports Councils States of Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja.

806 questionnaires were administered and duly filled by the respondents. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 806 respondents as follows 49 management staff, 273 coaches, 264 association secretaries and 220 clerks in the study area.

The instrument that was used for the collection of data for this study is a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher entitled "Social Media Sports Organization Questionnaire (SMSOQ)". The scoring of the questionnaire was based on the format of each section. The structured questionnaire consists of two (sections A and B). Section A elicits information on personal data of the respondents for the study.

There were 33 items under. The items were in the form of statements and respondents are required to respond on a 4-point Likert scale. The scoring format was represented as follows: Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4 points, Agreed (A) =3, Disagreed (D) =2, Strongly Disagree =1 point.

To ensure the validity of the instrument, draft copies of the questionnaire was presented to 3 Jurors in Human Kinetics Education and Communication Information Science Departments, University of Ilorin for content validation.

A test-retest method of reliability was conducted; the researcher administered the questionnaire to a group of respondents in Oyo State sports council who are not part of the study twice with two weeks interval between the first and second administration. The researcher then compared the relationship between the first and second tests using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 alpha level. The coefficient/index obtained was 0.86r. Thus, the index showed that the instrument was suitable and reliable for use in the conduct of this study.

Three trained research assistants were employed to facilitate the smooth conduct of the research. Training and guidelines in the effective distribution and collection of the questionnaire were done to equip them with necessary skills. The completed questionnaires were retrieved for

data analysis. However, 50 questionnaires were not retrieved, due to the international engagements of some respondents.

Research question one: Will the use of social networks (Facebook & Twitter) have any relationship with organization of sports in North Central zone sports councils, Nigeria?

Table 1: Analysis of responses to research questions on the relationship between socio-networks (Facebook and Twitter) on organization of sports

S/N	Items	SA	A	FR	D	SD	UR	Row total
1.	Sports administrators in the organisation need to be trained on using Facebook and Twitter to disseminate information to their staff.	352 (43.7%)	321 (39.8%)	673 (83.5%)	83 (10.3%)	50 (6.2%)	133 (16.5%)	806
2.	The use of social media like Facebook, Twitter usually make sports administrators be efficient in discharging their duties.	323 (40.1%)	276 (34.2%)	599 (74.1%)	155 (19.2%)	52 (6.5%)	207 (25.7%)	806
3.	Most staff of sports council are competent on the use of social media like Facebook, Twitter to send messages which assist in the administration of sports.	213 (26.4%)	435 (54.0%)	648 (80.4%)	158 (19.6%)	0 (0.0%)	158 (19.6%)	806
4.	Social networks such as Twitter can be used by sports administrators to discovered and share new information on sports to the public.	116 (14.4%)	298 (37.0%)	414 (51.4%)	356 (44.2%)	36 (4.5%)	392 (48.6%)	806
5.	Twitter can be used by sports administrators to recruits services and advertised their sports programmes.	298 (37.0%)	328 (40.7%)	626 (77.7%)	130 (16.1%)	50 (6.2%)	180 (22.3%)	806
6.	Facebook is a tool that sports administrators can use as an effective option for communicating their sports programmes to the target audience	179 (22.2%)	447 (55.5%)	626 (77.7%)	100 (12.4%)	80 (9.9%)	80 (9.9%)	806
7.	Sports teams are using Facebook to connects with fans and are embracing social media as a way to build and strengthening the relationship	240 (29.8%)	419 (52.0%)	659 (81.8%)	147 (18.2%)	0 (0.0%)	147 (18.2%)	806
	Column Total	1721	2524	4245 (75.2%)	1129	268	1397 (24.8%)	5642

The analysis of item 1 in table 1 revealed that 673 (83.5%) of the respondents agreed that sports administrators in the organisation need to be trained on using Facebook & Twitter to disseminate information to their staff. Also, the majority of the respondents 599(74.9%) agreed that the use of social media like Facebook & Twitter usually make sports administrators be efficient in discharging their duties. Also, 645(80.4%) of the respondents agreed that most states of sports Council is competent on the use of Facebook & Twitter to send messages to assist in the administration of sports. The table also revealed that 414(51.4%) of the respondents agreed that social networks such as Facebook & Twitter can be used by sports administrators to discover and share new information on Sports to the public. It is also revealed in item 5 of the table that 625(77.7%) of the respondents agreed that Twitter can be used by sports administrators to recruit, service and

advertise their sports programme. A total of 625(77.7%) agreed that Facebook is a tool that sports administrators can use as an effective option for communicating their sport programme to target audience. It is revealed from the table that 659(81.8%) of the respondents agreed that sports teams are using Facebook to connect with fans and are embracing social media platforms as a way to build and strengthening relationship.

The overall results of the items analysis in the above shows that 4245(75.2%) of the respondents agreed on the seven (7) items presented on the table above, while 1397(24.8%) of them disagreed with the social networks (Facebook & Twitter) is needed to disseminate information.

Research Question Two: Will the use of mobile applications (texting & Webcasting) have any relationship on organization of Sports in the North Central zone sports councils, Nigeria?

Table 2: Analysis of responses to research questions on a mobile application (Texting and Webcasting) on organization of sports in North Central zone sports councils, Nigeria.

	ITEMS	SA	A	FR	D	SD	UR	ROW TOTAL
8.	The involvement of staff that are versatile on the use of a mobile application such as webcasting and texting enhances effective administration and organisation of sports in sports council	501 (62.2%)	220 (27.3%)	721 (89.5%)	35 (4.3.3%)	50 (6.2%)	85 (10.5%)	806
9.	Inefficient service delivery by network providers in the dissemination of information usually results in the poor organization and administration of sports.	351 (43.5%)	281 (34.9%)	632 (78.4%)	96 (11.9%)	78 (9.7%)	174 (21.6%)	806
10.	The innovation of mobile phone application serves as encouragement to the staff of the sports council to be proactive in term of dissemination of information which can promote smooth administration and organisation of sports.	384 (47.6%)	348 (43.2%)	732 (90.1%)	28 (3.5%)	46 (5.7%)	74 (9.9%)	806
11.	Mobile applications provide a supportive environment for sports administrators to explore friendship, social status and opportunity to share and discuss their knowledge of sporting activities.	166 (20.6%)	309 (38.3%)	475 (58.9%)	194 (24.1%)	137 (17.0%)	331 (41.1%)	806
12.	A cell phone can be used by sports administrators to keep in touch with the staff, colleagues and other stakeholders in the sports industry.	68 (8.4%)	379 (47.0%)	447 (55.5%)	281 (34.9%)	78 (9.7%)	359 (44.5%)	806
13.	Mobile applications tools such as cell phone and texting can be used to create networks of youth to spread youth's sports to their peers.	243 (30.1%)	263 (32.6%)	506 (62.8%)	210 (44.4%)	90 (23.1%)	300 (37.2%)	806
14.	Mobile application such as cell phone and texting are excellent model of a low cost technology tools used to facilitate youth access to sports information.	186 (23.1%)	358 (44.4%)	544 (67.5%)	142 (17.6%)	120 (14.9%)	262 (32.5%)	806
	Column Total	1849	2158	4057 (75.2%)	986	599	1585 (24.8%)	5642

The analysis of item 1 table two (2) above shows that 721(89.5%) of the respondents agreed that the involvement of staff that are versatile on the use of mobile applications such as Webcasting and Texting enhances effective organisation of sports in Sports Council. Also, 632(78.4%) of the respondents agreed that ineffective service delivery by network providers in the dissemination of information usually results in poor organisation and administration of Sports. The analysis of item in the table above shows that 732(90.1%) of the respondents agreed that the innovation of mobile phone application serves as encouragement to state Sports Councils to be proactive in terms of dissemination of information which can promote smooth administration and organisation of sports. A total of 475(58.9%) of the respondents agreed that mobile applications provide a supportive environment for sports administrators to explore friendship, social status and opportunity to share and discuss their knowledge of sporting activities. Also, a total of 506(62.8%) of the respondents agreed that cell phones can be used by sports administrators to keep in total with the staff, colleagues and other stakeholders in the sport industry. The table shows that 506(62.8%) of the respondents agreed that mobile applications tool such as cell phones and texting can be used to create networks of youths to spread youth's sports to their peers, furthermore, 544(67.5%) of the respondents agreed that mobile applications such as cell phone and texting are an excellent model of low cost technology tools used to facilitate youth access to sports.

The overall results of the analysis of items show that 4057(75.2%) of the respondents agreed that mobile applications (texting and webcasting) have influence in organisation and administration of sports, while 1585(24.8) of them disagreed with the statement. This means that mobile applications assist greatly in the organisation of sports.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Table 3: Summary of Pearson's product moment correlation analysis of social networks (Facebook and Twitter) relationship with organization of sports.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. r-value	Crit. r-value	Decision
Social Network	806	24.67	8.364				
				805	0.6081	0.195	H ₀ Rejected
Organization of sports	806	36.89	12.62				

As shown in table3, the calculated r-value of Pearson's Product Movement Correlation of 0.6081 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance and for 805 degrees of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, social networks (Facebook and Twitter) have significant relationship with organization of sports in North Central States Sports Councils, Nigeria This implies that sports administrators in the North Central States, Nigeria uses Facebook and twitter in disseminating information and quick passage of message for better organization and effective service delivery in the study area.

Table 4: Summary of Pearson's product moment correlation analysis of mobile application (testing and webcasting) relationship with the organization of sports

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. r-value	Crit. r-value	Decision
Mobile Application	806	2134	6.467				
				805	0.6241	0.195	H ₀ Rejected
Organisation of sports	806	36.89	12.62				

Table 4 reveals that the calculated r-value of Pearson's Correlation of 0.6241 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance and for 859 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, mobile applications (texting and webcasting) have a significant relationship with organization of sports in North Central States, Nigeria. This connotes that mobile application such as texting and webcasting play a significant role in passing information relating to sporting activities among sports administrators in the North Central States, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that social media platforms have a significant relationship on organization of sports in North Central States Councils Nigeria. Findings in table 2 revealed that social networks (Facebook and Twitter) have many relationships on organization of sports among the state's sports councils in the North Central states of Nigeria. The findings were in agreement with Hambrick (2012) who affirmed that most sports managers used social media like Twitter to add value to their brand and to strengthen the brand that the fans have with teams. He further stated that athletes have adopted the use of Twitter to send messages and display their brilliant posture and use it as a way to comment on games, support charitable causes and endorse products. Carolina (2012) equally asserted that as Twitter continues to evolve, many business organizations have adopted Twitter accounts within their marketing strategies to interact with their fans. She further gave examples of clubs in the United States like NBA, WLF, WNBA, MLB, MLS who now utilizes twitter in some manner. Hence, Duff (2014) concluded that companies have a huge responsibility to cautiously monitor and handle all Facebook and twitter activities to avoid potential complications.

The result of hypothesis two (H_{O2}) in table 2 also revealed that the use of mobile application (texting and webcasting) have a greater influence on organization of sports among states sports councils in the North Central States of Nigeria. This finding corroborates that of by Xu and Chua (2005) who stated that with the advent of mobile devices and the need for instant gratification, it would be useful for sports fans who are unfit to watch the live communicate, to in any case be kept refreshed on the live procedures of the amusement, through customized occasions/features. In this manner, the accessibility of programmed devices to live to despise and create customized occasions from communicate sports recordings and live to send the created occasions to client's cell phones will just improve the generation effectiveness for the communicate experts yet in addition give better diversion watcher ship to the sports fans.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusion were drawn;

1. Social networks (Twitter and Facebook) have influence on organization of sports in North Central zone sports councils, Nigeria.
2. Mobile applications (texting and webcasting) contribute to organization of sports in North Central zone councils, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Sports administrators in the North-Central Zone should strengthen social media skills of their personnel in the area of organization of sports programmes by providing them with regular in-service training in order to improve their service delivery skills.
2. The states sports councils in the North Central Zone of Nigeria should give preference to proficiency in social media use in their future recruitment drive for effective organization of sports.

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