

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS ON THE ORGANIZATION OF
SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAMS IN ILORIN SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,
KAWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Social media has become a dominant force in shaping communication, interaction, and community engagement across various sectors, including education. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have revolutionized how information is disseminated, allowing for real-time updates, broader outreach, and enhanced stakeholder engagement. **Purpose:** This study investigated the influence of social networks and media applications on the organization of school sports programs among post-primary schools in the Ilorin South Local Government Area (ISLGA) of Kwara State, Nigeria. **Methods:** A descriptive survey research design was employed. The study population comprised sports officers and school principals within ISLGA. Samples of 100 respondents were selected through a multi-stage sampling procedure. Data collection utilized a validated, researcher-structured questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of $r = .75$, $p < .05$. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and chi-square tests at a 0.05 level of significance. **Results:** The results revealed that the use of Twitter ($n = 100$, critical value = 21.03, $\chi^2 = 22.04$, $df = 12$, $p < .05$), short messaging services ($n = 100$, $\chi^2 = 25.31$, $df = 12$, $p < .05$), and Facebook ($n = 100$, $\chi^2 = 22.99$, $df = 12$, $p < .05$) all significantly influenced the organization of school sports programs. **Conclusion:** It was concluded that Twitter, short messaging services, and Facebook contributed substantially to the organization of school sports programs among post-primary schools. **Recommendation:** The study recommends that organizers of school sports programs should continue to adopt and integrate social media networks as strategic communication tools during school sports competitions.

Keywords: Media, social media, networks, school sports, communication, and engagement

Introduction

Sport is a part of general education that contributes to the intellectual growth and human development of youth. Sports are regarded as one of the most influential communication tools because of its appeal and power. Active sport participation in youths has positive role to play in the maintenance of physical wellbeing, health and academic excellence. School Sports, as being used in Nigeria, is known as Interscholastic Sports Programme in the world. Ffion; Fieke; Cowburn & Kevin (2022) opined that school sports is widely accepted by educators as part of the general educational programme based on the values accrued to it, if well controlled.

Interscholastic sport, on the other hand represents an integral part of the total physical education programme and in most cases, it evolves from the intramural athletic programme. Intramural sports are comprehensive programmes of sport competition and recreational activities carried on within the walls of an institution; it includes all the non-competitive sports carried on within the school organization. The programme is designed in such a way that all students can participate in various competing activities offered, thus producing a wide range of abilities, enjoyment and interest, which participation is voluntary (Jacob; John,; Gwany & Augustine, 2020)

For a successful school sport programme, sports communication is a vital ingredient to enhance and enrich sports participation, for effectiveness, better outreach and improved performance. Sports organizations utilize numerous platforms which include social networks and other media to reach their stakeholders. These include both traditional and modern means. Mary & Kathryn Zickuhr (2011) opined that over 65% of online adult are using social networking sites and its popularity is also manifesting in the sports industry globally. Sports organizations

are now utilizing various social network and media platforms such as: Facebook, Twitter, Short Messaging Service and Youtube to disseminate information to many stakeholders with speed, carrying ample amount of information and with capability of interaction between the sender and the receiver of such of information or messages (Balloul & Hutchingon, 2010). This implies that the social media is a good platform for the dissemination of information among people.

According to Hambrick (2012), most sports manager used social media tools like twitter to increase the value of their image and to reinforce the bonds between the fans and the team. Athletes have adopted the use of twitter to send messages and display their brilliant posture to their fans and followers on this type of socio-media platforms. Athletes in all sports have used twitter and Facebook as a way to comment on games, support charitable courses and endorse products. In the same vein, Carolina (2012) also observed that as twitter continues to evolve, many business organizations have adopted twitter accounts within their marketing strategies to interact with their fans. The author further gave examples of leagues in United States like NBA, WLF, WNBA, MLB, and MLS who now utilizes twitter in disseminating information to various fans and other stakeholders.

As indicated by Venkatachalam; Iyappan & Leelapriyadharsini (2019) with the approach of cell phones and requirement for moment satisfaction, it would be useful for sports fans who cannot watch the live communicate, to in any case be kept refreshed of the live procedures of the game, through customized occasions/features. Along these lines, the accessibility of programmed instruments to create live occasions to clients' cell phones will not just improve the generation proficiency for the communicate experts, yet in addition give better game viewership to the game's fans.

Facebook, which is one of the social media outlets, is also used to provide information, post pictures and videos and promote upcoming events. According to Peate (2012), if Facebook is leveraged properly, it would allow sports organization to build huge fan base and therefore improves participation drive traffic to their official websites and even develop sponsorship programmes to increase revenue. Text messages give the power to keep team updated anywhere, anytime. It can be used to pass information to coaches and players. Professional sport teams have implemented the use of short messaging service for communication in different ways which include informing players and other officials of training schedule or changing in training schedule, informing them of emergency meetings among others. NBA teams such as Phoenix Sun and Chicago Bulls make use of short messaging services to communicate with team members (Teamsnap, 2018). According Barbara (2018), short messaging service is the most efficient means of communication with people with 91% of adults owning cell phones. He further stated other benefits of text messages as: serving as reminders; means of sending urgent messages; and, a means of sending progress report. This shows that text messaging should be developed by sports managers as part of the tool for disseminating information.

Nigeria school sports started as Hussey Shield Competition when in 1933, E.R.S. Hussey who was then Director of Education for the southern provinces donated a shield for athletics competitions among teachers training colleges in both northern and southern provinces which later metamorphosed into the National Sports Federation (NSSF) in 1976 (Godwingodson, 2015). The fundamental objectives of school sports in any country is to facilitate the total, wholesome and fullest development of each student in terms of enriching his/her intellectual, vocational, emotional, personal, social and psychological resources (Alexia, 2017).

Fruitful association and organization of a game programme in any establishment, means that a country's human possibilities and powerful administration of such possibilities Boyle and Hayness (2013) stated that good character and good behaviour learned within sport context can be transferred from the school community to the society at large.

Statement of the Problem

Traditional media are means of communication and expression that have being widely used before the advent of internet. Component of Traditional Media include: radio broadcast, print media, television coverage, sport talk show, among others. The television and radio have been the most common source of communicating messages to sport audience and a perfect way of introducing and reminding fans, sport lovers and the community of impending events. Despite the potency of these traditional Medias, it is being plagued with various problems such as insufficient level of accessibility, literacy level of consumers and inconsistent power supply. The internet gave succor to these problems and it has dramatically changed how sports organizers communicate with fans, and other sports stakeholders (Martin K.; Iztok P.; Maja M.; & Irena N. Š. 2025). Internet has created avenue for students to participate in online discussion of sports events and send message electronically to classmates on related sports issues. These new technologies have also allowed fans and sports lovers to have an unhindered access to their sporting idols (Kassing & Sanderson 2010).

Despite the benefits of this new technology, sports administrators in post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State have not fully tapped into the potentials of social networks as an effective tool in communicating with sport stakeholders for effective school sports programme. It was on this premise that this study was carried out to examine the

influence of social networks on the organization of school sports programmes in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in this study.

1. Will the use of twitter influence the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area?
2. Will the use of short messaging service influence the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area?
3. Will the use of facebook influence the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. The use of twitter will not significantly influence the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.
2. The use short messaging service (SMS) will not significantly influence the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government.
3. The use of facebook will not significantly influence the organization of school sports programme in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to examine influence of social network and media application on organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area. The objective is specifically meant to:

1. investigate the influence of the use of twitter on organization of school sports programme in secondary schools.
2. examine the influence of the use of shat messaging service on organization of school sports programme in secondary schools.
3. evaluate the influence of the use of facebook on organization of school sports programme in secondary schools.

Methodology

A descriptive research design of survey type was used. The population for this study comprises of all sports officials and school principals in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 85 sports officials 15 school principals and vice principals were randomly selected making a total of 100 respondents for this study. The research instrument used for the study was a researcher structured questionnaire of four-point Likert rating scale format. The instrument was validated by three experts in related fields. The reliability of the instrument was established through test re-test method using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Coefficient of 0.75 was obtained. The administration of data was done by the researcher and three trained research assistants, the data collected were analysed using inferential statistics of Chi-square to test the formulated hypotheses set for the study at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Hypothesis one: Use of twitter will not have significant influence on organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Table 1: Chi-square X' result on influence of use of twitter on organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Row Total	Cal. X ² Value	df	Crit. X ² value	Dec
1.	Operating twitter account makes organizing school sports programme difficulty	15	35	8	42	100	22.04	12	21.02	H ₀ Rejected
2.	I don't tweets other sports masters and P.E teacher on sport programme in my school	18	10	38	34	100				
3.	I don't follow sport events in my local government with my twitter account	13	12	27	48	100				
4.	Use of twitter is not necessary for communicating sport programmes among sports officers	20	14	46	20	100				
5.	P.E teachers and sport masters do not make use of sport handle to communicate with one another	15	5	50	30	100				
Column Total		81	76	169	174	500				

P<0.05

Table one revealed that the use of twitter significantly influences the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State. The calculated X² value of 22.04 is higher than the table value X² value of 21.02 at 12 degree of freedom and 0.05 alpha level. The null hypothesis that stated that the use of twitter will not have significant influence on organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area was rejected. .

Hypothesis Two: Short messaging service will not significantly influence organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area

Table 2: Chi-square X result on influence of short message service on organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Row Total	Cal. X ² Value	df	Crit. X ² value	Dec
1.	I make use of short message service to pass information to my colleagues on sport programmes in schools	5	10	20	65	100	25.31	12	21.02	H ₀₂ Rejected
2.	Most P.E teacher and sport msters rarely use short message service on sport programmes	10	15	35	40	100				
3.	I don't have the necessary skills to handle short message service for short programmes	20	14	50	16	100				
4.	It is not necessary to use short service message for sport programmes at secondary school levels	8	11	39	42	100				
5.	We use short message service platform to pass information on sports event among sports officers in secondary schools	25	14	16	45	100				
Column Total		68	64	160	208	500				

P<0.05

Table two shows calculated X² value of 25.31 which is higher than the table value X value of 21.02 at 12 degree of freedom and 0.05 alpha level, since the calculated X' value is higher than the table value X³ value hence, the null hypothesis that stated that the use of short messaging service will not significantly influence the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area is rejected. This means that short messaging service have significant influence on the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Hypothesis Three: Use of facebook will not have significant influence on organization of school sports programme among secondary school in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Table 3: Chi-square X result on influence of use of facebook on organization of school sports programme among secondary schools

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Row Total	Cal. X ² Value	df	Crit. X ² value	Dec
1.	Having facebook account contribute to effective organization of school sports	15	30	45	10	100				
2.	Messages, events and photos sent by the organizer of school sports programme more difficult for sports officers in schools	10	25	15	50	100				
3.	Use of facebook for communication and sports programmes is not necessary	31	19	30	20	100				
4.	P.E teachers and sport masters make use of facebook to communicate on pending sports programme	9	23	27	41	100	29.44	12	21.02	H ₀₁ Rejected
5.	Facebook as a social network a influence by participation on sport programme in my local government	14	26	45	15	100				
	Column Total	79	123	162	136	500				

P<0.05

Table three revealed the calculated X² value of 29.44 is higher than the table value x² value of 21.02 at 12 degree of freedom and 0.05 alpha level, since the calculated X² value is higher than the table value X value, hence, the null hypothesis that stated the use of facebook will not have significant influence on organization of school sports programme among secondary schools was hereby rejected. This implies that use of facebook significantly influence the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from tested hypothesis one revealed that use of twitter has significant influence on organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area. This finding corroborates the view of Hambrick (2012) who

stressed that most sports manager use social media like twitter to send instant messages to their colleagues in term of results of matches which sometimes used to add value to their brand and to strength the brand that the fans have with team. Similarly, Carolina (2012) observed that athletes in all sports used twitter as a way to comment on games that they support chart, and also to check the view of their fans towards their performance.

The finding from tested hypothesis two also shows that Short Messaging Service has significant influence on organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area. This result is in agreement of Hu and Chua (2005) who affirmed that the advent of mobile devices bring about instant gratification of news and information about sports development. The use of short messaging service to send vital sport information among sports officers often enhance effective organization of sports programme among sports officers. Also Manish (2002) pointed out that the availability of automatic tools such as short message service of information about sports makes organizing of school sports programme more interesting among sports organizers at secondary schools level.

The finding from hypothesis three revealed that the use of facebook have significant influence on organization of school sports programme among secondary schools in the study area. This result tallied with the view of Jackson (2005) that stated that most sports organization within school setting usually reports or send messages through facebook which makes organization of school sports programme at secondary school level so easy to administer. Sports organizations uses facebook and twitter for communication and to disseminate information about sports programme in schools. These findings showed that the use of social media networking tools are very important in the successful organization of school sports programme in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the study concluded that:

The use of social media network such as Twitter, Short-messaging service and Facebook contribute immensely to the organization of school sports programme among post-primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1. The organizers of school sports programme should endeavor to adopt the use of Twitter as a means of disseminating messages to enhance organization of school sports programme among secondary schools in Ilorin South Government Area of Kwara State.
2. There is need for sports officers and games masters to always use Short- message service to send messages and information on the organization of school sports programme among secondary schools in Ilorin South Government Area of Kwara State.
3. The use of Facebook should be adopted by the sports officers in schools to post picture and sending instant messages to their colleagues as regards organization of school sports programme among secondary schools in Ilorin South Government Area of Kwara State.

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