

Economical Use of the New Media by Artisans and Entrepreneurs for Improved Living Standard in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper explores the relevance of new media technologies knowledge in improving the socio-economic power of the young rural artisans and entrepreneurs. The paper began with a discussion of the socio-economic predicament of young rural artisans and entrepreneurs. It went further to discuss the new media technologies and its relevance in promoting and marketing goods and services and argued that young rural artisans and entrepreneurs can improve their living standard if they have adequate knowledge and skills of how to use the new media economically. The paper identified how the new media can be economically used by young rural artisans and entrepreneurs to improve their standard of living and reduction of brain drain in the rural areas. The paper recommended, among others that government should enter into partnership policy arrangement develop with the telecommunication companies on special data packages for young rural artisans and entrepreneurs in the rural areas to reduce the cost of data and improve social amenities such as electricity supply.

Keywords: New Media, Rural Artisans, Entrepreneurs Standard of living, Telecommunication companies

Introduction

Globalisation, technological advancement and the explosion of web based, internet powered communication have introduced a radical change to how the world works in all spheres. The internet has brought about a shift and dramatic revolution in the way issues

concerning human relationships, security, agriculture, economy, business, communication, politics, health and other facet of human existence is viewed. This radical change is more eminent in information and communications advancement shrinking the world to a global village (Ekwueme and Okoro, 2018). New media technology is a growing media technology that is widely used by all and sundry to promote and project products and services and rural artisans and entrepreneurs should not be left out of this opportunity (Odun and Utulu, 2016).

Suleiman (2021) described an artisan as a creative person with a craft at hand. To Mooko and Aina (2007), artisans are those who perform skilled work with their hands. They described artisans as persons who are engaged in skilled craft works such as hairdressing/barbing, mechanics, refrigerator/air conditioner repairing, masonry, printing, carpentry/furniture making, shoe making, building/construction, electrical work, spraying/painting, fashion designing/tailoring, vulcanizing, book binding, plumbing, panel beating, welding among others. Artisans are major players of any growing economy. Nigeria economy can be said to have been stunted due to the neglect of the artisan sector. If the sector is properly organised, it has the capacity to rescue the rural youth from unemployment, drug abuse, crime and other social vices that can mar the socio-economic development of the country.

Entrepreneur has been described as an individual who creates a new business, bearing most of the risks and enjoying most of the rewards. They are commonly seen as an innovator, a source of new ideas, goods, services and business. Entrepreneur play a key role in any economy, using their skills and initiative necessary to anticipate needs and bringing good new ideas to market (Hayes, 2021). He described entrepreneurship as the process of setting up a business. Entrepreneurship covers the creation of new enterprises, innovation and the management of new enterprises (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Entrepreneurship is defined as an activity that involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organising, markets, processes and raw materials through organising efforts that previously had not existed (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000 ; Mbhele, 2011).

Studies have shown that rural artisans and entrepreneurs are facing numerous challenges. Patel and Shah (2017) stated that rural artisans and entrepreneurs mostly work in traditional unorganized sector in which they are vulnerable to exploitation and low wages. This is due to being an unorganized, lack of education, low capital, poor exposure, absence of market intelligence and a poor institutional framework. Banik (2018) opined that rural artisans and entrepreneurs are less exposure to information and technology; they lack formal training, marketing support system and non-competitive products. (Jayadatta, 2017) attributed the socio-economic predicament of rural entrepreneurs to lack of knowledge in information technology which could help in projecting their services.

Despite the huge opportunity presented by this sector in terms of capacity for poverty reduction, employment generation leading to economy development, the sector has been left uncoordinated by government. The rural artisans and entrepreneurs lack marketing strategies which could improve their sales and patronage thereby improving their socio- economic condition. Alabi, Famakinwa and Ogunjimi (2017) explain that the decades of poor infrastructure in Nigeria have collapsed many rural innovations such as those in the artisan and entrepreneurial sectors. They are always constrained with the size of their immediate market due to the low income of its rural dwellers. With the outsized number of low income earners in the rural communities, research has shown that rural entrepreneurs are faced with the difficulty of increasing the demand for their produce (Olabisi and Olagbemi, 2012; Kumar, 2016).

However, the emergence of new media has provided a huge opportunity for rural artisans and entrepreneurs to market their products, goods and services. Chavis (2010) described new media as any type of application meant to transfer information via digital techniques, computerized systems or data networks. This implies that old media such as television, film or paper-based products are not part of new media technology. Studies have indicated that traditional mass media audiences are increasingly turning towards the new media for information and gratification of certain communication needs (Rudloff and Fray, 2010).

Before the inception of the new media technologies, only the traditional media was available for the advertisement of goods and services. Advertisement of goods and services were concentrated on traditional media since there were no other alternatives. With the advent and increase in the use of the new media across fields, advertisers and business owners have also engaged the use of the new media platforms for advertising their goods and services. This implies that the popularity of the traditional media is waning. Advertising products, goods and services on the social media platforms have opened the door to a million possibilities for marketers, business owners, artisans and entrepreneurs.

In spite of the potentials inherent in the new media in terms of marketing of goods and service to the larger audience, there is the limited knowledge of the economic and commercial usage by the rural artisans and entrepreneurs in marketing and projecting their services. Literature have shown that, most of the rural artisans and entrepreneurs with smart phones and new media applications are only using them for social interaction, taking photographs, listening to music, and watching videos. Very few of them have the knowledge about the economic and commercial usage in promoting their goods and services (Shah and Patel, 2018). Suleiman (2021) assert that most artisans are not marketing their products and services on the social media sites due to financial constraints and inadequate knowledge about its economic and commercial benefits.

Due to poor patronage, some rural artisans and entrepreneurs have closed shops, while the existing ones are complaining of the hostile market environment leading to their migration to the urban communities (Allen, 20009). This development could lead to brain drain in the rural areas in terms of non-availability of these rural artisans and entrepreneurs and also urban congestion which could breed insecurity. Makinde (2021) attributed the high level of insecurity in Ibadan metropolis to population surge which could be attributed to migration among skilled and unskilled young adult migrants from the rural communities seeking better opportunities to project their service in the urban communities.

New media enables artisans and entrepreneurs to increase their worthiness, cultivate strategic partnerships and increase their contact with customers and partners. It has become imperative for artisans and entrepreneurs in the rural areas to understand how new media technologies work as a communication and marketing tool and how they can significantly market their skills and businesses (Jagongo and Kinyua, 2013). The new media is one of the most promising channels in today's marketing for selling goods and services as it provides e-commerce opportunities for the rural artisans and entrepreneurs. (Cot, 2020) identified Websites, Blogs, Emails, Social media networks, Music and Television streaming services, Virtual and augmented reality as an examples of new media technology.

This paper focuses on the social media network because social media is easily accessible and has the highest number of users of all the new media technologies (Punch newspaper, 16th February, 2021). According to Datareportal (2021) there are 4.48billion social media users around the world as of July 2021, equating to almost 57 percent of the global population While Nigeria had 33million active social media users as of January, 2021 (Statista, 2021). Olotewo (2016) asserts that in emerging economies like Nigeria, social media marketing is gaining traction. However, despite the emerging economic benefits of social media marketing there is the slow adoption of social media marketing in Nigeria by artisans and entrepreneurs particularly in the rural areas. Tapping into this opportunity by displaying their skills, goods and services will give them access to any larger market in the world.

Conceptual Clarifications: Social Media Platforms and Benefits

Social media has been described as the use of electronic means to communicate and interact. The platform is becoming more popular among business owners because it allows them to connect in the online world to form a group, a forum and community where ideas and information about their goods and services can be shared without geographic barrier (Sokoya, Onifade and Alabi 2012). Social media is any website which allows users to share their content, opinions, views and encourages interaction and community building.

Boateng and Amankwaa (2016) defined social media as the application that allows users to converse and interact with each other. It is an online space that is used by people to connect, share, communicate, establish or maintain connection with others for various purposes. It enables people to build relations with others who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. It relies on many electronic devices like tablets, smart phones, i-pads, laptops, and internet-based technologies for it to function and connect people. Promoting a business via these sites serves as a very attractive business proposition due to the vast amount of steady traffic every day.

Stelzner (2012) opined that marketers have considered social media as important platform for businesses promotion as it helps to increased customer base and exposure, generate leads, improved sales, developed loyal fans and establishment of business partnerships. Mangold and Faulds (2009) recognise that social media allows an enterprise to connect with both existing and potential customers, engage with them and reinforce a sense of community around the enterprise's offering(s). Further, an information rich website can help a business to develop relationships with customers by providing more effective marketing, new communication and distribution channels, shorter time to market, customized products, 24hour online technical support and online interactive community.

Otugo, Uzegbunam and Obikezie (2015) revealed that in Nigeria and part of Africa, the diffusion of new digital technologies and their use are increasing by the day. They noted that the advent of social media has introduced a paradigm shift in the way advertisers and business owners promote their goods and services even though the realm of social media advertising is still in its developmental stages. Thirushen (2013) asserted that, social media advertising has become a norm for most companies and business owners. He identifies social media platform to include; Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp. He believed that Social media marketing is gaining more prominence among companies as it enables brand engagement on a more personal level with the customer. Ekwueme and Okoro (2018) identified cost effective,

building strong customer relationship, highly targeted and having a wider reach as the benefits of using social media by artisans and entrepreneurs in promoting their goods and services.

Artisanship and Entrepreneurship

The artisan sector has been described as the second largest consumer base sector in the developing countries after agriculture (Indego Africa, 2016). They constitute a large percentage of the workforce in the informal sector of Nigeria's economy. The Artisan sector has been adjudged to have a huge potential of playing a great role in reducing the unemployment rate and contribute to faster economic recovery in Nigeria (Itasanmi, Ojedeji and Adelore, 2019). The Encyclopedia of the Early Modern World described artisans as members of guilds, skilled men who fashioned artifacts with hands and tools in autonomous workshops without the aid of powered machinery. In other words, artisans are skilled craft workers who make or create things by hand and their activities are often characterized by low entry requirements in terms of capital and professional qualifications, the small scale of operations, skills often acquired outside of formal education and labour-intensive (Onwe, 2013).

An artisan is a creative person with a craft at hand. Artisans practice a craft and may through experience and aptitude reach the expressive levels of an artist. Ezenwakelu and Ikon (2014) argued that economic success relies increasingly on the ability to innovate and create an economy driven by natural resources. The artisan economy consists of craftspeople, art makers, farmers, and food producers (Holmes, McLean and Green, 2012). Artisans play an active role in the primary production and exchange of goods and services to millions of Nigerians and serve as a great employer for those who by education or other requirements are unable to secure job in the organized or formal sector of the economy and ultimately promote entrepreneurial spirit among the populace (Kinyanjui, 2016).

The African Development Bank in 2013 opined that 55 percent of Sub-Saharan African's Gross Domestic Product and 80 percent of the labour force is driven by the informal sector of which artisans constitute the larger constituent (Itasanmi, Ojedeji and Adelore,

2019). Despite the high production quality achieved by many artisans, they often find difficulty marketing their goods to new markets because they are unable to compete with the marketing platforms of large-scale industrial companies. Many artisans struggle to adapt to modern methods of acquiring and selling their goods. There is the need to provide education on modern business and management practices, such as market communication skills and the utilization of social media for professional networking, so that artisans can achieve a notable increase in their quality of life (Banker, Chowdhary, Prindle and Xu, 2016).

Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with a value, particularly responding to the opportunities available. It involves time, efforts and assumption of risk, with the expectation of receiving the rewards at the end which can be monetary or non-monetary (Pahujaval and Sanjeev, 2015). Studies have shown that new and small businesses contribute significantly to job creation, innovation, economic growth and development (Cooper, Folta and Woo, 1995). Scholars have identified innovation as a key attribute of entrepreneurship as it involves the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organising, markets, processes and raw materials through organising efforts that previously had not existed (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

Mehdi and Hamid (2011) described entrepreneurship as a process in which the entrepreneur establishes new jobs and firms, new creative and growing organisations associated with risk taking by new and creative ideas and entrepreneurship identification of the new opportunities and resources mobilisation. Kirzner (1997) described an entrepreneur as an individual who is alerted to opportunities for trade. He/she is capable of identifying suppliers and customers and acting as an intermediary where profit arises out of the intermediary function. Entrepreneurs require information, capital, skills, and labour to start business activities. According to Jayadatta, (2017) the benefits of rural entrepreneurship to economic development; cannot be overemphasized as they provide employment opportunities, balanced regional growth, check on migration of rural population, check on social evils existing in society, awaken the rural youth and improved standard of living.

Strategies for Economic Use of the New Media by Artisans and Entrepreneurs

The use of social media platforms by small businesses is an important but under-researched area (Jagongo and Kinyua, 2013). With the development and availability of these platforms, the capacity of artisans and entrepreneurs to grow and improve their socio-economic status significantly has become a very real possibility through the display of their goods and services either in picture or video forms. Social media platforms have the capacity to increase the customer base, social contacts, hasten business operations, facilitation of innovation and favorable pricing system. Social media provides leverage for small and medium enterprises because it has created mechanisms for attaining sustainable competitive advantage.

In the present day, the heart of customer activity is progressively becoming virtual in nature, situated inside a social media to check the pictures and videos of desired goods and services (Baird and Parasnis, 2011). The social media platforms provide the opportunity for rural artisans and entrepreneurs to display their goods and service to attract and expand their customer base. The knowledge of economic and commercial use of social media tools by artisans and entrepreneurs has yet to be fully achieved. Studies have proven the potency of the social media to impacting business positively thereby improving the socio-economic lives of the business owners. Business Wire (2012) opined that social media platforms have a rapid effect on the growth and economic development of a number of small medium enterprises through the display of their products and services on their platforms. Social media has become alternative for expensive and time consuming marketing campaigns particularly on the old media platform (Benwell 2014).

Through display of pictures and video contents of their products and services 93 percent of companies used social media to promote their businesses globally in 2013 where Facebook has the highest concentration followed by Twitter (Bennett, 2013). Social media has the capacity to improve the socio-economic life of the artisans by promoting and projecting their services on the social media platforms. They are potent tools in modern communication and

marketing. Business organizations in Nigeria are embracing social media to communicate with their customers and acknowledged the successes recorded in their businesses with the use of social media advertising. Olotewo (2016) credited the boom in social media marketing to its numerous roles of reaching more customers and has positively affects brand success in emerging economies.

Social media platforms can bring the success every artisan and entrepreneur crave in business. Rural artisans and entrepreneurs should involve in social media marketing which will enhance their businesses. Social media has become a viable tool in the hands of modern entrepreneur for business differentiation and success because the business world is becoming more competitive in the emerging global village. Many organisations around the world such as GSM operators, banks, airway companies, universities enlarge their promotional activities on social media through advertising their products and service in pictorial and in video forms (Gença and Öksüz, 2015). There is the need for rural artisans and entrepreneurs to key into this opportunity to promote their goods and services.

Benefits of Economical Use of the New Media by Artisans and Entrepreneurs for Improved Living Standard

The growth of social media has emphasized that social media platforms are crucial component in business development. There is the need for artisans and entrepreneurs to incorporate social media innovations into promoting their products and services to ensure positive growth and enhance their profit and income. The economic and commercial use of the social media platforms have provided the opportunity for artisans and entrepreneurs to grow their businesses reasonably since social media platforms are an inexpensive marketing instruments. Positive relationship between social media platforms and business performance has been established by literature.

Economic and commercial use of these platforms can potentially improve sales, diminish costs, expand customer service, grow products and services awareness, and grow business-to-business relations (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010;

Mangold and Faulds, 2009; McCann and Barlow, 2015). The economic and commercial use of social media platforms will give artisans and entrepreneurs access to global market thereby placing them on equal footing with large corporations. It makes it easier for artisans and entrepreneurs to compete in the global space without having a physical presence in other countries of the world (Bedard, 2016).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has been able to validate the capacity of social media platforms to impact artisans and entrepreneurs positively in a developing country like Nigeria. It has been established that social media has the capacity to bring the success every rural artisans and entrepreneur crave in expanding their goods and services through displaying their goods and service either through picture or video on the social media platforms. There is the need for rural artisans and entrepreneurs to learn the economic and commercial use of these platforms. The usage of these social media tools by young rural artisans and entrepreneurs will not only increase their sales thereby improving their economic income leading to improved standard of living, it will discourage rural urban migration among rural artisans thereby preventing brain drain in the rural areas. Based on this, the following recommendations were made.

1. Government agencies such as National Directorate of Employment, Ministry of Youth Affairs should organise seminars and workshops towards exposing the rural artisans and entrepreneurs to the benefits of social media towards improving their creativity and businesses.
2. The policy makers should enact policies on internet surfing rates and e-business to encourage the technological adoption that would grow the SMEs industry.
3. Government should enter into partnership with telecommunication companies on improving network services and special data packages for young rural artisans and entrepreneurs in the rural areas to reduce the cost of data.
4. Since the world is becoming a global village, rural artisans and entrepreneurs should invest their time on acquiring knowledge on commercial use of the social media platform in order to fit into the business world at large.

5. Government should provide adequate infrastructural facilities such as electricity supply that will enhance ICT growth in Nigeria.
6. Seminar, workshop and training programmes should be organised for artisans and entrepreneurs on the commercial and economic use of the social media platforms.

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Peer Pressure, Time Management and Academic Performance of Female Secondary School Pupils in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated peer pressure, time management and academic performance of female secondary school students in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. A sample of 310 respondents was selected through multi-stage sampling procedure. Two hypotheses were tested. A questionnaire tagged “Peer pressure, time management and academic performance” was used for data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was the major statistical tool employed for data analysis. The findings revealed a significant relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of female secondary school students in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria ($r=0.650$, $p<0.05$). It was also shown that time management and academic performance of female secondary school students in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria were significantly related ($r=0.715$, $p<0.05$). It was also revealed that the joint contribution of the two variables (peer group and time management) was significant in the prediction of academic performance of female students ($F = 8.375$, $p<0.05$). Based on the findings from the study, it was recommended that female secondary school students should be made to cultivate the act of wise utilisation of time. Among other things that there should be counselors in all secondary schools to help students guide against negative peer pressure; parents should provide proper monitoring