

Use of Social Media for Dissemination of Drug Abuse Prevention Information in Federal University Libraries in South-East Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated use of social media in disseminating information on drug abuse prevention by academic librarians in South East Nigeria. A survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 71 academic librarians working in the four South-East Federal Universities. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Mean and percentages were used for data analysis. The major findings include that 82.76 percent of respondents used Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Chat and SMS to disseminate early intervention as prevention information on drug abuse. It was also found that Face- book was the most frequently used social medium for dissemination of drug abuse prevention information and fluctuation of Internet access posed the greatest challenge for dissemination of drug abuse prevention information in university libraries. The study recommended among others, that there is need for in-service training of academic librarians on use of social media for information dissemination.

Key words: Drug abuse, Drug abuse prevention, Federal University Libraries, Information dissemination, Nigeria and Social media.

Introduction

Drug abuse is a phenomenon that is characterized by a destructive pattern of using a drug or substance that leads to significant problems or distress. Youths are increasingly engaging in drug abuse. Drug abuse is seen as a very serious risk-taking behaviour among adolescents and young adults (Szasz, 2013). In Nigeria, the ever-increasing population and a surge in number of street youths, mostly from secondary school drop-outs have

exacerbated drug abuse. Famuyiwa, Aina and Bankole-Oti (2011) conducted a study on the use of psychoactive substances by adolescents in metropolitan Lagos, Nigeria. Their findings indicate that the rate of substance abuse among adolescents ranged between 4.0 and 4.8 percent. Mamman, Othman, & Lian (2014) investigated prevalence of drug abuse among adolescents in Nigeria. Their study indicated that 65 percent of high school students used drugs to

have good time, 54 percent wanted to experiment to see what it is like and 20–40 percent used it to alter their moods. Oliha (2014) and Staff (2012) state that some Nigerian youths are becoming drug dependent and that they practise the use of substances such as heroin, cocaine and Indian hemp. Findings from their study indicated that methamphetamine and substances containing codeine capable of intoxicating are mostly found in schools. To combat the social disease caused by drug abuse, many preventive measures have been established and one of them is the use of information.

Researchers such as Udofia (2014), Scanfield, Scanfield and Larson (2010), Lord, Brevard & Budman (2011), and Wakefield, Loken & Hornik (2010) have responded to this anomaly by exploring various ways of disseminating prevention information on drug abuse to youths. Udofia (2014) investigated administration of drug abuse among secondary school students in five public schools of five state capitals in Nigeria, namely Benin, Enugu, Ibadan, Jos and Lagos and his findings indicate that with appropriate education, drug abuse can be reduced drastically through the radio, television, commercials and other channels of sending out information. Other researchers, such as Wakefield, Spittal, Young, Durkin & Borland (2011) and Brinn, Carson, Esterman, Chang & Smith (2012) have investigated the effect of mass media intervention for preventing smoking

in young people. Their findings indicate short-term increases in the likelihood of smokers making a quit attempt and that mass media could prevent uptake of smoking in young people. Among the identified successful channel of disseminating information on drug abuse is social media

There are also six types of social media. They include social networks such as *Facebook*, *MySpace* and *LinkedIn*; Bookmarking sites such as *StumbleUpon*; Social News, such as *Reddit*; Media sharing such as *YouTube* and *Flickr*; Microblogging such as *Twitter*, and Blog comments/Forums/Blogging sites such as Blogger (SEOPressor5, 2015). Researchers such as Scanfield, Scanfield, & Larson, (2010); Brevard & Budman (2011) and Winzel (2012) explored Facebook's and Twitter's potential to serve as powerful vehicles to connect with college-aged populations about their drug use. Winzel (2012) and Steiner (2009) carried out similar research and noted that the messages were very effective and that social media such as *Facebook*, *My Space*, *Blogs*, *Twitter* and *Wikis* can be used effectively in library reference work

Han-Zhu, Joseph, Huey, & Yu-Hua (2006) noted that in China social media was engaged to increase anti-drug education and curb drug abuse challenges in primary, secondary schools as well as the general population. To help curb drug abuse challenges, Osadebe & Dim (2009) posit that it is the responsibility of

academic librarians to disseminate information on topical issues such as drug abuse to students, since most of their clients are students who need this life-saving information most.

Prevention information on drug abuse can be done through the family by parents drawing attention of their children to radio and network discussions on drug abuse. Schools can encourage their students to have accounts with social networks where they will initiate discussions on drug abuse. These measures are aptly captured by the National Drug Control (2012)

However, Jaeger & Bertot (2010) observed that there are many challenges hindering use of social media to disseminate prevention information on drug abuse in Nigeria. Among them are lack of access to internet connectivity in some areas, unstable internet connectivity which is prevalent in developing countries and the fact that many of the target audience may not be registered members of the social media platform being used. Physical band width in developing countries is low because it is prohibitively expensive. (Haber & Jackson, 2012). Ezeani (2009) identifies lack of constant power supply, phobia for technology, orchestrated by lack of skill and lack of enabling environment as some of the factors that hinder use of social networks information dissemination among librarians. In a similar study, Ajayi and Nwachukwu (2012) identified lack of ICT infrastructure, management problems, inadequate security and financial

problems. In this connection, use of social media could be most appropriately engaged in Federal University libraries that benefit from Federal Government's financial support.

Though efforts have been made by researchers such as, Lord, Brevard, & Budman (2011), Udofia, (2014), Brinn, Carson, Esterman, Chang & Smith (2012) and Wakefield, Spittal, Young, Durkin & Borland (2011) to disseminate information on drug abuse prevention, none of these works centered on the role of the library in disseminating information on drug abuse prevention through social media. It is this gap that this work sets out to bridge.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine the use of social media in disseminating information on drug abuse to young adults. Specifically, the work determined:

- 1) types of social media through which information on drug abuse prevention. were disseminated
- 2) frequency of use of social media in disseminating information on drug abuse prevention
- 3) challenges associated with disseminating information on prevention of drug abuse through social media.

Methodology

Design and Area of Study: The study design was a survey. The area of study is South-East geo-political zone of Nigeria. This consists of Abia,

Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. There are four Federal University Libraries in the area.

Population for the Study: The population for the study comprised all the academic librarians working in the federal university libraries. They comprised 40 academic librarians working in University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), five in Michael Okpara, University, Umudike, (MOU), six in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, (NAU), and 20 in Federal University of Technology Owerri, (FUTO). The population size was 71. There was no sampling because of the small size of the population.

Instrument for Data Collection: A 4-point scale questionnaire was used for data collection. It was validated by two experts in the Department of Library and Information Science. The reliability of the instrument which was estimated using Cronbach Alpha formula and found to be 0.76 was used.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis: Seventy-one copies of the instrument were administered to librarians by hand. A total of 63 copies (88.73%) were returned. Only fifty-

nine copies (93.65%) were however properly filled and used for data analysis. Out of the fifty-nine, twenty-nine copies of the questionnaire completely answered the question which required indicating social media used for disseminating information on each preventive measure of drug abuse. Percentage of the number of respondents that stated types of social media (column 2) for a particular preventive measure (column 1) was calculated. In Table 2, Fifty-nine copies of the questionnaire indicated use of named social media for dissemination on drug abuse prevention information only, (without relating any social medium to particular preventive measure). Frequency of each social medium in the fifty-nine copies of the questionnaire was used to calculate its mean. In Table 3, frequency of each item (challenge) in the fifty-nine copies of the questionnaire was used to calculate each item's mean. Fifty percent (50%) as well as mean scores of 2.5 and above were termed to be agreed with by respondents.

Results: Findings of the study

Table 1: Types of Social Media Used to Disseminate Each Preventive Measure of Drug Abuse N=29

S/N	Preventive Measures	Social Media Used	No. of Respondents	%
1.	Early Intervention	Face book, LinkedIn Twitter, Chat, SMS	24	82.76
2	Increased publicity of adverse effects of drug abuse	Face book, e-mail, My Space, Chat, Linked in Twitter, SMS, You Tube and e-mail	22	75.86
3	Creative use of	Face book, You		

	Social media sources	Tube, Twitter, Chat Linked in, Blog & Wiki	21	72.41
4	Instruction on strong and positive family bonds.	Face book, Chat, Library Thing, SMS, You Tube, My Space, Wiki and Twitter	20	68.97
5	Instruction on clear rule of conduct that are consistently reinforced within the family.	You Tube, Face book, Chat Newsgroup, Library Thing, Twitter and SMS.	18	62.02
6	Instruction on involvement of parents in the lives of their Children	Chat, Wiki, Library Thing Face book, You Tube and Twitter.	17	58.62
7	Providing guidelines to success in school performance	Face book, Library Thing, Teleconferencing, Twitter SMS and Chat	16	55.17
8	Laying emphasis on high self-esteem	Face book, Chat, My Space, Library Thing Twitter and You Tube	18	62.06
9	Encouraging strong Bonds with institutions such as schools and religious organizations.	Face book, Linked in, Twitter, Chat, You Tube Library Thing and SMS	18	62.06
10	Discussion of assertiveness skills that can motivate people to resist engaging in drug abuse	Library Thing, Wiki, You Tube, SMS, News-group, Face book, Chat, Linked in and Teleconferencing.	19	65.52
11	Discussion of virtues of abstaining from drug abuse	Chat, Face book, Linked in, Library Thing, Wiki, Twitter, You Tube, News-group.	20	68.97
12	Discussions on Improved social skills.	Chat, SMS, Flickr, Linked in, Library Thing, Face book, Twitter and Newsgroup.	19	65.52

Table 1 shows that twelve items were disseminated through social media. Percentage of respondents that disseminated each preventive measure through social media ranged from 55.17 - 82.76. Early intervention with a

percentage of 82.76 was the most used preventive measure, while providing guidelines to success in school performance with percentage of 55.17 was the preventive measure used by fewer people.

Table 2: Frequency of Use of Social Media to Disseminate Information about Prevention of Drug Abuse N= 59

S/N	Social Media	Mean	Decision
1	Wiki	2.54	F U
2	Linked in	2.34	Less F U
3	Teleconferencing	2.29	Less F U
4	Newsgroup	2.29	Less F U
5	Flicker	2.12	Less F U
6	Facebook	3.15	Mst F U
7	Twitter	2.66	F U
8	You Tube	2.66	F U
9	Library Thing	2.54	F U
10	SMS	2.92	Mre F U
11	Chat	2.76	F U
12	My Space	2.44	Less F U

Key: Mst F U= Most Frequently Used; Mre F U = More Frequently Used;
F U= Frequently Used ; Less F U = Less Frequently Used

Table 2 shows that five media were frequently used. Their mean scores ranged from 2.54-2.76. One medium was more frequently used, while five media were less frequently used. Facebook was the most frequently used social medium

Table 3: Mean Responses on Challenges Associated with Disseminating Prevention Information on Drug Abuse through Social Media in University Libraries. N=59

S/N	Challenges	Mean	Decision
1	Internet access in university libraries fluctuates	3.51	A
2	Some members of the internet group are not connected to the Internet	3.37	A
3	Some members of the target group are not registered members of the social media platform being used for disseminating the information.	3.20	A
4	Some librarians lack skills in use of social media	3.17	A
5	The use of social media requires a large bandwidth which could need substantial institutional resources	3.19	A
6	Numerous applications available through social media are potential sources of viruses. They can pose a serious threat to the safety of IT systems in these libraries	2.93	A
7	Constant power supply to sustain the programme is lacking.	3.34	A
8	There is inadequate Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure to bolster up the Programme.	3.14	A

Key: A=Accepted

Table 3 shows that eight items were accepted as challenges confronting academic librarians in disseminating prevention information on drug abuse through social media. These means ranged from 2.93-3.51

Discussion of Findings

Early Intervention by parents drawing attention of their children to radio and network discussions on drug abuse attracted 82.76 % of respondents. This agrees with Obot's (2014) belief as well as Wakefield, Loken & Hornik (2010) and Udofia (2014) who state that drug abuse can be reduced drastically through the radio and television. They also observe that mass media campaigns can directly or indirectly produce positive changes or prevent negative changes in health-related behaviours across large populations. The advent of mobile phones which can also receive radio signal has also helped in this direction. It was also supported and aptly captured by the National Drug Control (2012) Findings from the study reveals that Face book, SMS and Chat are the most, more and frequently used social media to disseminate information about prevention of drug abuse respectively. The rating of Face book as most frequently used social medium is consistent with Lord, Brevard & Budman (2011), Winzel (2012) and Steiner (2009) studies which results supported the potential of Face book. They proffered that Facebook can be used effectively in library reference work. Twitter social medium served

as powerful vehicle in studies of drug use and abuse of college-aged populations. It was explored by Scanfield, Scanfield, & Larson, (2010) who used twitter to investigate evidence of misuse of antibiotics among adolescents. SMS and Chat were rated higher than YouTube and Twitter social media but their impact in disseminating information about prevention of drug abuse has not been largely felt by respondents. YouTube participation involves photographic and possibly video expertise, a skill which is yet to be acquired by many librarians.

The study also shows that first and second greatest challenges confronting dissemination of information on prevention of drug abuse through social media are fluctuation of Internet access in university libraries and the fact that some members of the target group are not connected to the Internet. In developing countries the first challenge is not unexpected due to limited bandwidth. The second one agrees with observation of Jaeger and Bertot (2010) on ensuring equal and sustained public access to government information. Ezeani (2009) opines that some librarians lack internet skills and Ajai & Nwachukwu (2012) observe that there is a lack of ICT infrastructure. The finding that some librarians lack Internet skills does not augur well for library services in the prevalent digital age.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that Face book, was the most frequently used social medium to disseminate information about prevention of drug abuse.. All the identified challenges to dissemination of information on prevention of drug abuse through social media were perceived as serious by librarians. The major challenges confronting dissemination of information on prevention of drug abuse through social media were Internet access fluctuation, the fact that some members of the target group were not connected to the Internet and constant power outage (failure).

Recommendations

1. There is need for in-service training of academic librarians on use of social media for information dissemination.
2. The government should increase the bandwidth allocated to universities at minimum cost so that online information could be accessed seamlessly and fast.
3. The government should improve power supply within the country.
4. University authorities should augment government power supplies to their universities with powerful generators.

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