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Preface

It is with great pleasure that we present the third volume of the International Journal of Specialized and Professional Education (IJOSPED), a compilation of insightful research that advances discourse in specialized and professional education across diverse contexts. This volume features a rich array of studies addressing critical issues in education, ranging from psychological interventions to sociocultural dynamics, technological integration, and inclusive policy frameworks.

The opening article, *"Therapeutic Effects of Behavioural Modelling on the Reduction of Academic Procrastination Among Public University Students in Lagos State"* by Asikhia Olubusayo and Ridwan Ibrahim Bankole, provides empirical insights into mitigating procrastination, a pervasive challenge in higher education. Following this, Ajayi Rachael Adejoke and Kadiri Daniel explore the transformative potential of adult literacy programmes in fostering community development, emphasizing education as a catalyst for societal participation.

In the realm of technology, Akanbi Adekemi Olufunke *et al.* investigate AI-based teaching strategies in STEM education, highlighting teachers' awareness and practices in Osun State. This timely study aligns with global shifts toward digital pedagogy. Meanwhile, Ogunleye Titilayo Omowumi and colleagues critically examine policy perceptions regarding the education of physically challenged children, advocating for inclusive reforms.

The volume further delves into specialized educational needs with Aranmolate Temitope Rasheedat's work on collaborative strategies for gifted visually impaired students, while Abdusalam Oladimeji Sholagberu *et al.* propose innovative health sustainability advocacy for adult learners through social media.

Sociological perspectives take centre stage in Daniju-Jegede *et al.*'s analysis of teacher-child power dynamics in early childhood, complemented by a unique ethno-linguistic study of Yoruba didactic poems, which bridges cultural heritage and educational philosophy.

Each contribution in this volume reflects IJOSPED's commitment to interdisciplinary scholarship, offering actionable knowledge for educators, policymakers, and researchers. We extend our gratitude to the authors, reviewers, and readers whose engagement sustains this intellectual community. As education evolves amidst technological, societal, and global shifts, IJOSPED remains a platform for pioneering research that shapes inclusive and transformative learning environments.

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ABOUT US

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The International Journal of Specialized and Professional Education (IJOSPED) invites researchers, scholars, and practitioners to contribute to our upcoming issue focusing on the evolving landscape of specialized and professional education and other related issues.

SCOPE AND TOPICS OF INTEREST

IJOSPED publishes original research articles reporting on research that fulfils the criteria of a generally accepted research paradigm which critically evaluates the research done in a specific field in education. Thus, we welcome original research, theoretical papers and case studies that explore innovative approaches, challenges, and best practices in this field.

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We encourage submissions on a wide range of topics related to specialized and professional education, including but not limited to:

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- Inclusivity and diversity in specialized education.
- Challenges and opportunities in online professional education.
- Industry-academic partnerships and their impact on specialized education.
- Contemporary Issues in Early childhood and Primary Education
- Special Needs Education
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We look forward to receiving your contributions and sharing valuable insights to advance specialized and professional education.

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PROMOTING ADULTS' HEALTH SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA ADVOCACY IN NIGERIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on promoting adult learners' health sustainability through social media advocacy in Nigeria. The paper discusses the concept social media, health and sustainability health, adult education and the emerging role of social media to promote health behaviours towards a sustainable outcome. Emerging research is focused on evaluating the potential of social media as an opportunity to create awareness. Such measures require less effort in quantifying and isolating the effect. The design of the campaigns is required to be aligned in relation to stages of the behaviour change. The study provides suggestions and recommendations on how this can be achieved. One of the recommendations provided includes the need to implement fact-checking mechanisms on social media platforms to swiftly identify and counter false health information to help reduce the spread of harmful health-related rumours. Also, citizens should increase the use of social media tools for remote consultations, especially in rural areas, to enhance access to healthcare and reduce the burden on physical health facilities

Keywords: *Adults, Advocacy, Health Awareness, Promotion, Social-media, Sustainable Health,*

Introduction

Knowledge societies in the 21st century confront a health decision-making paradox. People are increasingly challenged to make healthy lifestyle choices and manage their personal and family journeys through complex environments and health care systems but are not being prepared or supported well in addressing these tasks. "Modern" societies actively market unhealthy lifestyles, health care systems are increasingly difficult to navigate (even for the best educated people), and education systems too often fail to provide people with adequate skills to access, understand, assess and use information through social media to improve their health and enhance their sustainable health status.

Developing strategies to change health behaviour is one of the biggest challenges of health promotion programs. Social media, as a popular and innovative communication and education tool, offers opportunities to modify health behaviour. While literature on using social media for health promotion campaigns is growing, there is a need to evaluate the approaches used to change health behaviour, rather than only creating awareness. Evaluating the performance of social media campaigns to promote health behaviours towards a sustainable outcome is a complex process. Emerging research is focused on evaluating the potential of social media as an opportunity to create awareness. Such measures require less effort in quantifying and isolating the effect. The design of the campaigns is required to be aligned in relation to stages of the behaviour change.

The review of existing literature on the application of social media in health promotion campaigns revealed a range of negative and positive aspects of using this venue for public health and medicine and challenged its effectiveness to ensure behaviour change and sustainability, especially in the long-term perspective. While some positive aspects include potential access to wider target audience, more accurate health messaging and facilitated communication between health professionals and a wide range of adult learners, the effectiveness of such social media in health promotion campaigns and their evaluation are somewhat questioned by improper communication strategies, lack of support, self-diagnostic and concerns about short- and long-term changes in health behaviour and sustainability among adults (Adeoye, 2020).

Promotion of health awareness campaigns is one of social media's most important functions in Nigeria. But currently, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), public health organizations', and medical professionals use various platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, Instagram and so on to raise public awareness of important health concerns including diet, cleanliness, and vaccination policies, as well as maternal health and immunization. Social media's immediate nature and broad audience make it possible to share health alerts in real time, which is especially important during epidemics or other situations involving the public's health. For example, social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp were used to spread information regarding mask use, social distancing procedures, and the advantages of vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic. This information was crucial in preventing disinformation and enhancing public safety.

Social media has not only raised awareness and encouraged peer participation, but it has also allowed Nigerian healthcare practitioners to offer telemedicine and online consultations. In rural areas where healthcare facilities are scarce, platforms like WhatsApp have been used by doctors to consult with patients remotely, thus broadening access to healthcare and improving health outcomes (Bello, Yusuf & Malik, 2019). When it comes to treating chronic illnesses, mental health issues, and other problems that call for ongoing patient monitoring, this digital transition is very helpful. Nonetheless, social media technologies will probably become even more important in improving Nigerians' health condition as the nation's digital environment develops. Social media serves as a collaborative dissemination platform to reach and influence the target audience and deliver health related information (Sutton, 2018). Social media can provide efficient, ubiquitous and user-friendly approaches to attract large numbers

of participants and demonstrate a certain level of engagement with the health-related messages most especially among adults. Social media interventions may improve early diagnosis of diseases and facilitate behaviour change techniques, such as providing social support and emphasizing the consequences of a health issue (Lawal, 2019).

Research has revealed a significant positive influence of social media on public health protection, with the potential to change individuals' behaviour towards establishing a healthy lifestyle (Oyebanji, 2018). Preliminary evidence shows that social media interventions can effectively promote health behaviour change (Sutton, 2018). Health promotion campaigns effectively contribute to increased awareness of health issues using social media to enhance the willingness of social media users to discuss the problems openly. Recent events related to COVID-19 are a vivid example where social media was used to significantly raise awareness of public health topics and elicit behavioural changes of individuals and thus increased protection against COVID-19 (Oloyede, 2021)

Concept of Social Media

The collection of interactive online tools called social media makes it easier for people to create, and share user-generated content individually or in groups. They are a feature of daily life that is becoming more and more prevalent. Wolf, Sims and Yang (2018) defined social media as a variety of technologies that facilitate the sharing of ideas and information among their users. It is referred to as the digital technology that facilitates the exchange of ideas and information through online communities and networks, including text and images. User-generated material on social media platforms is common and encourages interaction through likes, shares, comments, and discussions. Globally, there are around 5 billion users of social media. A study by Akpan, James & Nwokoro (2022), explained that brand awareness of a product can be set of activities carried out on outdoor advertising through social media platforms to promote consumer engagement and influence sales.

While social media is criticized for spreading hate speech and misinformation, it is also praised for aiding in the development of communities. Additionally, social media plays a bigger and bigger role in the marketing strategies of many businesses. The most popular social media sites in the world are We Chat, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp. It is also a type of communication where users may communicate more with one another by using certain media platforms. Wolf, Sims & Yang (2018), however defined social media as websites which allow profile creation and visibility of relationships between users. Social media refers to web-based programmes that offer features for connections, groups, profiles, and discourse. Some have referred to social media as social media sites, or as a collection of information technologies that enable networking and interactions.

Given how much time individuals spend on social media websites and applications every day; it should come as no surprise that social media plays a significant part in the marketing efforts of many businesses. Social media may be thought of as interactive platforms that let people and groups share, co-create, debate, and alter user-generated content such as text, photos, videos, audio files, and games using online and mobile technology. Social media is a type of online mass media communication where people exchange ideas, information, and

other content, including videos, using websites for social networking and microblogging. Additionally, they are collections of Web 2.0-based programs that facilitate the production and sharing of user-generated content while expanding on its theoretical and technological underpinnings. Indeed, many have mastered the social media landscape successfully, showing the potential of these applications to yield impressive results (Ohiagu & Okorie, 2019).

A variety of online environments where people may engage with friends, coworkers, strangers, information, visual material, and more is also referred to as social media. However, through online communities, people may develop, share, and exchange ideas and information using social media. Depending on the user, this tool can be utilized in a variety of ways. Given the importance of social media in influencing public opinion, terms like "social media" have gained prominence in public discourse and mass communication studies. Examples of these platforms include Facebook, Twitter, and blogs. Real-time one-to-one and many-to-many interactions are now possible because to this change in the way health communication messaging is distributed. Ohiagu & Okorie (2019) affirmed that, social media are online communications that use special techniques that involve participation, conversation, sharing, collaboration and linkage.

Concept of Health and Health Sustainability

Being in a condition of health allows one to express their full potential within their living environment and to perform successfully on a physical, mental, social, and spiritual level. Oleribe, Ukwedeh and Burstow (2018) affirmed that, Health is an amorphous word that lacks a single definition. Since one cannot reach one's full potential or that of society in the absence of excellent health, health is really wealth. Health is a condition of total physical, mental, and social well-being and is not only the absence of illness or infirmity. It encompasses all aspects of emotional, mental, and physical well-being. An aid to daily existence rather than the goal of life. Good health emphasizes both physical abilities and social and personal resources. Accordingly, one's health serves as a tool rather than an aim in and of itself to support one's role in larger society. One may live a complete life with meaning and purpose if they follow a healthy lifestyle.

Health is the body's capacity to adjust to unexpected dangers and conditions. The term "health" has several definitions that have been used to diverse contexts over time. In general, it denotes to being in good bodily and mental health, particularly when it is connected to the body's regular functioning and is free from illness, pain, including mental agony, or damage. Promoting healthy behaviours like consistent exercise and enough sleep, as well as minimizing or avoiding unhealthy settings or activities like smoking or excessive stress, can help people stay healthier. Alslman and Muayyad (2015) defined health as the holistic: a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. Wellness is perceived as a lived reality, a cyclical process of being and evolving. However, the state of being sound or entire in terms of both mental and physical functioning is called health. Physical, psychological, interpersonal, and social elements are all included. An individual's perceived state of existence is their level of well-being.

A person's subjective representation of their composite assessment of their somatic sense of self, how they are feeling, and their functional competence is referred to as their state of health; how one is doing. The judgement that follows materializes as a subjective perception of varying degrees of health or disease. A state of mind, body, and spirit when a person is free from disease is called health. In a similar vein, wellness is an active condition that includes leading a lifestyle that supports mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Being in good health goes beyond simply not being sick or disabled to include social and mental well-being as well as the capacity to lead a fulfilling life on both a social and financial level.

Concept and Objectives of Adult Education and Adults Uses of Social Media

Adult education as a concept is very broad in which literacy is just one of its components. The term adult education according to Okeke in Nzeneri, (2019) is an important facet of national education enterprise and a source of social, economic and political development of nations. It is worthy of note that this is the only type of education that gives people the second chance irrespective of their previous level of education to improve their lives, and to participate meaningfully in their social, economic, political and cultural activities. Many people have been inhibited by some socio-economic, political, cultural and natural factor from benefiting from the right to education.

In addition, its ultimate goal is to develop a process by which members of a community may learn to work together to identify problems and to seek out solutions to such problems (Oyebamiji, 2020). He went further to state that, its role extends from traditional idea of teaching children to the broader concept of identifying the needs, problems and wants of a community, and development facilities for the improvement of the whole community (Howard and Voorhees in Oyebamiji, 2020).

The most acceptable definition of adult education which is relevant for national development was given by UNESCO in Oyebamiji (2020): The entire body of organised educational processes, whatever the content, level and methods, whether formal or otherwise, whether it prolong or replaces initial education in schools, colleges, and universities, as well as in apprenticeship whereby person regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical qualifications, or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviours in two-fold perspective of full-personal development and participation in balanced and developmental social, economic, and cultural development.

From the above definition, adult education accommodates all categories of learners whether those already in the formal school system, out of school early leavers and those who do not have the ability to see the four walls of the classroom. It is interesting to note that emphasis is laid on flexible rather than rigid procedure of educational provision.

The objectives of adult education as seen in Oyebamiji (2020) citing the National Policy on Education as follows:

1. To provide functional literacy education for adults who have never had the advantage of any formal education;

2. To provide functional and remedial education for those young people who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system;
3. To provide further education for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills;
4. To provide in-service, on-the-job vocational and professional training for different categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills; and
5. To give the adult citizens of the country necessary aesthetic, cultural, and civic education for public enlightenment.

From the above stated objectives of adult education as contained in the National Policy on Education, the fulfilment of these objectives is paramount in order to attain all round health sustainability in Nigeria and thus, a well-informed adult individual with digital literacy knowledge will possess good knowledge over the use of social media for updates and current information on their health status (Ezimah, 2016)

Adult education aims, objectives, principles, practices, curriculum and policies need to be sustained for the future. Sustainable adult education can be seen as a transformative learning process that equips adult learners and facilitators in a formal, informal and non-formal system with the knowledge and ways of critical thinking in order to achieve economic prosperity and responsible citizenship while restoring the health of the living systems upon which our lives depend. Digital literacy is one of the key variables for the survival of the present-day economy. All the spheres of life have gone digital, and to be illiterate in this century will be a serious disaster for our development.

Effectiveness of Social Technologies on Health Promotion Advocacy

Social media serves as a collaborative dissemination platform to reach and influence the target audience and deliver health related information (Oyebamiji, 2020). Social media can provide efficient, ubiquitous and user-friendly approaches to attract large numbers of participants and demonstrate a certain level of engagement with the health-related messages. Social media interventions may improve early diagnosis of diseases and facilitate behaviour change techniques, such as providing social support and emphasising the consequences of a health issue (Abdullahi, 2020). Research has revealed a significant positive influence of social media on public health protection (Oyebamiji, 2020) with the potential to change individuals' behaviour towards establishing a healthy lifestyle.

Preliminary evidence shows that social media interventions can effectively promote health behaviour change. Health promotion campaigns effectively contribute to increased awareness of health issues using social media to enhance the willingness of social media users to discuss the issues openly. Recent events related to COVID-19 are a vivid example where social media was used to significantly raise awareness of public health topics and elicit behavioural changes of individuals and thus increased protection against COVID-19 (Abdullahi, 2020). However, there are challenges in evaluating the impact of social media interventions in health promotion programs and understanding how desired outcomes could be achieved for sustained engagement and behaviour changes (Eheazu, 2021).

The majority of past studies analysed social media from the viewpoint of the organisations implementing health promotion campaigns and only limited studies evaluated short-term and long-term changes in individuals' health behaviour and lifestyle and validated the effectiveness of social media beyond creating awareness. While social media campaigns can provide a significant change in health behaviour and orchestrate health promotion efforts (2019), the evaluation methods to measure the outcome and analyse the success of health promotion programs using social media platforms remain unexplored.

Use of social media in health promotion campaigns are of high interest among health professionals, marketers, policy setters, regulators, and any health enthusiasts. But evaluating the impact of such is a complex process (Eheazu, 2021). The main reason is that these initiatives are not implemented in isolation, but rather complementary to each other, creating synergies and blurring the effect. Such synergies make it difficult to isolate the impact of individual social media in health promotion campaigns, as well as potentially, make the impact marginal or complementary to other factors. For example, obesity and diabetes control involves individual knowledge, awareness and motivation for both diet and exercise, but it also involves structural and contextual factors such as urban design, food availability and pricing, access to appropriate clinical services etc. Similarly, smoking cessation involves taxation, restrictions on how and where tobacco products are marketed and sold, smoke free public spaces etc. (Abdullahi, 2020).

A systematic review found that using online social networks may not enhance smoking cessation or weight loss. However, some studies concluded that use of social media can improve physical activity behaviours (Eheazu, 2021) or facilitate healthier choices of eating and recipe tips in young adults, although they are reluctant to share their information on the online social networks. The current study developed a framework to guide the assessment of social media and illustrate the potential functions of social media in promotion of public health. The examples of functions that can influence the outcomes relevant to the evaluation of the effects of social media on the public health are minimising the spread of misinformation and increasing public awareness of accurate health-related information, enhancing real-time surveillance related to incident disease, disease Control and mitigation, and screening or treatment interventions (Oyebamiji, 2020).

Roles of Social Media in Promoting Health Sustainability among Adult Learners in Nigeria

Social media has become an important tool in the promotion of health sustainability among adults in most communities in Nigeria. The increasing use of social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter in Nigeria has changed how adult members obtain and share health information and how they interact. The significant roles of social media in health promotion among adult learners in Nigeria were discussed below:

In Nigeria, where access to traditional media and healthcare services is restricted in rural regions, social media platforms play a critical role in the dissemination of health-related information. The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that health literacy is crucial for promoting healthier lifestyles and enhancing public understanding of health issues

(WHO, 2020). Social media, on the other hand, fills the vacuum by providing forums for medical experts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the government to inform the public on a range of health-related issues, such as cleanliness, nutrition, and sexual health. (Jiang, &Beaudoin, 2020).

Social media sites assist in warning the public about possible epidemics and preventative actions by spreading information in real-time. During the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, including Nigeria, social media served as a critical tool for the dissemination of health warnings and preventive strategies (Obadare & Olatunji, 2020). The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) uses social media sites like Facebook and Twitter to promptly announce health alerts about epidemics and other public health issues. By utilizing hashtags like "#EndEbola" and "#StopCOVID19," social media served as a platform for public education and engagement while also encouraging preventative measures like social distance and vaccination drives. These digital tactics have been successful in raising public awareness of health emergencies and showing the role of social media in Nigeria's public health management.

Nigerians still face a great deal of stigma associated with mental health problems, in part because of ingrained cultural beliefs and restricted access to mental health care. But social media has given advocates for mental health a forum, which has helped to eliminate stigmas and advance mental health. Social media is a tool used by many mental health activists and organizations in Nigeria to spread awareness of mental health issues including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). On the other hand, Twitter efforts for mental health, such the "#MentalHealthAwareness"hashtag, have aided in conversations on the value of getting professional assistance and the necessity of society accepting mental health issues.

In Nigeria, social media is essential for providing residents with access to healthcare services. It has played a major role in the rise in popularity of telemedicine in recent years. In order to deliver remote consultations, healthcare practitioners use Facebook and WhatsApp. This makes healthcare more accessible, particularly in underdeveloped and rural areas. According to studies, social media has made it easier for patients and healthcare professionals to communicate, leading to a spike in the use of telemedicine platforms in Nigeria. Many residents now have better health outcomes since they can access healthcare more easily through social media platforms, eliminating the need for them to go far for care (Ogunniyi & Olagunju, 2021).

Social media encourages community involvement by allowing users to share their personal experiences and take part in health-related conversations. The popularity of online health communities has grown, enabling people to create support groups where they can talk about common health issues and provide encouragement. These virtual communities foster a sense of camaraderie, especially for people living with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer, or HIV/AIDS. For instance, Facebook groups devoted to certain medical issues offer a forum for Nigerians to interact, pose queries, and exchange coping mechanisms. Such peer support is vital for individuals managing long-term illnesses, as it reduces feelings of isolation and empowers patients to take charge of their health (Marijke, 2020).

Nigerian government organizations have included social media into national health campaigns after seeing the value of these platforms for public health. The NCDC, for example, uses Twitter to regularly update citizens on public health issues, from infectious disease outbreaks to vaccination drives (Ogunniyi & Olagunju, 2021). These organizations can reach a wider range of people using social media, which helps spread the word about public health issues throughout society. Furthermore, government organizations may get real-time public input via social media's interactive features, which helps them better customize health treatments. For example, social media channels were utilized to combat vaccine reluctance during the COVID-19 immunization campaign by debunking myths and disinformation that were spreading online.

Social media has advantages, but it can also be a double-edged sword since it frequently acts as a haven for false information, particularly in times of medical emergency. False health claims have the potential to cause widespread fear and encourage risky behaviour. Social media can, however, also present a solution since authorities and health professionals may utilize these channels to dispel rumours and give correct information. For example, false information about vaccination safety and possible treatments for COVID-19 disseminated quickly on social media during the epidemic. To combat these misleading narratives, the Nigerian government and health organizations used fact-checking techniques and started social media public education (UNESCO, 2020).

Conclusion

In conclusion, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for health advocacy and promoting sustainable health status among adults. By leveraging the reach and engagement capabilities of social media platforms, health organizations and individuals can effectively disseminate information, build supportive communities, and encourage positive behaviour changes that contribute to better health outcomes. Social media tools have emerged as transformative agents in promoting the health status of Nigerian citizens, offering a powerful means of health communication and service delivery.

These platforms have facilitated rapid spreading of vital health information, enabled widespread public health campaigns, and provided a space for peer-to-peer engagement and telemedicine services. However, social media interactions provide rich data to understand the processes of stages of behaviour change and can help to discover the patterns of changes in health behaviour. Adult learners' health promotion programs using social media platforms require the full knowledge and digital literacy skills.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made;

1. Government and healthcare organizations should use social media to launch targeted health literacy programs, ensuring citizens understand critical health issues and preventive measures.

2. Implementing fact-checking mechanisms on social media platforms to swiftly identify and counter false health information to help reduce the spread of harmful health-related rumours.
3. Citizens should increase the use of social media tools for remote consultations, especially in rural areas, to enhance access to healthcare and reduce the burden on physical health facilities.
4. It is advised that the public foster collaborations between the government, social media companies, and healthcare providers to create innovative digital health solutions and promote healthier lifestyles.
5. All the stakeholders involved in planning and implementation of adult education programmes such as: Nigerian National Council for Adult Education (NNCAE), Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), – National Mass Education Commission (NMEC) and National Orientation Agency (NOA) should include digital literacy contents and endeavour to make efforts to provide the needed facilities in every adult education programmes.

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