

FROM CHATTING TO MARKETING: THE DEPLOYMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR MARKETING ACTIVITIES BY STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS

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Abstract: Social media have assumed a ubiquitous status with its ability to be used making contacts, connections, knowledge, well as businesses. now gone beyond the corporate business world and, especially among. Thus, this study examines the deployment of social media for marketing activities among student entrepreneurs, using Fountain University, Osogbo (FUO). The study was guided by two objectives theoretical background Survey Method was used structured questionnaire was adopted as the instrument of data collection from the 167-sample size of the study through Simple Random Sampling and Purposive Sampling Techniques. Findings of the study revealed that FUO students used social media platforms for marketing activities at least once in a week the most used social media for marketing activities by Facebook, Instagram, Twitter telegram the least used. Also, it was found easy accessibility and profit maximization addition to no or low cost of advertisement among the factors that motivated FUO student entrepreneurs to social media platforms for marketing activities. It is however recommended that further studies to provide more empirical on the of social media for marketing activities among undergraduates, the motivations behind its usage the effects. This could be in of replicating this study its scope expanded to other tertiary across the nation. Tertiary institutions can be selected based on geo-political zones in Nigeria

Keywords: Deployment, social media, marketing activities, student-entrepreneurs, Fountain University Osogbo.

Introduction

Social media platforms have improved how things are done across all spheres of human endeavor (Bolton et al., 2013, Yaseen, et al., 2019). and Hofang (2016) that social media has altered people methods of communication, task performance, teaching, information-seeking, and commercial activity. Young businesspeople can social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and other platforms, to market, advertise, and promote their goods and services thanks to this power (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). In general, this trend has contributed to a decrease in is widespread worldwide (Akhueomonkhan, Raimi, & Sofoluwe, 2013).

Recently, there has been an increase in about the global unemployment rate, particularly among young people in developing countries (Akhueomonkhan, Raimi, & Sofoluwe, 2013). According to Bolton et al. (2013), the rise of

social media and its numerous applications in significant changes in all aspects of human endeavor, including work relationships. They have significantly altered how people communicate, collaborate, learn, and conduct business. In terms of reducing youth unemployment, the development of social media, particularly among those who are ICT, has been a real driver of job growth (Salem & Hofang, 2016). Due to their power, social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and others are used more frequently by young marketing, advertising promotion (Hanna et al., 2011). Essentially, this potency empowered young entrepreneurs, especially undergraduates the capacity and ability to assess resources and markets that were emergence of social media, not within reach.

According to Adu and Tella (2013), social media platforms are widely used by young people, especially by students at universities like Fountain University Osogbo, which is the focus of this study. However, students' use of social media goes beyond the dynamic environment the platforms offer. Through social media, some students—dubbed young entrepreneurs—provide their clients and customers with business information about their goods and services (Shokery, Nawi, Nasir, & Mamun, 2016). Through social media young business owners showcase their services and advantages to potential clients. This is particularly feasible because social media platforms offer companies and businesses of all sizes to flourish through the online promotion of their brands. Most importantly, social media platforms, according to, and Mamun (2016), are simple for young entrepreneurs to use because they are free to use some of them allow firms to advertise their services and products at a fair to reach a wider audience. Essentially, they simply offer young student entrepreneurs' opportunities to communicate with their potential clients in an affordable, confidential expressive way. Additionally, this makes it possible for customers to easily customer care services as well as praise and compliments in the form of reviews companies and businesses (Shokery, et al., 2016).

In Fountain University, Osogbo, students across the various departments their marketing acumen by exploring the instrumentality of media (Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp, & Instagram) . Some even used their status on WhatsApp to display their products and services. Meanwhile, researcher was by the increase in the of branded bags by female students on campus. A preliminary finding by the researcher shows that the branded bags were produced by a young entrepreneur who majorly advertises her products via social media Against this background, this study aims to assess the deployment of social media marketing for students' entrepreneurship: A study of Fountain University, Osogbo with the following research questions: (1) What is the level of social media marketing activities by student entrepreneurs Fountain University, Osogbo? and (2) What the motivating factors behind the use of social media for marketing activities among student entrepreneurs at Fountain University, Osogbo?

Literature and Theoretical Review

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is a relatively new and rapidly growing technique that helps businesses establish instant connections with their target markets. Social media marketing is the process of using social media platforms to promote a company and its products (Hafele, 2011). According to Barefoot and Szabo (2010), this of marketing can be seen as a subset of online marketing efforts that complement traditional Web-based promotion strategies like email newsletters and online advertising campaigns. Hafele (2011) claims that social media marketing has introduced the terms "exponential dispersion" and "trust" to the fields of mass marketing and communication. There is a constant development of new outreach and marketing tactics that provide firms with additional resources.

Social media marketers are now obtaining better and more insightful information because of the introduction of analytical tools from official social platforms (Hafele, 2011). Social media sites offer functions and are available in forms. Remarkably, the first social media platform that comes to mind is Facebook. Facebook 2.934 billion monthly active users as of July 2022. When Facebook was first released in February 2004, Facebook, Inc. was in charge of it. In 2021, the company changed its name to Meta Users register before they access the website. After, people can create their own accounts, add friends, communicate with other, and get alerts when other users update their profiles automatically (Facebook, 2022). In addition, users can associate their relationships with lists such as "People from Work" or "Close Friends" by joining user groups that share their interests. Facebook objective is to enable sharing and promote increased global connectivity (Facebook, 2022). Other social networking platforms, such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Google Plus, and LinkedIn quite similarly, although with variations. This kind of social media marketing is just one of many variations. For example, the idea of a true "friend" is replaced in the basic Facebook model by a brand, a tangible commodity, or the formation of a page or group (Facebook, 2011). A user announces a product or business to personal network of contacts when they select to "like" it. This idea also other social media sites.

According to Bernie Borges (2009), Twitter is a hybrid of social networking and microblogging. users can producers for quick updates and marketing (Hafele, 2011). Twitter users have the opportunity to engage in live sharing. A tweet can contain up to 140 characters, which are visible to the user's followers (Borges, 2009). not the only ones, these two social media sites are among the most popular and widely. and Haenlein (2010) and Hafele (2011), each social media outlet offers unique advantages and opportunities for marketing This perhaps motivates University Osogbo students to use social media platforms their products to in and outside the campus.

Advantages of Social Media Marketing

According to Watson al. (2002) in Sheth and Sharma (2015), many businesses are investigating how social media assist them their goods and services to both present and potential customers as digital marketing grows in popularity. Two social networking sites that have altered how some businesses advertising Facebook and Twitter. Some businesses send more traffic to their social media pages than to their main websites. While social media marketing offers certain advantages, associated drawbacks as well (Watson et al. 2002; Sheth & Sharma 2015). Among advantages are the following:

Cost-related

According to Weinberg (2009), social media marketing mostly offers financial advantages. Financial barriers to social media marketing are, in comparison, comparatively low. social media sites allow users to register for free, create profiles, and submit content. The high costs of traditional marketing campaigns are in contrast to the abundance of free social media platforms, those for corporate use. Businesses may run social media marketing campaigns on a low budget.

Social Interaction

One of the most significant outcomes of new media is the emergence and expansion of new forms of social contact. Over 25% of people online time is spent on communication activities (emails, instant messaging, social networking, etc.), according to Riegner (2007) Moran (2011). This is the total time spent on the internet for fun and relaxation in general. , the most popular websites on the Internet are social networking (Burmester, 2009). According to Burmester (2009), new media has not only altered the frequency of online connections but also expanded and opened up new avenues for action

Interactivity

Steuer (1992), cited by Hill and Moran (2011), asserts that, in contrast to TV and radio viewers, users of new media are active participants in. According to Hill and Moran (2011), interactivity the extent to which users actively participate in modifying the content and structure of a mediated environment in real time. Fiore et al. (2005), cited by Hill Moran (2011), that one of the main characteristics of new media technologies is interactivity, which also allows for greater user control over and involvement with social media content. Context interactivity. Within the realm of online social networking, interaction pertains to with gadgets, messages, or other users, the experience element of process (Hill & Moran, 2011).

Customer Service

Hafele (2011) that customer service is an essential element of social media marketing. Website designers occasionally some degree of complexity the architecture of their sites. a well-thought service system is. Links to FAQs and representatives are useful for assisting customers or purchasing. Online assistance is not the only resource a marketer should utilise. In numerous circumstances, customers find it more convenient to call a business. According to Hafele (2011),

of Social Media Marketing

Both opportunities and challenges can be found in the online social media marketing landscape. All audiences access online information thanks to the transparency of the web, which also the importance consistency in the strategy, design, implementation, and administration of online marketing communication (Hart et al., 2020). Among social media marketing drawbacks are

Time intensive

Engaging in two-way conversations is necessary social media is an interactive and successful platform. Social media marketing has a different focus now because it more about creating long-term relationships that can lead to more sales. Barefoot and Szabo (2010) that someone must be in charge of monitoring each network, answering questions and comments, and publishing helpful product information. This process is time.

Trademark and Copyright Issues

Businesses should safeguard their and trademarks while social media to promote their brands and products, according to Steinman and Hawkins (2010). A company's intellectual property, including its brands, is almost always worth as much as products or services While social media can assist companies in distributing copyrighted content and promoting their brands, it can also facilitate trademark and copyright infringement by third parties (Steinman & Hawkins, 2010). Social media makes it easier to impromptu, casual conversations in real time. Whether using a company own social media channels or a third-party source, marketers should continuously monitor how their trademarks and copyrights are being used on social media. Businesses should keep an eye on both their own and third-party social media platforms to ensure that people information through their intellectual property.

Trust, Privacy, and Security Issues

Concerns data security, privacy, and trust can also arise when using social media to promote a business, products, or service. It is imperative that companies understand these dangers and implement safety measures to the liability associated with, using data. Trust a major role in determining customer loyalty to social media marketers, especially the unique features of transactional security and privacy (Hoffman, 2012). Research indicates that consumers' fear of credit card fraud has been a major barrier to more widespread online shopping (Ratning, 2016).

Furthermore, privacy concerns have made several major social media ads a PR catastrophe, severely harming brand reputation (Advertising Age, 2019).

Negative

Depending on how the business is portrayed online and the of goods and services offered to the client, customers can exert either positive or negative pressure on the business, its goods services (Roberts & Kraynak 2008). Social media advertisements and marketers. Consumer-generated product reviews, images, and tags have grown rapidly online since the introduction of Web 2.0 technologies. These resources are an important source of information for consumers (Ghose, Ipeiritis, & Li 2014). These developments have also had a significant impact on electronic commerce (Forman, Ghose, & Wiesenfeld 2008). One aspect of social networking that is to marketing campaigns is post reactions. Marketers have limited control over unpleasant or disparaging photos, posts, or videos online by irate clients or competitors in the same industry (Cheung, Lee, & Thadani 2009).

Theoretical Framework

study is guided by the principles of Social Exchange Theory. Given that media relies individuals to create content, it is imperative to understand why people participate. The from sociological studies that communication within small groups or between people (Emerson, 1976). In order to explain how individuals with one another, form bonds and relationships, and create communities through communication, theory largely uses a cost-benefit analysis and of alternatives (Homans, 1958).

The theory holds that people avoid high-cost and engage in that they find rewarding. , each individual decision to engage in a social trade is based on how they assess the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. According to Emerson (1976), exchange ideas or interact with each other if the other person does the same. Mutual reinforcement be studied within a microeconomic framework, even if the rewards are often social rather than monetary (Emerson, 1976). Examples of these benefits include opportunity, status, compliance, and acceptability. The best explanation of theory was perhaps given by Homans (1958) when he said: "Social activity is an interchange of products, material as well as intangible ones, such as the symbols of approval or prestige." Individuals who are generous with others try to generous returns, and those who receive generosity from others are under pressure to be generous This influencing process generally results in A person changes less as the difference between the two maximum because his contributions to a contract may have both costs and rewards Consequently, four arguments have been put to explain why people engage in social interactions: A) a projected rise in stature and power; B) a predicted degree of reciprocity from others; C) selflessness; and D) .

As to this study, the theory student entrepreneurs' use of social media for marketing. In the , individuals (in this case, student entrepreneurs) participated in social exchange for the four reasons listed above: a) a projected rise in stature and power; b) a predicted degree of reciprocity from others; c) selflessness; and d) . The use of social media by student entrepreneurs marketing objectives was motivated by these factors. This theory provides this study opportunity and theoretical explanation to buttress the level of social media usage for marketing activities among student in Fountain University and the motivation behind such usage.

Methodology

The study adopted Survey Method and it is quantitative. The of this study are Fountain University, . The total population of Fountain University students of the University is One thousand, eight hundred and sixty-eight (1868) as at December 2023. Hence, the population of the study will cover Fountain University, , Osun The sample size was 167 students (drawn from each of the five colleges in the school) using , Lewis Thornhill (2009) sample size calculation model. Random Sampling Purposive Sampling used to select the 167 respondents for this

research work within the premises of selected students on . Data collected using descriptive analysis using tables,charts, simple percentages standard deviation used to the data gathered.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Across Colleges

Colleges	Number of Respondents
College of Management and Social	43
College of Management and Social	33
College of Basic Medical	33
College of	33
College of Postgraduate Studies	25

Results and Discussion of

Findings of this study are presented under the two research questions that guided this study.

Research Question One: What is the level of social media marketing activities that Fountain University students engage in Osogbo?

This research question was set to examine the level of social media marketing activities respondents (87) (52.1%) the usage of social media for marketing activities among FUU students as high, 54 respondents representing (32.3%) rated it as while 26 respondents representing (15.6%) rated it as low. The implication of this that the of social media for marketing activities

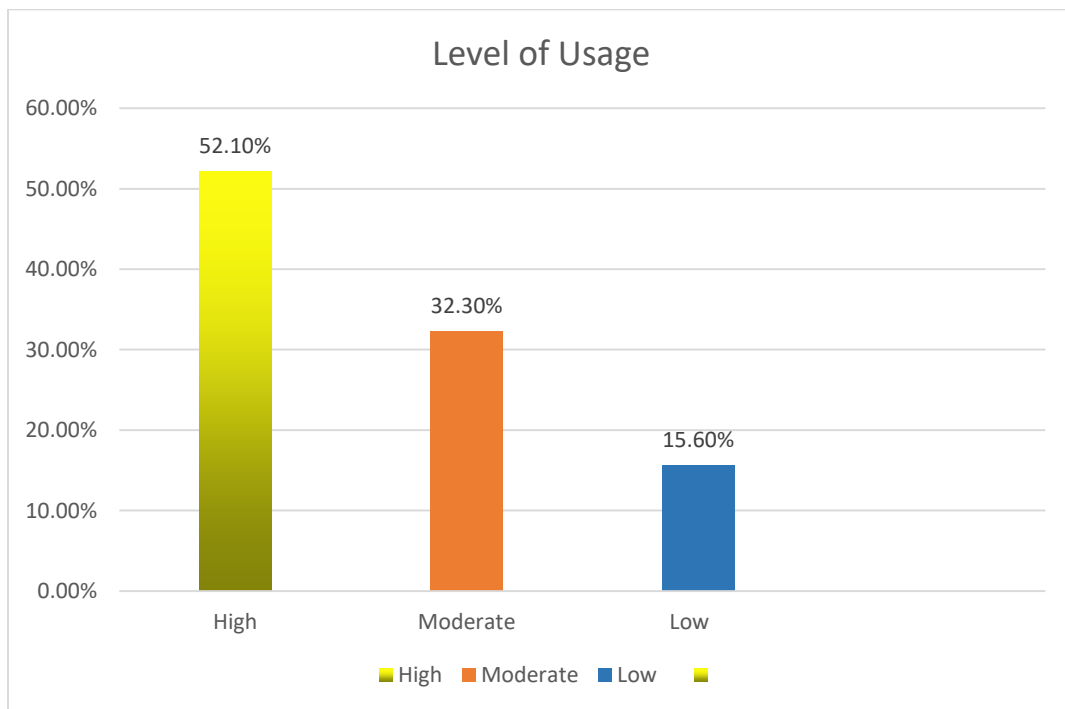


Figure 1: Distrubution based on of social media usage

Also, findings revealed that 82 (31.1%) respondents were exposed to or used social media for marketing activities on a daily basis, 71 (42.6%) respondents were exposed to or used social media for marketing activities on a weekly basis, 35 (20.9%) respondents were exposed to or used social media for marketing activities on a monthly basis 9 (5.4%) respondents were never exposed to or used social media for marketing activities. This finding implies that students used or received social media marketing messages from student in FUU.

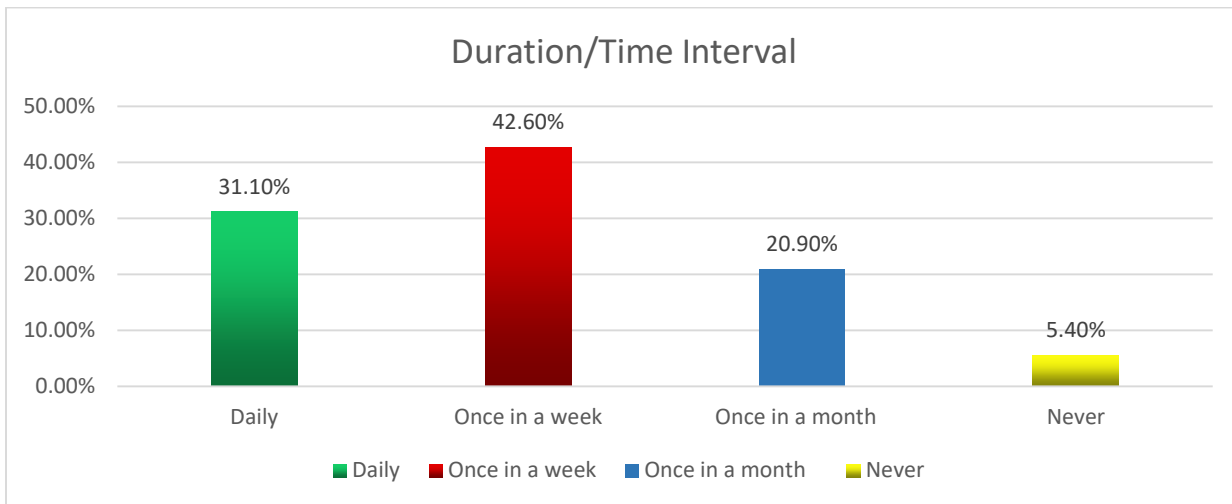


Figure 2: Distribution based on duration of usage or exposure to marketing activities on social

Furthermore, it was revealed by majority of the respondents-114 (68.3%) that WhatsApp is the most used social media platform for social media marketing among Fountain University students-entrepreneurs, 22 (13.2%) respondents revealed that Facebook is the most used social media platform for social media marketing among Fountain University students-entrepreneurs, 15 (9%) respondents chose Instagram as the most used social media platform for social media marketing among Fountain University students-entrepreneurs, 9 (5.4%) respondents indicated that Twitter is the most used social media for social media marketing among Fountain University students-entrepreneurs, 1 respondent chose Tiktok while 6 respondents chose Telegram as the social media platform mostly used for social media marketing among Fountain University students-entrepreneurs. Essentially, it can be affirmed from this finding that WhatsApp is the most used social media platform for social media marketing among Fountain University students-entrepreneurs.

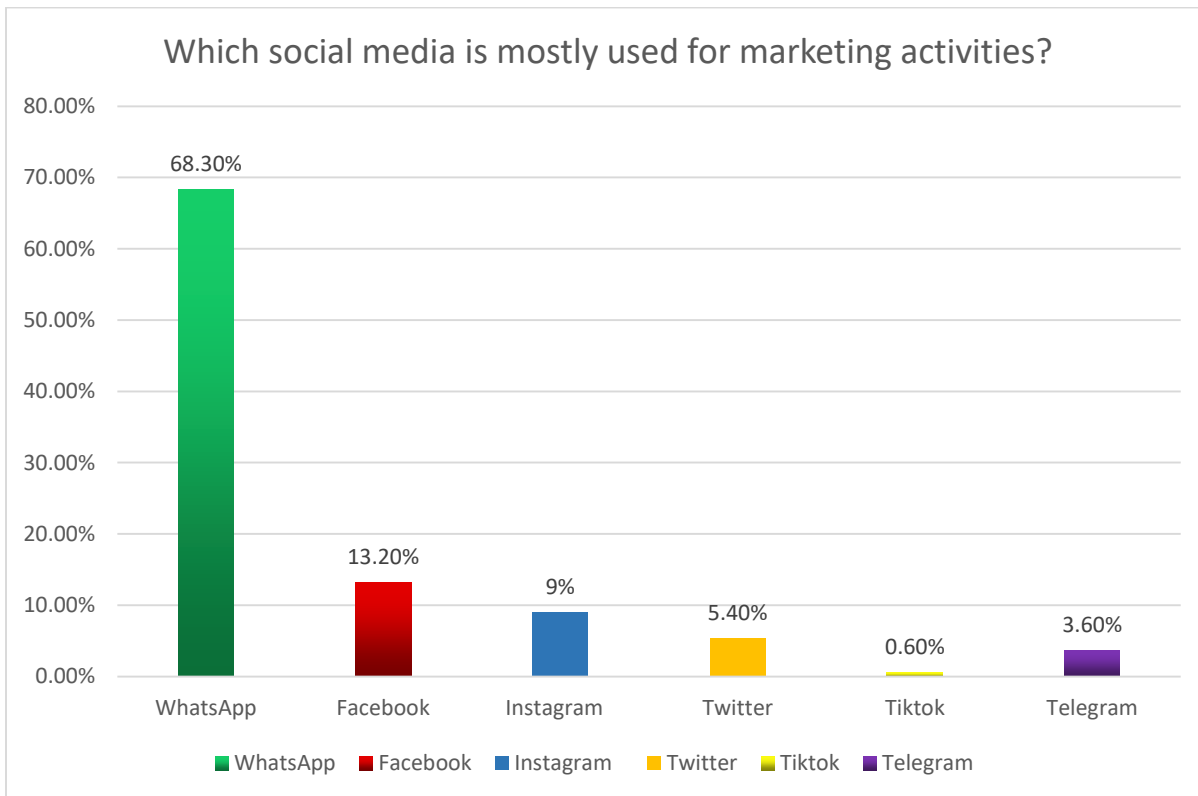


Figure 3: Distribution based on the most social media for marketing activities

Essentially, the findings of this study research question one with the findings of Ajiboye and Adekonojo (2019) as well as (Tayo et al., 2019). The former evaluated the awareness and usage of social media among undergraduates in selected universities in Ogun state the latter examined the awareness and usage of social media among undergraduates University of Eastern India.

Research Question Two: What is the motivating factor behind the use of social media for marketing activities among ?

This research question was set to the motivation behind the use of social media for marketing activities among FUI students. In the table below, on the overall, respondents generally agreed the indicators on the motivation behind use of social media platforms for marketing activities among FUI students as tested in this study ($\bar{x} = 4.25$). Specifically, respondents agreed that: wide reach of social media platforms motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student-entrepreneurs in Fountain University Osogbo ($\bar{x} = 4.35$), easy accessibility motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student-entrepreneurs in Fountain University Osogbo ($\bar{x} = 4.20$), having personal conversation and direct dealing with customers via direct message (DM) motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student-entrepreneurs in Fountain University Osogbo ($\bar{x} = 4.08$), social media being the hub of digital natives (youths) motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student-entrepreneurs in Fountain ($\bar{x} = 4.24$), internet interconnectivity (reaching everywhere without stress) motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student entrepreneurs ($\bar{x} = 4.26$), increase in sales via internet interconnectivity motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student entrepreneurs in Fountain University Osogbo ($\bar{x} = 4.08$), nature of business motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student entrepreneurs in Fountain University Osogbo ($\bar{x} = 4.18$), and using no or

reduced cost of advertisement motivates the use of social media platforms for marketing activities among student-entrepreneurs in Fountain University Osogbo ($\bar{x} = 4.24$).

Table 2: Motivation social media marketing activities

Items	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	N Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	\bar{x}	Sx
reach of social media platforms motivates platforms for marketing activities	85 (50.8)	44 (26.3)	12 (7.2)	20 (12.0)	6 (3.6)	4.35	.695
Easy accessibility motivates social media platforms for marketing activities Fountain University Osogbo	125 (74.9)	20 (12.0)	5 (3.0)	10 (6.0)	7 (4.2)	4.20	.854
Having personal dealing with customers via direct message (DM) motivates.	34 (20.4)	67 (40.1)	42 (25.1)	20 (12.0)	4 (2.4)	4.08	.755
Social media the hub of digital natives (youths) social media platforms for marketing activities	122 (73.1)	10 (6.0)	17 (10.2)	11 (6.6)	7 (4.2)	4.24	.849
Internet interconnectivity (reaching everywhere without stress) motivates social media platforms for marketing activities	136 (81.4)	20 (12.0)	10 (6.0)	1 (0.6)	- (-)	4.26	.937
sales via internet interconnectivity motivates social media platforms for marketing activities	112 (67.1)	42 (25.1)	4 (2.4)	8 (4.8)	1 (0.6)	4.08	.998
of business motivates social media platforms for marketing activities Fountain University.	34 (20.4)	67 (40.1)	42 (25.1)	2 (2.4)	20 (12.0)	4.18	.775
No or reduced social media platforms for marketing activities	122 (73.1)	10 (6.0)	17 (10.2)	11 (6.6)	7 (4.2)	4.24	.849
Average Mean/Sx						4.25	0.96

Source: Field Survey, 2023. KEY: SA=Strongly Agree, A=, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree.

***Decision Rule: if mean is 1 to 1.49 =Strongly Disagree; 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree; 2.5 to 3.49 =Neutral; 3.5 to Agree; 4.5 to 5 = Strongly Agree

Findings from table 2 revealed that respondents generally agreed that easy accessibility, having personal dealing with customers via direct message (DM), social media being the hub of digital natives (youths), internet interconnectivity (reaching everywhere without stress), increase in sales via internet interconnectivity, using no or reduced cost of advertisement nature of business motivated their use of social media platforms for marketing activities. Essentially, this finding is again in congruity with the findings of study by Ajiboye and Adekonojo (2019) which also found out that social media are used for marketing purposes based on different motivations and recommendations

This study that social media tools are critical to entrepreneurship drive undergraduates, especially students. This revelation joins the league of studies already conducted on the power of media to bring about positive changes in all aspects it is used for. Essentially, easy accessibility, wide reach of social media, having direct personal contact with the entrepreneur via DM, low cost of usage timely delivery of goods and are established as for using social media for marketing activities among FOU students. Despite needing low cost for usage, it is established that of social media marketing tools by student entrepreneurs gives them more returns (profits). Overall, it can be concluded that the more profit at a low cost. This resonates well with Exchange Theory serves as the anchor upon which this study is premised.

As, further studies should be carried out to provide more empirical on the of social media for marketing activities among undergraduates, the motivations behind its usage and the effects. This could be in of replicating this study its scope expanded to other tertiary across the nation. Tertiary institutions can be selected based on geo-political zones in Nigeria

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