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Use of Social Media Campaigns against Substance Abuse among Chemistry Undergraduate Students of the University of Lagos

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Abstract

The growing influence of social media has created new opportunities for entrepreneurship, particularly among young people seeking alternative sources of livelihood in Nigeria. This paper examines the role of social media engagement in shaping youth entrepreneurship in Nigeria, with particular attention to entrepreneurial interest, skills development, business branding, customer engagement and enterprise promotion. It explores how platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and LinkedIn facilitate access to business information, entrepreneurial knowledge, wider markets and potential customers. Drawing on the Diffusion of Innovations Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the paper explains how exposure to entrepreneurial content, purposeful media engagement and perceived behavioural control can influence young people's entrepreneurial intentions and activities. Using a conceptual approach based on secondary data and a review of relevant literature, the paper establishes that social media provides young entrepreneurs with relatively affordable opportunities to promote products, build business identities, acquire entrepreneurial skills, interact with customers and expand market reach without necessarily maintaining physical business premises. However, it highlights that social media engagement does not automatically translate into entrepreneurial development, as its effectiveness depends on the purpose and quality of engagement, digital literacy, internet accessibility, financial resources and the availability of supportive entrepreneurial networks. It concludes that intentional and goal-oriented social media engagement can contribute significantly to youth entrepreneurship, economic participation, self-reliance and enterprise development in Nigeria.

Keywords
Social media engagement; youth entrepreneurship; digital literacy; entrepreneurial skills; business promotion; Nigeria

I. Introduction

Social media are interactive web-based technologies that fosters establishment and sharing of information, concepts and thoughts through virtual networks and communities (Kietzmann & Kristopher, 2011). Social media is a mixture of two words; social, which means exchange of information and media which is the medium of communication. It involves a series of websites and applications that enables human beings to distribute content like links, pictures, posts, texts, etc. quickly, on time and efficiently. Social media is a significant media platform which disseminates information due to its huge audience using most major social media platforms (Aondover et al., 2025). Facebook is an example of social media and it is the largest social media platform in Nigeria. Social media has

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become one of the most influential digital tools of the twenty-first century, determining, directing and shaping how people learn, communicate, conduct business and build connections. For young people in Nigeria, it is no longer a space just for entertainment or casual relationships. It has also become an environment used to enhance visibility and ensure enterprise development.

Adewale et al. (2025) observed that social Media plays a crucial role in connecting people and developing relationships, not only with key influencers but also provides a great opportunity to establish public opinion by gathering input, answering questions and listening to perceptions and views on almost every important issue. (Nwolu et. al, 2021). Basically, social media is a business strengthening platform. It is a visibility tool. Platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn have given youths access to opportunities that support business creation, product promotion, client engagement and retention, and personal branding. The fact that social media has enforced itself as an important factor in the growing conversation around youth entrepreneurship has made it a form of 'religion'. The rise of digital and mobile technologies has enabled interaction on a large scale easier for individuals, as a result, a new media age was born which ensured that interactivity was placed at the center of new media functions.

1.1 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the process of designing, launching, and managing a new business or venture (Berlin, 2025). Entrepreneurship refers to the way in which an individual or group identifies a problem or a gap and finds a way to effectively create a product that solves it with value added. The definition of entrepreneurship can vary slightly depending on the source, but it generally revolves around starting, growing, and managing a new venture while taking calculated risks to generate value The term is derived from the Old French verb entreprendre, "to undertake." Entrepreneurship is one of the four factors of production (the economic resources, both human and other, that are used to bring about a flow or output of goods and services), the other three being land, capital, and labour.

Entrepreneurs are essential drivers of economic growth. They combine the resources of land, labour and capital to create goods and services, often taking on significant personal and financial risk. When they succeed, they generate profits, create jobs, and boost productivity.

Nowadays, it is not uncommon to see startups and young businesses. Many young adults also combine business with their 9-5 jobs. This is to say that entrepreneurship as a concept has been widely accepted by a lot of Nigerian citizens partly because of the love for it but more because of the recent orientation around it as 'the' pathway to wealth. This has a lot of acceptance among Nigerians. The richest men in the nation are mainly entrepreneurs. It is only natural for more and more youths to gravitate towards it.

1.2 Their Relationship

Comparing the economic realities facing Nigerian youths with the use of social media makes its relevance much more pronounced. Unemployment, underemployment and limited access to formal job opportunities have pushed many youths to seek alternative means of livelihood. In this context, entrepreneurship has become a practical response to economic uncertainty and a route to self-reliance. This has become easy because social media lowers the barrier to entry for many young individuals because it allows them to begin small businesses which require minimal capital but can reach a wider audience and interact directly with customers without necessarily owning a physical space. For example,

many small and medium enterprises in Nigeria are owned by youngsters who don't even need to rent or buy a physical area unlike previous years. Now, we have online shops, vendors and people who are just a dial, a click or a text away from their customers. This has expanded the possibilities of entrepreneurship beyond traditional settings. Social media entrepreneurship is a sub group of digital entrepreneurships which involves leveraging on social media platforms to create and grow a business. In essence, social media has paved the way for consistent nearness to the market owing to the fact that the world dwells on the internet now.

In Nigeria, there has been a massive creation of a group of youths who are increasingly active online because of the freedom that the digital world provides. However, time spent on these platforms can either be productive or unproductive depending on how it is used. While some youths endeavour to utilize the social media space judiciously, others while away time engaging in unreasonable activities. While some advertise their product and sell services, others indulge in excessive entertainment, social interaction and content consumption (Mohammed et al., 2025). There are two extremes but therein lies the philosophy and the powers the actions of young people. This distinction is important because it suggests that social media engagement doesn't necessarily always lead to the development of interest in entrepreneurship or even its growth, rather it becomes appreciative when it is intentional and goal- oriented. The purpose of engagement, not just the degree, is what determines whether social media supports entrepreneurial interest and endeavours or not.

Several emerging studies have shown that social media can positively influence entrepreneurship in Nigeria. It has been linked to job creation, entrepreneurial skill acquisition, business competitiveness, and digital marketing (Aondover & Obasi, 2025). Young entrepreneurs use these different platforms to advertise their products, connect with customers, track market trends, ensure nearness to the target market and learn from other business owners. According to event data, social media has become the first major point of contact between a young entrepreneur and the market. In addition, many young entrepreneurs who are just starting out have learnt a few things from successful businesses online. These functions make social media a powerful support system for entrepreneurial development.

1.3 Problem Statement

Nigeria continues to face high youth unemployment, underemployment and limited access to formal employment opportunities, making entrepreneurship an increasingly important pathway for young people seeking income and self- reliance (Mohammed & Aondover, 2025). At the same time, social media has become deeply embedded in the daily lives of Nigerian youths, creating new possibilities for communication, learning, networking, and business promotion. Despite this, it remains unclear how effectively social media engagement translates into meaningful entrepreneurial interest and actual entrepreneurial action among young adults in Nigeria.

While many young Nigerians are engaged on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and TikTok, not all of them make strategic use of these channels for company development. While some young people use social media solely for social engagement and pleasure, others utilize it for content production, brand marketing, market access and skill development (Aondover et al., 2026). This variant brings up a crucial issue: can social media actually influence youth entrepreneurship in a quantifiable and long lasting way, or does it only offer fun and visibility.

The problem is that, despite the widespread use of social media by Nigerian youth, little is known about how it affects entrepreneurial behaviour. Conceptual research is required to determine whether social media use encourages entrepreneurial interest, supports the growth of entrepreneurial skills, and facilitates the creation and growth of youth-owned enterprises in Nigeria (Ademosu et al., 2025). By investigating the ways in which social media may impact adolescent entrepreneurship as well as the situations that can restrict its effectiveness, this study closes that knowledge gap.

1.4 Objectives

Main Objective To examine the role of social media in shaping youth entrepreneurship in Nigeria.Specific Objectives

a. To assess how young Nigerians' interest in entrepreneurship is influenced by their use of social media.
b. To assess how much social media aids in the development of entrepreneurial skills.
c. To evaluate social media's contribution to branding, customer engagement. And business promotion.
d. To investigate the best ways to use social media to encourage young Nigerian entrepreneurs.

II. Review of Literature

Social media's ability to facilitate learning, networking, visibility, and business promotion has made it a crucial digital environment for young entrepreneurs in Nigeria. According to recent research conducted in Nigeria, social media sites including WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and LinkedIn are being utilized for entrepreneurial purposes like product display, consumer interaction, and skill development in addition to communication (Christopher et al., 2026c). Because of this, social media is a pertinent topic for entrepreneurship studies, particularly in a nation where a large number of young people seek out other sources of income and lessen their reliance on conventional work (Adetutu et al., 2024). The idea that social media fosters the growth of young people's entrepreneurial abilities is a central theme in the literature (Titilayo & Samour, 2025). The rise of social media has led to changes in how entrepreneurs carry out their day-to-day activities.

Additionally, social media can help young entrepreneurs access a wider audience and increase their company's visibility. WhatsApp is one of the most popular social media tool used by young Nigerian technopreneurs to market their companies and reach customers. Social media improved a company's ability to compete, indicating that having an online presence can boost marketing and consumer interaction (Ademosu et al., 2026). This is significant since one of social media's biggest benefits is that it enables small businesses to promote their goods without having to pay for physical expansion or traditional advertising. For young Nigerians who sometimes start with little money, this low-cost visibility is a huge entrepreneurial advantage.

Nevertheless, social media does not always result in successful entrepreneurship. The level and quality of engagement are important in determining the influence of social media on young ones. Social media engagement is a measure of how people are interacting with your social media accounts and content (Okunade et al., 2025). The engagement of youths on certain platforms will help foster or kill the desire for entrepreneurship in youths. The

development of social media has led to the public being better informed (and sometimes manipulated) about key political and economic issues of public concern. Comments of Facebook users have been found to positively influence the attitude of the viewers of the comments (Dutta and Bhat, 2017). This implies that what the young person sees on social media affects his perception of entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, it is safe to state at this point that the 'how' and 'why' of social media engagement affects how youths perceive business. The reason for and the manner in which social media platforms are being utilized will go a long way to affect the youngster. The significance of digital infrastructure and literacy is another recurrent issue. Research has repeatedly shown that the entrepreneurial potential of social media is diminished by erratic internet connectivity, and a lack of digital literacy (Aondover et al., 2025). Similarly, to make social media more useful for entrepreneurial learning, the study on entrepreneurship skills among young, lowering data costs and improving infrastructure are really essential. This implies that social media's potential for entrepreneurship in Nigeria depends not just on platform accessibility but also on user skill and access quality.

III. Research Methods

This study is primarily rooted in the Diffusion of Innovations Theory and the Uses and Gratifications Theory, while the Theory of Planned Behaviour serves as a complementary framework. Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory describes how new concepts, information, practices, and technologies proliferate over time within a social system. The theory in this study explains how social media platforms spread entrepreneurial knowledge, business opportunities, digital marketing strategies, and role models among young Nigerians.

Young people can learn about market trends, follow business pages, join professional forums, watch successful entrepreneurs, and obtain online training through social media. Entrepreneurial ideas can spread quickly between people through direct messaging, shares, likes, comments, and recommendations. As a result, social media serves as a crucial conduit for the spread of innovation and entrepreneurial knowledge among youth (Success & Maiwada, 2026).

The notion is pertinent because it demonstrates how young people's knowledge of business potential can be influenced by exposure to internet entrepreneurial information. Adoption is not, however, a given. For young people to turn their exposure to the internet into entrepreneurial activity, they must possess the necessary interest, knowledge, confidence, resources, and supportive environment.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory explains why individuals actively choose and use media. It assumes that people are not passive consumers of information; rather, they select media content to satisfy particular needs.

Nigerian adolescents may utilize social media for information searching, education, networking, entertainment, identity expression, company promotion, and consumer involvement in the context of youth entrepreneurship. The purpose for which social media is utilized determines its worth. Young people who use social media platforms primarily for enjoyment are less likely to acquire an entrepreneurial interest than those who use them purposefully to study digital marketing, promote products, develop a personal brand, or find business prospects (Akintayo et al., 2025).

Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior explains how intention affects behavior. Subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and attitude toward the behavior all influence intention. In this study, the theory explains how exposure to online

entrepreneurial content may shape Nigerian youths' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. For example, young people who repeatedly see successful young entrepreneurs online may develop a more positive attitude towards starting a business. They may also perceive entrepreneurship as socially acceptable when family members, friends, mentors, or online communities support it.

Perceived behavioural control refers to a person's belief that they have the ability, resources, and opportunity to perform an action. In this context, a youth may be interested in entrepreneurship but may be unable to act because of poor internet access, high data costs, lack of digital skills, insufficient capital, or fear of online fraud. These barriers can weaken the relationship between social media engagement and venture creation.

Together, these theories provide a strong explanation of how social media engagement may influence entrepreneurial awareness, skill development, networking, and venture creation among Nigerian youths.

IV. Result and Discussion

It is important to note that the review has revealed how essential the role of social media is in shaping youth entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Platforms such as Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube and LinkedIn provide young people with access to information, customers, role models and business opportunities.

Entrepreneurship is supported and improved by social media as visibility is created for youth-owned businesses. Youths in business can upload their products, advertise services, communicate with customers, get feedback and generate trust without the need of a physical space. This invariably leads to a reduced cost of building business.

Many young entrepreneurs learn informally on social media. Skills like marketing, communication, branding, digital advertisement and business management can be learnt online. In economics, knowledge is almost more important than physical cash. Intellectual property gives an edge in entrepreneurship. This is why social media greatly supports the development of young startups by providing information.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to understand that social media engagement does not automatically lead to entrepreneurship. As it has been stated explicitly in this paper, time spent on social media can be productive or unproductive depending on how it is utilized. The Uses and Gratification theory supports the argument that the purpose and quality of engagement matter more than the amount of time spent online. Social media engagement becomes valuable for entrepreneurship when it is intentional, goal-oriented, and supported by relevant skills.

The benefits of social media are also not evenly distributed. While some youngsters have access to quality internet, digital training and exposure, coupled with supportive networks, there are others with poor networks, limited digital literacy and other negative predisposing factors.

Therefore, intentionality is important. Social media supports entrepreneurship best when young people use it with clear goals, such as learning a skill, promoting a product, building a brand, identifying customers, or accessing business opportunities. What empowers any activity for productivity is a goal. There will always be tradeoffs. This is what entrepreneurs who will be leaders should know. If they want to become great business people, they must give up excessive use of social media in the wrong direction.

Implications for Policy and Practice

The findings suggest that social media should be recognized as an important tool for youth empowerment and entrepreneurship. Schools, youth platforms and government agencies should create programmes that help young people use social media productively.
It is important that policy makers support digital infrastructure, reduce data costs and promote digital literacy as this will give youths better online access to business opportunities and help them to be better positioned for business growth.

Educational institutions should include digital skills, communication, entrepreneurship, and personal branding in their curriculum. This will prepare youths for self-employment, innovation, and enterprise development.

Youth organisations and platforms can also provide mentorship, training, networking, and business-support programmes for young people. Such will encourage youths to challenge themselves and aim for the skies in their endeavours.

V. Conclusion

Social media definitely has been registered worldwide as an important tool for connection and now for youth entrepreneurship in Nigeria. Connections are built, branding is made possible, publicity is made easier and sales is made faster. Social media is a blessing in this regard.

However, social media utilization does not automatically lead to entrepreneurship. Just as actions have consequences, the individual use of social media also has consequences depending on how it is done. Its profitability or non-profitability is solely dependent on the 'how' and 'why'. A youngster who seeks to be informed, empowered and educated will have his reward and this principle also applies to a young entrepreneur who spends all day doomscrolling.

The summary is that as powerful as social media iss, its impact is highly individualistic. The degree of negativity varies just as much as the degree of positivity. Therefore, harnessing digital tools effectively can promote innovation, economic participation and general youth development in Nigeria. Social media provides lots of possibilities in entrepreneurship and it is necessary.

Recommendations

Based on the review made, the following recommendations are made:

a. Schools, youth organisations, and government agencies should provide training on digital marketing, online communication, content creation, and safe use of social media. This promotes digital literacy among young ones.
b. Government, telecommunication companies, and private-sector partners should work towards affordable data plans and improved internet access, especially for young people in low-income communities.
c. Training programmes should teach youths how to use social media for business planning, branding, marketing, customer engagement, and sales.
d. Young people should be encouraged to use social media for learning, networking, skill development, and enterprise growth rather than only entertainment.
e. Government agencies, NGOs, financial institutions, and private organisations should provide mentorship, funding, training, and digital-business support for young entrepreneurs.
f. Schools and higher institutions should increase practical training on social media management, digital marketing, personal branding, and online business development.

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