Chapter 5
Social Media Use and Ethical Behaviour of Students in Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT

Use of technology for teaching and learning became necessary during the COVID 19 pandemic where higher education institutions (HEIs) had to close down and students were asked to go home. The use of technology became the ready tool to accomplish the abrupt academic calendar and programs with social media becoming a veritable tool as it enhances interaction between students and faculty, among the students and the learning resources. However, the use of social media is guided by rules and regulations and students are expected to adhere to such rules. Studies that reveal the ethical behaviour of students in the use of social media for teaching and learning are very few and this necessitates investigation especially in higher education institutions. This chapter highlights the types of social media used for teaching and learning, ethical behaviour of students, awareness of ethical issues in the use of social media by the students and the implication for higher education institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, learning is now student-centered and whatever pedagogy or method a lecturer decides to use must be based on the needs of the students. Learning is expected to take place not only in the classroom, but outside the classroom and this can be facilitated using technology. The use of technology can facilitate interactions: among the students; between lecturer and student; and between students and learning materials. The choice of the technology should be one that can be used for course delivery, assignment, attendance, uploading of lecture materials, video and audio recording. However, the type of technology to be adopted for teaching and learning must be one that will be easily available, accessible, convenient and meet the various learning needs of the students.

Wyse, Stickney, Butz, Beckler, and Close (2020) reported that some technology platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Canvas, Zoom, and Google Hangouts have been adopted for teaching and learning. The adoption of technology however, became imperative during the Covid 19 era as physical classes and traditional means of teaching and learning could not be used due to the closure of universities. Lecturers looked for media that could be used for teaching and learning so students will be able to continue learning virtually even when it was not possible to meet physically. The pandemic forced lecturers to adopt one form of technology to deliver their lectures and ensure that the students are able to learn. This necessitated that both the lecturers and the students were mandated to use appropriate platforms for teaching and learning.

In many universities in Nigeria, lecturers have had the option to use some technology platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Schoology, Edmodo, WhatsApp and Telegram for teaching during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. This is supported by Walsh, Owen, Mustafa, and Beech (2020) who stated that the deployment of technology for education has come to stay and it has led to innovations in teaching methods. However, the choice of any technology for teaching and learning will be determined by the availability, knowledge, cost to the students, digital divide which is based on socio-economic status, physical access, motivation, skills and actual use of the technology of the students. These factors became necessary as many organizations where some of these students were employed were not working optimally, but providing very skeletal services and this affected the economy in terms of money to pay for data subscription and network reliability. The consideration of these factors may make the adoption of social media an option for teaching and learning in Nigerian universities.

Social media refers to websites and online platforms allowing users to create, share content and interact with others. Social media can be explained as applications that are Internet-based which allows the creation and exchange of contents that are

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