

**INTERROGATING SOCIAL MEDIA PREVALENCE, ACCESS AND UTILIZATION
AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

There is an avalanche of studies on the use of social media among employees in private organizations. However, studies on the prevalence, access and utilization of social media in public organizations, such as the civil service are limited. Widespread use of social media and its role in transforming the way government employees communicate and discharge their duties, can no longer be ignored. However, it seems that the adoption and usage of social media as a means of communication in government institutions has been accepted with mixed feelings. While some were more open and welcoming to the idea of using social media, others are not quite receptive because of the feared disruptions it could bring to the structure and communication in the civil service. The current study, anchored in Manuel Castell's Network Society was carried out to interrogate the prevalence, access and utilization of social media within the context of Anambra State Civil Service in order to provide evidence based answers. Using mixed methods research approach, quantitative data was collected from 612 civil servants, selected through the lottery method of the simple random sampling. Qualitative data were generated from both interview sessions conducted among 15 civil servants purposively selected, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) sessions with senior and junior civil servants respectively. The study found a high prevalence use of social media among civil servants in Anambra State during work hours, for communication and collaboration. The study however, notes that social media use can be hedonistic and thus counter-productive, especially when used outside work related issues at work site, and therefore recommends regulation of social media use among civil servants.

Key words: civil servants, social media, job performance, social media prevalence, access and utilization, Anambra state, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

In today's scientific world, social media remains the most influential communication tool in the world and has permeated all sectors and institutions (Ashraf & Javed 2014). Organizations are increasingly adopting it for marketing, consumer outreach; employee participation and connection with other organizations (Munene & Nyaribo, 2013, Weru 2017). The emergence and adoption of social media have significant impact on the structure of many organizations including the civil service. According to Al-Badi(2014) the importance of social media is further underscored by the budget many governments around the world map out for it for engagement between government agencies and their customers to ensure its availability, access and utilization.

Prevalence, access and utilization of social media platforms have become indispensable tools in the achievement of organizational goals. Among civil servants, the growing prevalence of social media use mirrors the global digital transformation and increasing demand for real-time, interactive communication. Studies have revealed that government employees leverage social media not only for

official tasks but also for personal and professional networking, making it a critical tool in modern governance (Mergel, 2013). The accessibility of these platforms via smart phones and other digital devices has further enhanced their utilization, enabling civil servants to interact with citizens, collaborate with colleagues, and share information with broader audiences efficiently.

Undeniably, the advent of social media has exponentially connected individuals around the globe (Bennett, 2010). In 2021, over 4.26 billion people were using social media worldwide, a number projected to almost six billion in 2027. More than half of the world (59%) or 4.76 billion people now use social media, with 137 million new users coming online consistently (Chaffey, 2023). The average daily time spent using social media is 2 hours, 30 minutes. As at January 2022, 15.4% of the total population of Nigerians or about 109.2 million use the internet (Kemp 2022). Of this number, data published in Meta's advertising resources indicate that Facebook had 26.1 million users, Youtube had 32.90 million users, Instagram had 9.05 million, Facebook Messenger reached 4.05 million users, LinkedIn had 60.30 million, X (formerly Twitter) had 325.4 thousand users (Kemp 2022).

The significant of the figures notwithstanding, social media use in developing countries such as Nigeria appears to focus more on private than government organizations. There is therefore, a dearth of studies on prevalence, access and integration of social media into the daily functions of public institutions like the civil service and its contribution to their achievement of organizational goals. The utilization of social media by civil servants however raises questions about boundaries between personal and professional use, compliance with government policies, and the potential risks of spreading misinformation or breaching confidentiality (Bertot, Jaeger, & Hansen, 2012). Regrettably, disparities in access to technology and digital literacy among civil servants affect equitable use of these tools, particularly in regions where infrastructural and educational gaps persist. This paper therefore, interrogated the prevalence, access, and utilization of social media among civil servants, focusing its contribution to the overall organizational goal of the civil service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Advent of Social Media use in Nigerian Civil Service.

Like in many societies around the globe, the emergence of social media in Nigeria has its roots in technological advancements; development of the internet and the proliferation of digital technology (Longe et al., 2009). The use of social media in Nigeria is closely tied to the adoption of the internet. The internet began to gain popularity in Nigeria in the late 1990s and early 2000s, initially among universities and research institutions (Eke & Odoh 2014). Dial-up connections and cybercafés were the primary means of accessing the internet during this period. The internet forums and chat rooms allowed people to engage in discussions and connect with others online (Stewart & Mann 2000).

In the early and mid-2000s, social networking sites like Hi5, Friendster, and MySpace became popular in Nigeria (Tarver et al 2022). These platforms provided Nigerians with new ways to connect and interact with others. Facebook was established in 2004 and gained massive popularity around 2008 and 2009 (Oparaugo, 2021) The introduction, spread and the adoption of mobile phones, smart phones as well as the growth of 3G and 4G networks also played significant part in the increase and spread of social media (Emmanuel & Marvis, 2014). Consequently, more Nigerians now have increased access to social media platforms using their mobile devices. This also made accessing social media convenient. In recent times, social media in Nigeria is now used for numerous purposes, such as business promotion activism, and social mobilization. Even

Nigerian political parties and leaders have also leveraged social media for political campaigns and engagement with the public. According to the Nigerian Communication

Commission (NCC) Nigeria has registered about 156 million active internet subscribers in February 2023 representing over half of the country's population. This implies that a good number of Nigerians have now tapped into different social media platforms.

The advent of social media in Nigeria has not been without controversies. Like many developing countries it has become a tool for generating misinformation, hate speech, and political tensions (Hassan 2023). The Nigerian government has at some point attempted to regulate or restrict social media use, leading to debates on freedom of expression and online regulation. In all, the use of social media in Nigeria has continued to evolve and expand alongside internet and digital technology. It has become a vital tool for communication, social interaction, business, and activism in the country thereby shaping various aspects of the Nigerian society.

Prevalence of social media use among civil servants

Kavanaugh Fox Sheetz Yang, Whalen and Xie (2011) adopted mixed research methods in conducting a pilot study of social media use by government, from the routine to the critical. The study was conducted at Arlington, Virginia, Washington, DC United States of America. The research is based on the outcome of focus group interviews and participant questionnaires shared among 25 respondents. Findings revealed that the overwhelming majority (80%) of respondents reported having a profile on a social networking site, with many having profiles on multiple social media sites. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the sampled participants used social networking sites on a daily basis while 76% agreed to have made use of these sites at least once a week. From this study, there is an indication of high prevalence of social media use among government officials in Washington DC, United States of America. It may be necessary to investigate, if this is obtainable in the current study.

In their research, Akinbode Opayemi and Sokefun (2013) adopted cross sectional design to determine the impact of online social networking (OSNs) on employees' commitment to duties in the private and public organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria. Two organizations constituted the population of study. The sample size is 100 respondents, made up of 40 senior staff and 60 junior staff picked at random. The data was collected through the use of questionnaire and simple frequency distribution was used for the analysis. The study revealed that employees of the public organization use social networks more frequently than their private organization counterpart because those in public organisation are idler at work. More so, the time spent on social media is relatively high as 40 out of the 65 respondents admitted to spending an average of one to two hours daily on social networks. The study also revealed that Managers/Heads of units/department claimed to have cautioned subordinates on the use of social media while they have pending task/deliverables. The outcome of the research therefore shows that those in public offices spend more time on social media platforms and are likely to be unproductive. This study gave an insight into the structure of public and private organizations in Nigeria. It possibly provides a decent reflection of what is obtainable in the civil service in Nigeria and Anambra State in particular. However, only an empirical investigation will help us to either validate this stand or have a different view, hence this study.

Matyek, Solomon, Ohaji and Etumnu (2022) adopted cross sectional method in studying social media as a government digital public relations tool: the Nigerian experience. The researchers adopted the qualitative approach, with descriptive research as the research design. The findings show that all national and sub-national governments use a minimum of two and a maximum of

six social media accounts. It further revealed that the frequency of use which ranged from monthly to yearly among all the 38 national and sub-national governments in Nigeria is low. The findings in this study provide insight into what could be obtainable in the field as regards periodicity of usage. Though variation in this study is different from the other two reviewed, the differences in space and time could be a limiting factor in having different result as regards social media usage. The researcher will therefore build on these findings as they will act as a guide for further investigation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored in Manuel Castell's network society. The theory visualizes an emerging societal structure where human relationships are increasingly organized around technologically assisted information "flows". This space less and timeless world without boundaries has transformed elements of human identity relationships consumption and work. The theory emphasizes that the changes observed in the social, political, and economic systems have occurred due to the spread of the network of digital and information technologies. According to Castell, the concept of network society is associated with interpretation of the social implications of globalization and the role of electronic technologies in society. The author believes that although there have been social networks; the key factor that distinguishes the network society is the use of information and communication technology which helps to create and sustain far-flung networks in which new kinds of social relationship are created. This theory captures how the digital world is influencing our everyday interactions including work relationship in the civil service. The use of social media has become ubiquitous and it is part of the reality in the work place.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study adopted mixed methods research approach (Kroll & Neri 2009), where quantitative and qualitative data collection methods are used simultaneously to gather information. These methods helped in gaining deeper insights while interrogating prevalence and level of access to social media among civil servants. The study location is Anambra State, Southeast Nigeria. Through the lottery method of the simple random sampling, 626 civil servants were adopted for this study. This involved assigning numbers to all elements and randomly selecting from the population. As at when the study was conducted, according to the data from the Anambra State nominal payroll (2023), the number of Ministries and Departments in the State currently stood at 22. The researcher assigned label to each Ministry/Department and randomly handpicked a label till the target number was gotten. Since, there are 22 Ministries/Departments in Anambra State and the researcher considers every Ministry/Department equal. The numbers of the Ministries were divided by 2 and the researcher arrived at 11. Thus, 11 of the 22 ministries representing 50% of the total Ministries were considered adequate for the study. The copies of questionnaire were shared in the selected Ministries/Departments in the State. This procedure ensured that all elements within the target population of the Civil Servants in Anambra State were equally represented and it guaranteed that findings from the study can be generalized. Equal numbers of respondents were consequently drawn from each of the selected Ministries/Departments. As stated earlier, the sample size for this study is 626. This sample size was divided by the number of selected ministries, to arrive at 56.9, approximately 57. The researcher further divided the 57 respondents into two categories: senior and junior staff. Since 57 when divided by the two categories of the respondents have a remainder of 1, the researcher allotted 28 slots to senior staff and 27 to junior staff. The allotment was revised in the next Ministry and junior staff got 28 slots while senior staff members were given 27. The quantitative data was processed with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The data were analyzed with descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution tables and percentages. The qualitative data gave room for the researcher to employ In-depth Interview Guide and a Focus Group Discussion which was conducted among senior and junior civil servants who were randomly selected and who fall within the target respondents' category to express their opinions. The qualitative sessions aided in gaining deeper insights into issues associated with their level of knowledge about social media, level of access to social media. The questions that were asked to provide answers to the prevalence and access to social media in the work place include to ascertain if participants make use of social media in their office, the type of social media platform they make use of, the length of time they spend on social media in a day during work hours, the day they spend most of their time on social media. Participants were further asked to rate the intensity level of their social media use during work hours and how often they make use of social media during work hours. The interviews sessions were further recorded and transcribed. Transcripts derived from the In-depth interviews were thoroughly read, coded, and manually analyzed thematically. It is expected that the manual thematic analysis will help provide rich, detailed simplified information on the complex nature of the mixed research approach. Welsh (2002) argued that in some instances, it might be better but not always to use manual analysis rather than computer-based methods.

FINDINGS

The Findings are presented as they relate to the objectives of this work; which is to provide answers to issues on prevalence access and utilization of social media use among civil servants in Anambra

Analysis of Socio-Demographic Variables

This sub-section contains information on the result of the analysis conducted on the socio-demographic features of the respondents including: age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, annual salary range, and years of service. The results obtained are presented in a composite table as shown in Table 1A.

Table 1A: *Distribution of respondents according to socio-demographic variables*

Description of Variables	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	259	42.3
Female	353	57.7
Total	612	100.0
Age Category		
25 - 32 Years	158	25.8
33 - 40 Years	140	22.9
41 - 48 Years	153	25.0
49 - 56 Years	155	25.3
57 Year and above	6	1.0
Total	612	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	194	31.7
Married	273	44.6
Divorced	28	4.6
Separated	67	10.9
Widowed	50	8.2
Total	612	100.0

Educational Level

SSCE	131	21.4
OND/NCE/Equivalent	223	36.4
B.Sc/HND/Equivalent	184	30.1
M.Sc/Equivalent	61	10.0
PhD	13	2.1
Total	612	100.0

Annual Salary Range

350,000-449,000	59	9.6
450,000 - 549,000	168	27.5
550,000 - 649,000	248	40.5
650,000 - 749,000	94	15.4
750,000 and above	43	7.0
Total	612	100.0

Years of Service

1 - 5 years	189	30.9
6 - 10 years	170	27.8
11 -15 years	153	25.0
16 - 20 years	72	11.8
Others	28	4.6
Total	612	100.0

Field Survey, 2024

With respect to gender of respondents, the analysis showed that 42.3% of the respondents were male, while 57.7% were female. This indicates a higher representation of females in the civil service within Anambra State. This gender imbalance may not only reflect broader social and cultural trends in civil service employment in Nigeria but also suggests that any insights derived from the study will incorporate perspectives from a predominantly female workforce, which could influence access and utilization of social media and their influence on job performance. Regarding respondents' age, apart from a very small proportion (1.0%) of the study participants who are between 57 years and above, there appears to be a seemingly even distribution. The analysis showed the following distribution: 25 to 32 years (25.8%), 33 to 40 years (22.9%), 41 to 48 years (25.0%), and 49 to 56 years (25.3%). The relatively even distribution of the age groups indicates a diverse age range of civil servants in the study, with a significant proportion being young to middle-aged adults (i.e., about 73.7% are below 48 years, with mean age of 40.5 and standard deviation of 9.30). This age diversity suggests that the workforce is adaptable and potentially more open to leveraging social media for job-related tasks, aligning with the study's focus on access and utilization of social media and their effects on job performance. In terms of respondents' marital status, the analysis showed that the largest proportion (44.6%) of respondents are married, while about a quarter proportion (31.7%) of them were single. In other-words, a substantial proportion of the respondents (approximately 76.3%) were either married or single, which reflects typical family structures in the current study area. The marital status of respondents may have implications for their social media usage, as married individuals might use these platforms differently compared to single individuals, potentially affecting job performance in various ways, such as networking opportunities or family commitments that could impact work-life balance.

The analysis of respondents' education levels revealed significant variance among respondents, with the highest proportion (36.4%) of them possessing an Ordinary National Diploma (OND) or its equivalent. This was followed by 30.1% of them who hold a Bachelor's degree (B.Sc./HND), while the rest (21.4%) were Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) holders, 10.0% were Master's degree (M.Sc.) holders, and a very low proportion (2.1%) of them were PhD degree holders respectively. The data implies that the majority (approximately 87.9%) of the respondents have attained tertiary education, suggesting that civil servants in Anambra State are likely to be literate enough in the use of social media, which may correlate positively with their job performance.

With respect to the years of service of the respondents, the data revealed that the majority (30.9%) of them had 1 to 5 years of service experience as civil servants. This was followed by those with 6 to 10 years of experience, comprising 27.8% of the sample. A smaller proportion, 25.0% reported having up 11 to 15 years of service experience, while 11.8% had 16 to 20 years of experience. Lastly, only 4.6% indicated that they had served for more than 20 years. These findings suggest that a significant portion of the workforce in Anambra State Civil Service is relatively new, with over half (58.7%) of the employees having 10 years of service or less, indicating a tendency that this population may have greater access and familiarity with social media.

Finally, the income distribution among respondents showed that the most common income range is between 550,000 and 649,000 Naira, with 40.5% of respondent falling within this category. Following closely, 27.5% of respondents indicated earning between 450,000 and 549,000 Naira, indicating a significant representation in this category. Conversely, the lower income brackets show a smaller presence, with only 9.6% of the sample earning between 350,000 and 449,000 Naira annually. In the higher earning category, 15.4% of the respondents fall within the salary range of 650,000-749,000 Naira, while a mere 7.0% earn 750,000 Naira and above. Overall, a substantial majority of 68.0% of respondents earned an annual salary range between 550,000 and 749,000 Naira, reflecting a significant concentration of average income individuals within the civil service.

Table 1B: Respondents' use of social media in office

Options	Frequency	Percent
Yes	389	63.6
No	223	36.4
Total	612	100.0

Field Survey, 2024

In Table 1B, respondents were asked whether they make use of social media in their office. The results indicate that a majority of respondents (75.7%) reported that they do utilize social media at work, while 24.3% indicated that they do not. These findings suggest a predominant inclination towards social media use among civil servants in Anambra State, Nigeria. The high percentage of respondents who reported using social media in their offices may reflect a growing recognition of the role that social media can play in enhancing communication, collaboration, and information sharing within the workplace. This trend could have significant implications for job performance, as social media can facilitate real-time interaction and access to resources that support employees in their roles. The proportion of respondents who reported using social media in their offices were further obliged to indicate the social media platform they mostly make use of. Analysis of their responses in this regard was presented in Figure 1.

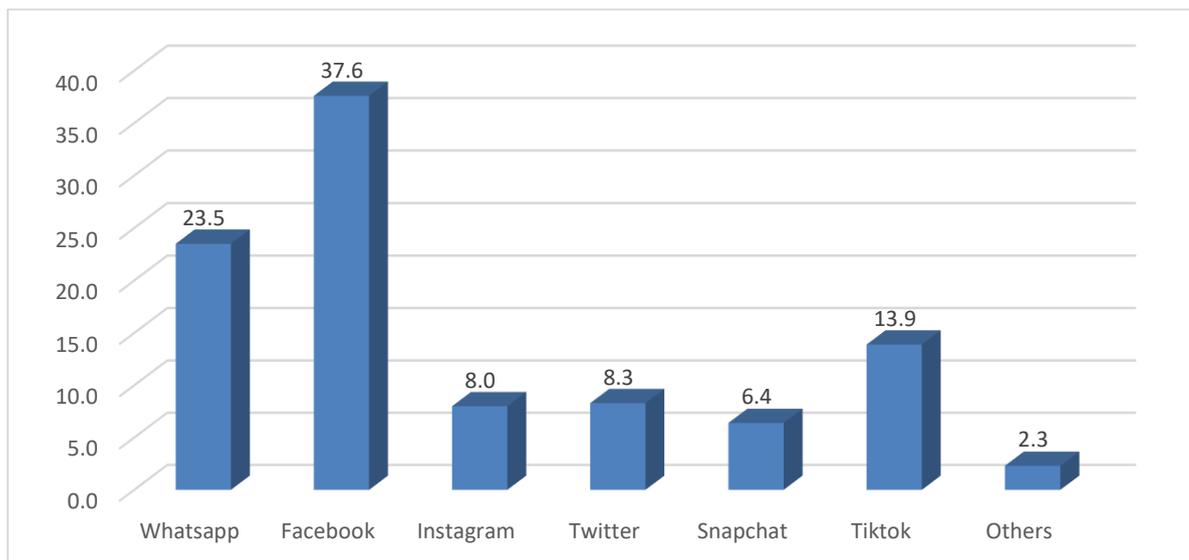


Figure 1: Social media platforms used often by respondents.

The analysis presented in Figure 1 showed that Facebook was the most commonly reported platform used by the respondents in their offices, with the largest proportion (37.6%) of respondents indicating they often use it. WhatsApp followed closely behind, with 23.5% of respondents reporting its regular use. The use of TikTok was reported by 13.9% of respondents, Twitter and Instagram received similar percentages, 8.3% and 8.0% respectively, while the use of Snapchat was mentioned by 6.4% of respondents. Cumulatively, these results illustrate a diverse range of social media platform usage among respondents, with Facebook and WhatsApp being the most favored.

From the in-depth interview sessions respondents expressed diverse opinions with respect to the social media platform they often use. While some of the respondents said they use Facebook more, others opined that they use different forms of social media. One of the respondents said, “We use Facebook and we use X (formerly \twitter) and we also use Instagram a lot, that of Youtube is also coming up and we have the plan to also use Tiktok” (Male 51 years).

Another respondent reinforced this stance saying;

I use different social media platforms depending on the mood I am and what I want to do on social media. For instance, I have Instagram account, I watch videos there, I have Facebook account and I also watch videos there too, I still explore X and read vital information there. X is very educative, so each platform has a role it plays for me. (Female, 38 years)

One of the participant’s views however is more consistent with the findings from the quantitative data, as he revealed using Facebook more. The quote below captures the respondent’s view;

Well, it’s more of like the Facebook thing and Instagram. Maybe when I feel like I need to ease myself of certain tension, I just go to internet and ease myself of stress. I used them to ease tension, communicate with certain people that I tag as close friends and people who actually will help me relieve tension, you know. The Facebook aspect of it, I used it a lot. (Male, 43 years)

The views expressed by the participants in the interview sessions are not completely in contrast with the quantitative research. The qualitative sessions further demonstrates that there are dynamics that influence the prevalence of social media usage among civil servants. Notwithstanding that there are different platforms that civil servants subscribe to; Facebook still remains one of the dominant social media platforms.

The respondents were further probed to know the length of time they spend on social media in a day during work hours. Their responses were analyzed and presented in Figure 2.

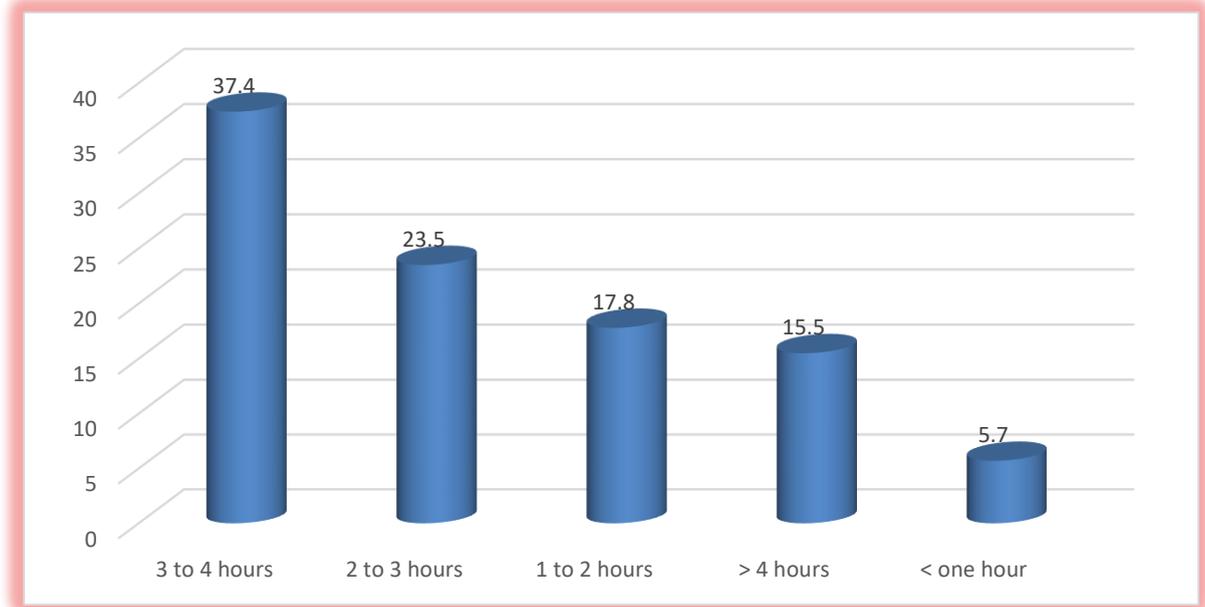


Figure 2: Distribution of respondents on length of time spent on social media during work hour
The findings as presented in Figure 2 indicate a diverse range of responses concerning social media usage during working hours among the respondents. The largest proportion (37.4%) of respondents indicated usage of social media in range of three to four hours. This was followed by 23.5% of respondents who reported spending between two to three hours on social media during working hours. These data implied that approximately 60.9% of respondents allocate two or more hours per day to social media during work hours. This significant percentage raises important questions regarding the balance between personal engagement and professional responsibilities. Excessive social media use may create distractions; detract employees from job performance, which may ultimately lead to decreased productivity.

From the qualitative data, respondents revealed that there are factors that influence the length of time they spend on social media, especially during work hours. The excerpt below captures one of the participant's viewpoints;

If there is a job for me that I need to do, then, I won't have so much time to spend on social media. I don't really think that I will abandon that job and be whiling away time on social media. If I have to sit for like four hours and there is no job before me to do, what am I supposed to be doing? I can spend some time on social media while waiting for instruction and I won't even check the number of hours I have spent.
(Male, 43 years)

In a similar vein, one of the respondents in the FGD put forward her view as follows;

I do not check the number of hours I spend on social media platforms. It depends on what I am doing in the office and what I am doing online. If

I have free time in the office, I might spend hours unknowingly and if what I am doing online is fascinating I might spend more time online without checking (Female, 35 years)

As suggested by the participants, it is important to consider the condition that employees find themselves which influences access and the number of hours spent on social media. Further interest was directed towards understanding the motivations behind respondents' usage of social media during office hours. Findings in this regard were presented in Figure 3

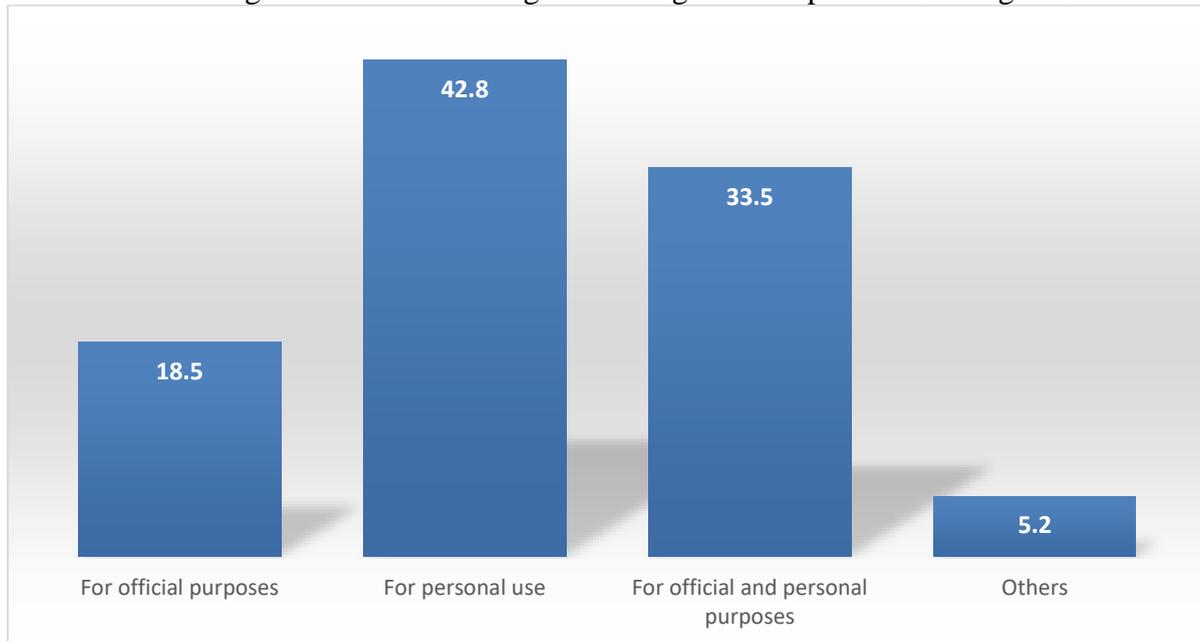


Figure 3: Distribution of respondents on their purpose for using social media in office

As shown in Figure 3, the largest proportion 42.8% of the respondents indicated that they use social media for personal use; this was followed by about a quarter of the proportion of the respondents (33.5%) of who indicated using social media for official and personal purposes, suggesting a dual usage for both professional and personal reasons. A proportion of the respondents (18.5%) stated that they use social media solely for official purposes, while 5.2% of them indicated 'other' usages that were not specified. These data suggest that social media is often seen as a multifaceted tool, blending personal and professional interactions.

From the qualitative data, respondents reveal that they use social media for personal use for various reasons including work related purposes. One of the respondents disclosed that he uses social media to connect with friends and access information. The quote below captures the participant's response to the question;

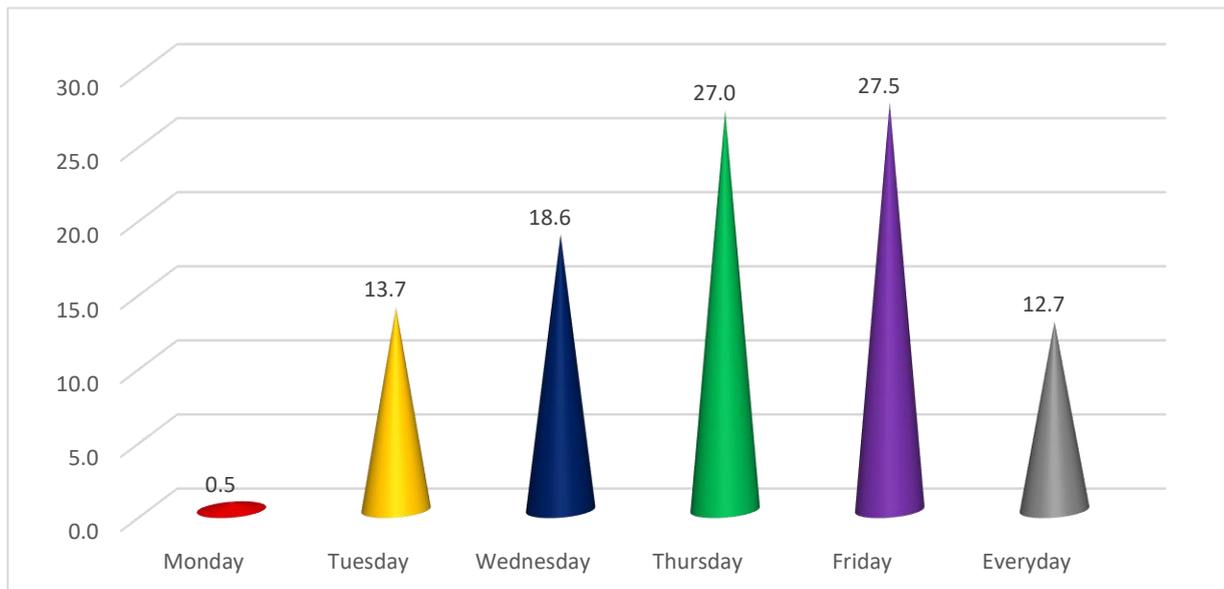
Like in my own case, when I feel like I need to get connected to close friends that are not physically available to me, I use social media to connect with them. Sometimes I download information from the social media but more often than not, it is for my personal consumption anyway (Male, 39 years)

Another respondent from the FGD revealed that they use social media for official duties. The quote below succinctly discusses the participant's opinion;

We use it to disseminate information. Everyone in our ministry use the same platform because we have a WhatsApp group for all the staff. Every information dissemination is being carried out there, and that is how we reach out to them. And for some of our workers in different

communities working in different local governments, we can use social media to pass information directly (Male, 51 years)

These responses further validate the findings from the quantitative data which shows that there are different reasons why civil servants use social media. While some civil servants use social media for personal purposes, others use it for official purposes. The researcher also probed further to inquire about the daily pattern of social media usage during office hours among the respondents. The data gathered in this respect were analyzed and presented in Figure 4.



The analysis presented in Figure 4 showed that based on the modal frequencies, Friday emerged as the day with the highest reported social media engagement, with 27.5% of respondents indicating that they spend the most time on social media on this day. Following closely is Thursday, with 27.0% of respondents reporting significant social media usage. The consistent high levels of engagement on these two days may indicate a trend where employees allocate time for personal engagement as they anticipate the weekend. In contrast, the middle of the week appears to be less favored for social media use, with Wednesday showing a frequency of 18.6%. This decline may reflect a midweek focus on performance, as employees might prioritize work responsibilities over social media interactions during this period. However, Tuesday and Monday represent the lower end of the spectrum, with 13.7% and a mere 5% respectively. The minimal engagement on Monday could be indicative of a collective effort among employees to begin the week focusing on their job performance, while Tuesdays' moderate percentage suggests a gradual increase in social media use as the week progresses. From the qualitative data, respondents expressed varying opinions. While some of the participants revealed that they have more time to spend on social media during weekends, others stressed that the time they spend on social media was contingent upon the work they have in the office. One of the participants opined as follows;

Can I even say there is a day I spend more time on social media? I think this depends on the work we have in the office. Sometimes, we work all through the week and do not even have time for social media engagement. In some other weeks, we may not do much on Mondays and Tuesdays, but by Wednesday, we will be very much occupied. I think it varies. (Female, 41 years)

Another respondent echoed this view stressing that they never considered checking the day they spend more time on social media and that this is usually determined by the number of tasks they attend to. The excerpt below captures the participant's view;

I have never considered checking the day I spend more time on social media. My social media engagements are usually influenced by the job at hand and the instruction from my Superiors. If we are too engaged in the office, no one has time for social media, so there is no particular day (Male, 46 years).

In contrast, one of the participant's views supports the findings from the quantitative data. The respondent revealed that they usually have more time on Fridays. As captured in the quote below, the participant revealed;

I think it is on Fridays, Mondays are usually hectic for us, but by Thursdays and Fridays, we are usually less busy, sometimes, our director does not even come to the office, so we have enough time for recreations, including social media engagements (Female 38 years old)

In all, these findings further demonstrate that the structure and organization of civil service influences social media use.

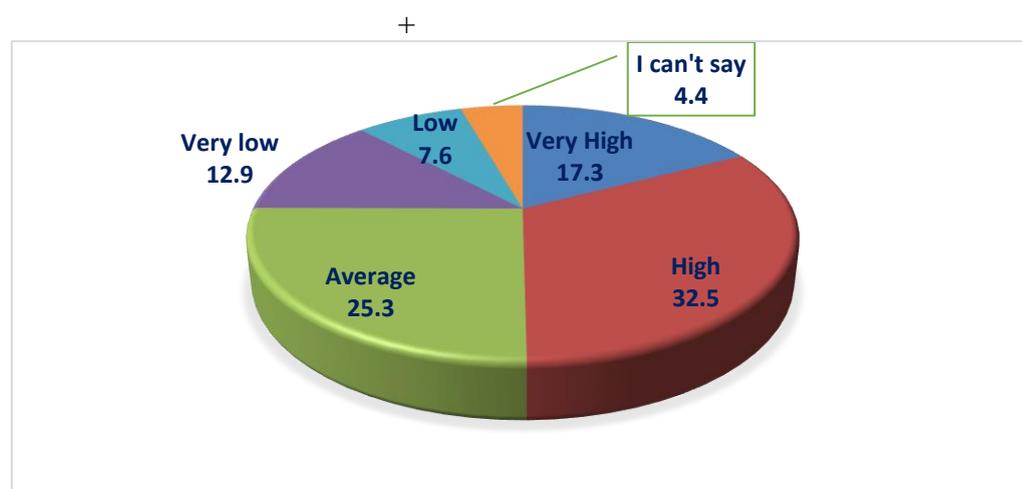


Figure 5: Respondents' rating regarding the level of social media usage among civil servants during work hours

As presented in Figure 5, the modal frequency for the responses indicated that the most common rating was "High," with 32.5% of respondents selecting this option. This suggests that a significant portion of respondents perceived a relatively high intensity of social media use among civil servants during work hours. This was followed by 25.3% of respondents who choose the option "Average", indicating that this proportion of respondents viewed social media engagement among civil servants during office hours as moderate. Overall, the combined proportions of "Very High" and "High" ratings (which total 49.8%) underscore the view that nearly half of the respondents perceived social media use among civil servants during work hours as being at least high. This data demonstrates a workplace culture where social media use is not only prevalent but potentially significant among civil servants during work hours. This brings to fore the need to further inquire into the contextual factors influencing the high level of social high use during work hours among civil servants, as well as the implications for workplace performance. This is captured in the following sub-section. The qualitative data further supports the findings from the quantitative data as respondents reveal that their level of

social media usage is high. In his response, one of the participants has this to say;

I think most people in my office make use of social media as internet access is granted freely by the Ministry. Majority of us actually own a mobile phone and we buy data to stay in tune when outside the network coverage of the Ministry. This gives us access to social media which we use as we deem fit (Male, 46 years).

In a similar vein, one of the FGD participants described social media as an essential tool for their office. In his words captured below;

We have high access to social media, in fact, it is being used properly. Everyone is aware of that and they make use of it the proper way. So everyone in our ministry uses the same platform and we have a WhatsApp group for all members of staff (Male, 51 years).

From the responses of the quantitative and the qualitative data, it can be inferred that there is a high level of social media use among civil servants in Anambra State, including its usage to enhance service delivery thus influencing job performance.

DISCUSSIONS

The study discovered that there is a predominant inclination towards social media use among civil servants in Anambra State, Nigeria as the majority of respondents (75.7%) reported that they use social media at work. This finding mirrors a growing recognition of the role that social media can play in enhancing communication, collaboration, and information sharing within the workplace. This finding is consistent with Kavanaugh et al, (2011) study which reveals a high prevalence of social media use among government officials in Washington DC, United States of America as overwhelming majority (80%) of respondents reported having a profile on many networking sites. The findings further corroborates Akinbode et al (2013) study which reveals that employees of the public organization use social networks more frequently than their private organization counterpart because those in public organisations are idler at work. The high prevalence of social media among civil servants in Anambra State could have significant implications for job performance, either negatively or positively. The outcome of this study however contradicts the report by Matyek et al (2022) study of social media as a government digital public relations tool: the Nigerian experience which reveals that the frequency of social media use which ranged from monthly to yearly among all the 38 national and sub-national governments in Nigeria is low. This further indicates that the structure and objective of an organization can influence social media use. As discovered in this study, the high prevalence of social media use among Civil Servants is influenced by several factors which will be discussed in subsequent sections. The study further discovered different social media platforms adopted by civil servants of which Facebook and WhatsApp are the most frequented. The study further established high prevalence of social media use among civil servants who indicated using different types of social media platform.

The study also revealed that a large proportion of civil servants use social media three to four hours a day, during work hours. The study further revealed that approximately 60.9% of respondents allocate two or more hours per day to social media during work hours. This finding is consistent with the report by The Global State of Digital in their 2019 Report where they reported over 4 million increases in the number of internet users. It however contradicts the findings by Ahmad et.al (2020) who revealed that overall internet penetration is relatively low, with only 50% of the population connected to the internet, compared to the global average of 57%. The current study further exposed the dynamics that influence the length of time people spend on social media, especially during work hours. Having a task at hand to implement reduces the length of time civil servants spend on social media while not having a duty to attend to increases their propensity towards spending time on social media. This study discovered that

civil servants use social media both for personal and official duties. While a larger percentage of respondents use social media for personal use, about a quarter of the civil servants use social media for official duties. From this study, a larger percentage of civil servants use social media more on Fridays and Thursdays with 27.5% and 27.0% reporting significant social media usage respectively. The high levels of engagement on these two days demonstrate a trend where employees allocate time for personal engagement as they anticipate the weekend. In contrast, the beginning and middle of the week appear to be less favored for social media use. The minimal engagement on other days, especially on Mondays demonstrates a collective effort among employees to begin the week with focus, thus upping their job performance. The study further revealed that nearly half of the respondents perceived social media use among civil servants during work hours as being at high. This data suggest a workplace culture where social media use is not only prevalent but potentially significant among civil servants during work hours. This brings to the fore the need to further inquire into the implications of using social media for workplace performance.

CONCLUSION

This work examined prevalence access and utilization of social media and their effects on job performance of civil servants in Anambra state Civil Service. The study became necessary because ascertaining access and level of social media adoption in both private and public institutions will assist in understanding how to mitigate controversies surrounding social media use in the achievement of organizational goals.

From the literature, many of the researches done on social media and employee performance were more on private organizations which evidently have different structure and goals from that of the civil service. Private organizations emphasize profit motive as the ultimate goal and therefore can easily dismiss a worker for non-performance. The civil service on the other hand emphasizes service delivery and enjoys job permanence. The structure and the indicators of job performance in the civil service are different from that of profit oriented organizations. Then need for a research to ascertain the prevalence, access and utilization of social media in public institutions like the civil service therefore is imperative as civil servants implement government policies which have implication for all citizenry. The study yielded important findings and demonstrated the level of access and utilization of social media among civil servants in Anambra State.

The findings of the study have added to our understanding of the prevalence and level of access and utilization of social media use among Civil Servants in Anambra State. The study has clear implications for policy and future research as it investigated access and utilization of social media discovering a predominant inclination towards social media use among civil servants in Anambra State. There is a high level of access and utilization of social media among civil servants which reflects an increasing recognition of the role that social media plays in enhancing communication, collaboration, and information sharing within the workplace could have significant implication for job performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends infrastructural development such as installation of internet-enabled devices in offices and other necessary equipment to provide the necessary climate for social media utilization by the civil servants.

There should be continuous training and development of civil servants on the importance of using social media while in office for job related purposes thereby improving job performance of the workers.

Management should also put in place policy guidelines on social media use in office for

effective utilization and realization of organizational goals.

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