

Perception of Undergraduate Business Education Students on the use of Social Networking Sites for Entrepreneurship Activities in Universities in North-Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract

This research work title Perception of Undergraduate Business Education Students on the Use of Social Networking Sites for Entrepreneurship activities in Universities in north-eastern Nigeria. The main objectives of this study is to determine the Perception of Undergraduate Business Education Students on the Use of Social Networking Sites for Entrepreneurship activities in Universities in north-eastern Nigeria. The design used in the study was descriptive survey; a sample size of 191 undergraduate business education students were drawn from the population of 384 from three Universities offering Business Education in the North-Eastern Nigeria. A structured questionnaire titled 'Perception of undergraduate business education students on the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities (PUBESOUSNSEA) was administered. Data collected were analyzed using Mean and standard deviation. The result of the study reveals that mostly all the students are using social networking sites in discovering entrepreneurship activities, understanding market trends and changes, comprehending customer problems, loading and uploading information on goods and services etc. There are also laudable benefits in using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities such as increase in customer and supplier contacts, providing communications and distribution channels, acquiring new customers and retaining the existing ones, making 24 hours online transactions, advertisement of goods and services etc. Based on the findings, it was recommended that lecturers and stakeholders shall adopt the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities in teaching entrepreneurship as a course. Academic planning unit of the universities should also plan and redesign syllable that will captured the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities, in addition useful suggestions for further research are equally made.

Keywords: Social networking sites, Entrepreneurship, Activities, Perception, Undergraduate

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the act of being an entrepreneur, is a person who undertakes innovation, finances and display business acumen in an effort to transform innovation into economic goods (Shane, 2010). Entrepreneurship may result in new organization or may be part of revitalizing mature organizations in response to a perceived opportunity. Entrepreneurship therefore is a derivative word from entrepreneur; entrepreneurship in other words is a process which involves creation of an innovation economic of risk and uncertainty (Shane, 2010). The entrepreneurial activity implies the discovery assessment and exploitation of opportunities in other words, new product, services or production processes; new strategies and organizational forms and new market for products and input that did not previously exist (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

Social networking sites are web-based application that allows individuals to create profile and share information with friends within the system the study of Ahmed, & Qazi, (2011) found that the first official social networking site is classmates.com that was founded in 1995. The purpose of its creation was to provide the structures a means of social connection during or after their degree completion. For example, Facebook is currently the fastest growing commercial social networking sites in the world, with more than 350 million subscribers/ actions user profile worldwide in 2010 (social media statics, 2011). Therefore, social networking sites can be an excellent way of creating entrepreneurship activities by building online groups around entrepreneurs, which client and prospective customers can interact with like-minded individuals, acquire new customers and retain the existing ones. This group provides valuable insight plus useful feedback that help marketers, improve their products to suit the need of the

customers. This feedback can assist in advancing their markets efforts, Mangold & Faulds, (2009). Recognize that social media allows enterprises to connect with both existing and potential customers, engage with them and reinforce a sense of community around the enterprise offering, both business and customers are using the media to share information, exchange opinion, recommendations and display certain consumption behaviors (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011). Morales are able to engage in audience sizing and get to better understanding their customers and as such companies can quickly add products and change prices or description (Kotler & Armstrong, 2011).

Social networking sites allow businesses to gain access to resources that might otherwise not be available to them and it can also aid the development of a firm, increase the customer and supplier contacts brings to light when resource and funding are available to promote innovation and help in the cultivation of strategic partnerships. Business owners rarely possess all the skills and knowledge needed to expand their enterprises, and finding people with the necessary skills and getting them to contribute, is a vital aspect of their networking. Social networking sites can also be used to provide customers with information on product specifications, availability, and usage and many companies are now successfully advertising their products and services via Facebook, second life, Twitter, and similar sites (Li & Bernoff, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

The use of social networking sites among undergraduate business education students in the universities is now widespread. Students consume a lot of time on social networking sites uploading or downloading and getting information concerning their career or academic work. Students are always online every second chatting with friends, watching online movies and doing research. Access to social networking sites has become a habit for this age group. They find it difficult to study for one hour without logging into social networking sites. Some students have become very smart because of the interaction they got from these sites, while some have become very poor academically. In spite of this important usage of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities by business owners, companies, employers, customers, despite it’s importance, is not yet ascertain, it usage for entrepreneurship activities by undergraduate business education students in the universities. It is on the basis of this problem that this study seeks to find out the perception of undergraduate business education students on the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities, other than for social interaction only.

Scope of the Study

The research covers all the final year undergraduate business education students on the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities in Federal Universities in North Eastern Nigeria, because they offered entrepreneurship as a course in their final year as part of their graduation requirements. The study was also delimited to Facebook and Whatsapp because they are the most used social networking sites by the students.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is constructed to explain the relationship between the different variables in the study. Variable is anything whose value changes according to situation or with the situation.

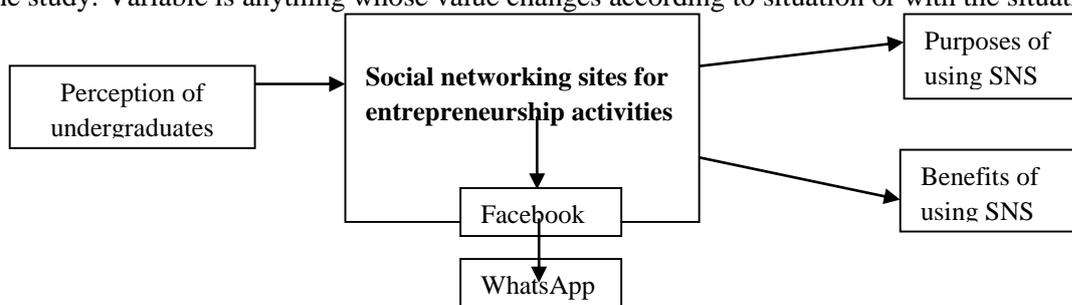


Figure1. Conceptual framework on the perception of undergraduate business education students on the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities. Independent variable is that who or what influence the dependent variable, while the dependent variable is researcher's aim to understand and describe the dependent variable. In the study two variables were selected:

- i. Perception of undergraduate business education students as dependent variable
- ii. Social networking sites as independent variable

Theoretical Framework

In the opinion of Marangunic & Granic (2015), the constant improvement and progress in technology, especially ICT related applications, make the choice to decide on matters of acceptance and rejection a dilemma. Based on this, many models and theories have been developed to shed more light on the effective use of technology and, out of all the models, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) stands out in examining issues affecting users' acceptance of modern technology. Without considerable understanding of the foundation, growth, and adjustment, along with the limitations of the model, there can be no broad and systematic research in the field.

On this basis, the study is anchored with the theory of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) because that is the most cited model in explaining attitudes towards technology. Its roots can be traced back to the Theory of Reasoned Action of Ajzen & Fishbein's, (1980). According to Priyanka & Kumar, 2013 the theory was initiated by Fred Davis in 1986. The aim of the theory is to describe factors that determine technology acceptance, information technology usage behaviour and to provide a parsimonious theoretical explanatory model (Bertrand & Bouchard, 2008).

Ducey, (2013) explains that TAM includes Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness which are the important determinants of technology acceptance and user behaviour. Teo, (2013) identifies various factors that promote the use and acceptance of technology. He enumerates individual differences, social influences, beliefs, attitudes and situational influences as factors that promote the intention to use technology and promote the ability to accept or reject it. In addition, Teo, (2013) posits that an individual's behaviour is influenced by an intention to perform the behaviour, in other words, the real performance of the behaviour is heralded by a person's behavioral intention to engage in the activity. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a prominent theory that seeks to investigate the attributes that influence technology adoption. Ducey, (2013) also described it as a parsimonious theory of technology adoption in an establishment which intends that individual responses toward a technology can trigger intentions or curiosity to use the technology, which in due course can influence actual usage (Aggorowati, Suhartono & Gautama, 2012).

Also important to TAM is intention which can also be used to envisage and predict the eagerness and motivation to perform behaviour and a number of skills. Such intention is determined by three factors: the first is personal in nature which reflects human attitude, the second is a subjective norm which shows social influence and the third is called perceived behavioral control (Huda, Rini, Mardoni & Putra, 2012). Therefore, peoples' intention to adopt a particular skill can be anchored on the three important factors stated above.

TAM has proven to be useful in revealing certain shortcomings in society. It was discovered that despite the growth of information usage, evidence has shown that there is a significant decline among the elderly, illiterate, lower income earners than the younger, well educated and high income earners. The application of TAM has helped to confirm that age, education, earnings and race are associated with beliefs in the importance of information. These beliefs can influence attitudes towards the use of skills that will enhance access to information.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to find out the perception of undergraduate business education students on the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities. Specifically, the study intends to;

1. Determine the perception of undergraduate business education students on the purpose of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities.
2. Determine the perception of undergraduate business education students on the benefits of using

social networking site for entrepreneurship activities.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are:

1. What is the perception of undergraduate business education students on the purposes of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities?
2. What is the perception of undergraduate business education students on the benefits of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities?

Methodology

The research design used for this study was descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey is a study which uses the sample data in any systematic investigation to describe and explain what is existent or non-existent on the present status of a phenomenon being investigated. The area of the study is north-eastern Nigeria. North-east is a Geo-political zone of Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is located on latitude of 9.082 and longitude of 8.6752 the area comprise; Adamawa State, Borno State, Bauchi State, Gombe State, Taraba State and Yobe State. . The population of the study is 384 final year undergraduate business education students that have already undertaken entrepreneurship as a course. The population of this study is presented on the Table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of final year Business education students and their various universities

S/N	Universities	State	Number of Final year Students
1	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi.(ATBU)	Bauchi	144
2	ModibboAdama University of Technology, Yola.(MAUTECH)	Adamawa	118
3	University of Maiduguri	Borno	122
TOTAL			384

Source: Academic units of the respective Universities, (2016).

The sample size of the study is191 final year business education students that have already undertaken entrepreneurship as a course. Based on Krejcie & Morgan, (1970), the estimated populations above 380 and close to 400 should have a sample size of 191.The sample was selected using proportionate random sampling technique. At first instance three Universities offering business education in the study area were already formed the strata; i.e. (Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi, Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola and University of Maiduguri). A proportion of 50% was used to select sample of respondents from each stratum, which gives a total sample of 191. As Shown in table 2 below:

Table 2; Percentage of Sample Size Drawn from the Population

S/N	Universities offering Business Education in North-East Nigeria	Population from each university	50% drawn	Sample Size from each university
1	ATBU, Bauchi	144	49.7	71
2	Mautech, Yola	118	49.7	59
3	Unimaid, Maiduguri	122	49.7	61
TOTAL		384		191

Source: Field Survey, (2017)

The instrument that was used in this study for the collection of data was perception of undergraduate business education students on the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities (PUBESOUSNSEA), the measurement instrument were constructed and developed by the researcher. The instrument was developed based on the content analysis. The questionnaire consists of a number of items printed in a definite order using 4 points scale and the subjects are guided to respond

to each item thus: SA-Strongly Agree; A- Agree; SD- Strongly Disagree; D- Disagree. The researcher with the help of two research assistants distributed 191 questionnaires to the respondents, which after a week of distribution of the questionnaires 179 were returned out of 191 that were distributed to the respondents that is representing 90%. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. This is because mean and standard deviation has the greatest reliability than other measures of central tendency (Uzuoagulu, 2012). Decision rule of upper and lower limit are used, the lower limit for strongly disagree is 1.00 and the upper limit is 1.50, the lower limit for disagree is 1.51 and the upper limit is 2.50, the lower limit for agree is 2.51 and the upper limit is 3.50, while the lower limit for strongly agree is 3.51 and the upper limit is 4.00.

Therefore 2.50 being the lower limit of 3 were considered as the decision point. And anything above 2.50 is considered as agree or positive while anything below 2.50 is considered as disagree or negative.

Results and Discussions

This study presents the analysis of data that answer the research questions in the study. It also presents the findings of the study and discussion on the findings.

Research Question 1: What is the perception of undergraduate business education students on the purpose of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities? For Research Question 1, mean and standard deviation were computed on the data collected from the field; the result is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation Responses on the Purpose of Using Social Networking Sites for Entrepreneurship Activities.

S/N	Social Networking Sites	Mean	SD	Rmk
1	Social networking sites are used in discovering entrepreneurship activities.	2.87	1.63	Agree
2	Social networking sites are used in understanding market trends and changes.	2.89	1.63	Agree
3	Social networking sites are used in recognizing changes in technology, markets and concepts.	2.95	1.65	Agree
4	Social networking sites are used in comprehending customer problem.	3.06	1.63	Agree
5	Social networking sites are used in finding the drawbacks on products or services.	3.08	1.62	Agree
6	Social networking sites are used for loading and uploading information on goods and services.	3.10	1.67	Agree
7	Social networking sites are used in obtaining work related information for entrepreneurs.	3.13	1.58	Agree
8	Social networking sites are used to bring on changes in market competition	3.02	1.60	Agree
9	Social networking sites are used in knowing market characteristics and ways to serve the market.	3.11	1.58	Agree
10	Social networking sites are used in gathering customer feedback and information.	3.05	1.66	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The results in the table 3 for the respondents shows that all the 10 items have the means score ranging from (2.87 to 3.13) which indicates that all the respondents have agreed. The table shows the responses for all the items has the mean that is above the cut-off point for the study, thus, the discussion to agree or disagree on the table meaning that greater respondents agree with all the items as the purpose of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities as perceived by respondents.

Research Question 2: What is the perception of undergraduate business education students on the benefit of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities?

To answer research question 2 mean and standard deviation are computed on the data collected from the field; the result is presented in the Table 4 below.

Table 4: Mean Responses on the Benefits of Using Social Networking Sites for Entrepreneurship Activities

S/N	Variable	Mean	SD	Rmk
1	Social networking sites help to increase customer and supplier contracts.	3.07	1.60	Agree
2	Social networking sites help in providing communication and distribution channels.	3.03	1.58	Agree
3	Social networking sites help in acquiring new customers and retaining the existing ones.	2.98	1.55	Agree
4	Social networking sites help in making 24 hours online transactions.	3.07	1.56	Agree
5	Social networking sites help to ensure prompt feedback when making purchase.	3.02	1.56	Agree
6	Social networking sites help in the advertisement of goods and services.	2.93	1.52	Agree
7	Social networking sites help in forming online group among various companies.	2.98	1.51	Agree
8	Social networking sites help investors to minimize post investment problems.	2.92	1.53	Agree
9	Social networking sites help in creating platform for the creation of new ventures.	3.02	1.51	Agree
10	Social networking sites help in improving products, sales and services.	3.10	1.53	Agree

Source: Researchers Survey, 2017

From Table 4 the respondents for all the 10 items have the mean scores ranging from (2.92 to 3.10) which indicates that all the respondents have agreed. The table shows the responses for all the items and they have the mean that is above the cut-off point for the study, thus, the decision agree or disagree on the table meaning that greater respondents agree with all the items as the benefits for using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities as perceived by respondents.

Findings of the Study

The major findings from the result of the data analysis of the study are:

1. The study reveals that all the respondents, responded to the items positively or agreed that undergraduate business education students use the social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities and their mean scores was above the cut-off point for the study.
2. The study shows that all the respondents respond to the items positively that undergraduate business education students benefited from the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities and their mean score was above the mean cut-off point for the study.

Discussion of the Findings

The undergraduate’s business education student’s perception on the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities reveals that they responded positively on the purpose of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities. The investigation reveals that undergraduate business education students use the social networking sites to discover entrepreneurship activities, in recognizing changes in technology markets and concepts, in understanding markets trends, to comprehend customer problems, in finding the drawback on product and services, for loading and uploading information on

goods and services, for obtaining work related information, bringing out changes in market competition, in knowing market characteristics and ways to serve the markets, and for gathering customer feedback and information. The findings of research Question One are in line with the view of Kotler & Armstrong (2011), for companies to be able to engage in audience sizing and get to better understand their customers such companies can quickly add products and change prices or description. Smith & Taylor (2011) reveal that companies are presently experiencing severe new unanticipated events and the development of the interest as competed events and the developments of one of the most influential factors. Evans & McKee (2010) also note that the insights into what a customer may need next are generated from past transactional data. Also Evans & McKee (2010) observe that the use of social media technologies provide insight and ideas on innovative ways to serve customers better.

Benefits of using social networking sites by undergraduate business education students for entrepreneurship activities, the responses gathered from the questionnaire reveal the benefits of using social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities. They help in increasing customer and supplier contacts, helps in providing new communication and distribution channels, help in acquiring new customer and retaining the existing ones, as well as in making 24 hours online transactions, SNSs help to ensure prompt feedback when making purchase, and in the advertisement of goods and services. SNSs also help in forming online group among various companies. Investors also minimize post investment problems. SNSs also help in creating platform for the creation of new ventures and SNSs also help in improving products, sales and services. Goel (2008) argue that people can do business all over the world as easily as they can from their neighborhood since social media does not know any boundary. Also Evans & McKee (2010) further state that the customer becomes an important part of the sales process and businesses cannot ignore the customers. Kotler & Armstrong (2011) state that marketers can no longer be on mass media channels alone to communicate with their customers, they must adopt new strategies if they wish to succeed.

Conclusion

The results obtained from the findings revealed that all or most of the undergraduate business education students of north-eastern universities are not using their data for socialization only on the social networking sites but they also used it for entrepreneurship activities and it also has a lot of benefits it has been confirmed from the findings of the study. Therefore, based on this findings relevant bodies such as lecturers, stakeholders, academic planning units, students and the government should be involve in ensuring that undergraduate business education students use the social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities. Based on this, the relevant authorities should take measures to ensure that the students use social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities in order to be prepared as entrepreneurs after graduation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made based on the findings and conclusions of the study;

1. Lecturers and all stakeholders who handle all entrepreneurship education courses are encouraged to adopt the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities in teaching entrepreneurship as a course because from the findings of the study all the respondents agreed that social networking sites are used for the purpose of entrepreneurship activities by undergraduate business education students.
2. The university's academic planning unit should plan and redesign entrepreneurship syllable to include the use of social networking sites for entrepreneurship activities to undergraduate business education students

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