

EXPLORING THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA/MOBILE PLATFORMS AS AGENTS OF VALUE RE-ORIENTATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION

By

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Abstract

The 21st century student teachers are digital citizens that spend large amount of their time on the internet either for entertainment and social reasons or for academic purposes. Literature reveals that engaging students through mobile platforms and social media has indeed yielded positive outcome for the learner, the educators and the society at large. The aim of this study therefore was to explore the extent to which social media and mobile platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Telegram and Whatsapp can be used to foster value re-orientation in teacher education. Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population and sample of this study comprises of student teachers in the Faculty of Education University of Port Harcourt. A self constructed questionnaire was used for data collection and the results gotten were analyzed using mean scores. Based on the findings from the data collected, recommendations were also made.

Key Words: teacher education, social media, mobile platforms, value re-orientation, online learning,

Introduction

Teacher education refers to the policy and procedure designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills they

require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider Community. (Samsujjaman, 2017).

The delivery of basic values vital to the society rests mostly on teachers and the entire education process of a particular society. As mentioned in UNESCO's Guidelines and Recommendations for Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability institutions of teacher education fulfill vital roles in the global education community; they have the potential to bring changes within educational systems that will shape the knowledge and skills of future generations. (UNESCO, 2005). Teacher education is essentially a value-laden activity concerned with the overall development of the teacher. The 'education' emphasises a drastic qualitative change in its orientation from the training of teacher as a craftsperson to the development of a humane teacher. (Singh, 2016) According to Olasehinde (2018), in pre-colonial Nigeria, education particularly through the apprenticeship system was a powerful vehicle of equipping the child (in terms of skill, ethics, mores, customs, traditions and values) for effective participation in the society. This means that even before the introduction of formal education the core objective of traditional education was to inculcate positive and worthwhile values into young ones of the society and this objective still matches that of formal and modern education of today that focuses on the development of sound values and moral character.

As stated in the National Policy of Education (2008) the goals of teacher education in Nigeria shall be to:

- (a) Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
- (b) Encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.
- (c) Help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and the society at large, and enhance their commitment to national goals.
- (d) Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations; and
- (e) Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession

Njoku, (2015) defines values as acceptable standards, idea and ways of doing things and living a virtuous life in society. According to Educationtopia (2021), possessing and exhibiting core values which include ; integrity, sense of hope for learners, sense of urgency, continuous self learning and mutual respect and responsibility for learners will enable teachers to appear as a better

leaders, facilitators and educators. It is therefore very important for constant reorientation of a society's values be made available to teachers at the trainee level, to prepare them to face the teaching profession with the right frame of mind which will in turn yield positive result in the entire education system

According to Aja, Eze, Igba and Ukaigwe (2017), be it individual or communal, values can be positive or negative depending on the prevailing situation. Value orientation simply means the process of changing an individual's, group's or societies' negative behaviour to a positive one for the benefit of the society. Value reorientation means restoration or a change of attitude towards a number of things that have been identified as wrong actions or wrong attitudes. (Denen, 2020).Mezieobi, Nwankwo and Mezieobi (2017) are of the view that there is so much ground to cover in teacher preparation programmes in Nigeria but too little time in which to cover them. They stressed the need for quality instead of mere quantity in teacher education programmes in Nigeria.

Social media and mobile devices have over time proven to be useful when it comes to quick delivery and spread of both negative and positive information in the society. Social Media users have been responsible for reporting events before traditional media outlets .Recent literature reveals that the 21st century learners among many other characteristics can be considered to be mobile learners because of the amount of time they spend online with mobile devices. Wade, 2014 suggests in her article that there is no need for another case study about the usage of social media in schools because simply walking into the halls of schools will reveal how students have made browsing and sharing photos on Instagram part of their daily routine. Studentjob.com (2018) also mentioned that university students spend a lot of their time on social media not just because there is a huge amount of freedom in these platforms but also because it exposes them to a whole new way of learning. Institutions can share supportive and positive posts that reach all students that are connected to their networks and pages. Educators can initiate hashtags on social media to engage students and online discussions that are helpful. Video is a prominent tool in social media trends that are effective and can be used to share useful videos that inspire students and help them in their course subjects. (London College of International Business Studies, 2021).

This is why it is necessary for educators to always strategize on ways they can take instruction online where they are sure their learners will always be. This study therefore seeks to explore how social media apps and mobile

platforms can be used to indoctrinate the core values of society and specifically teacher profession to trainee teachers.

Statement of Problem

In Nigeria today the attitude of teachers and the way they deliver their services cannot be rated as desirable and thus value is speedily declining. A lot of complains and negative feedback from parents and the society at large has made it necessary to look into the reason behind attitude as such as laxity, unpunctuality, mistreatment to learners and lack of motivation among many. As regards this paper the question is how can the overall process of inculcating the desired values of teacher education be promoted for the benefit of the entire society? The problem of this study therefore was to determine if social media and mobile platforms can be used to inculcate desirable values in student teachers in order to combat the ill rated attitudes already in existence in the teaching profession.

Aim of Study

Specifically this study's aims and objectives include;

1. To determine if student teachers are aware of the core values of the teaching profession.
2. To determine the extent student teachers access social media.
3. To determine the extent social media /mobile platforms can foster value reorientation in teacher education.

Research Questions

The study sort to answer the following questions;

1. To what extent are student teachers aware of the core values of the teacher profession?
2. To what extent do student teachers access social media?
3. To what extent can social media /mobile platforms foster value reorientation in teacher education?

Methodology

The research design used in this study was a survey research design. A self constructed questionnaire titled “**Exploring the Use of Social Media and Mobile Platforms for Value Reorientation in Teacher Education**” was used

for data collection based on procedure. The instrument contained 12 items; it was a four-point likert scale questionnaire consisting of response options; Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). A sample size of 240 students (30 each from the eight departments) were purposely selected from a population of 796 students of all University of Port Harcourt Faculty of Education year 2 students who are offering Edu200.2 with course title "Act of Teaching" in the U2019/2020 session.

Results

Research Question One

To what extent are student teachers taught the core values of the teacher profession?

Table 1: Student Teachers Awareness of the Core Value of the Teacher Profession

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
XDecision					
1.	The core values of the teacher profession is 100 Low a key topic taught in education courses.	25	30	85	2.58
2.	Seminars are organized periodically to reorient 16 1.74 Low student teachers of the core values of teacher education	30	70	124	
3.	I am aware of the importance/benefits of core 45 1.98 Low values of teacher education.	13	74	108	
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Cluster Mean					
1.56					

Table 1 shows that student teachers are not aware of the core values of the teacher profession. The mean from the data collected for the above items are all below 3.0 which shows that the extent to which student teachers are taught the core values of the teacher profession is low.

Research Question Two: To what extent do student teachers access social media?

Table 2: Student Teachers Social Media Participation

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
4.	I am an active Whatsapp user	180	37	11	12	3.60	High
5.	I am an active Facebook user		119		82	26	13 3.28
							High
6.	I am an active Instagram user	109	83	22	26	3.15	High
7.	I am an active Telegram user	63	26	55	96	2.23	Low
Cluster Mean						3.07	

Data from Table 2 above shows that students are very active users of social media sites and also engage in online activities. The platforms students engage in more according to Table 2 above is Whatsapp, Facebook and Instagram. The data presentation on Table2 however reveals that students barely use Telegram as the mean gotten from item 7 is 2.23 which fall under “Disagree.” Even so the cluster mean of 3.07 shows that students are active when it comes to using mobile platforms.

Research Question Three: To what extent can social media /mobile platforms foster value reorientation in teacher education?

Table 3 The Extent Social Media/ Mobile Platforms can Foster Value Reorientation in Teacher Education

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
8.	The core values of teaching profession can be inculcated via Whatsapp broadcasts		146	57	30	7	3.43
							High
9.	Instagram video posts can be used to reorientstudents of the core values of teaching profession.	94	98	12	36	3.04	High
10.	Facebook posts can be used to create awareness on the values in teacher profession.	102	81	17	42	3.53	High

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11. Value reorientation can be done via telegram group interactions.	20	53	72	95
1.97 low				
12. A viral hash tag on the core values in teacher profession can foster reorientation in teacher education.	94	91	30	25
High				3.06
Cluster Mean				
3.01				

Table 3 represents data gotten for the extent social media/ mobile platforms can foster reorientation of the core values of teacher profession. The table shows that social media and mobile platforms can be used as agents of value reorientation in teacher education institutions. As the mean scores and cluster mean presented above are all above 3 except for item 7 which has a low mean of 1.97.

Discussion of Findings

The results from Table 1 showed that students are not abreast with the core values of the teacher profession. The cluster mean of 1.56 shows that the extent to which student teachers are aware of the core values of education is low. This confirms Mezieobi, Nwankwo and Mezieobi (2017) observation that there is so much ground to cover in teacher preparation programme but too little time in which to cover them. They stressed the need for quality instead of mere quantity in teacher education programmes in Nigeria

From Table 2, it is evident that student teachers engage in social media and participate in mobile platforms. This is in agreement with Wade, 2014 who stated that there is no need for another case study about the usage of social media in schools because simply walking into the halls of schools will reveal how students have made browsing and sharing photos on Instagram part of their daily routine.

As shown in Table 3, the level at which social media /mobile platforms can foster the reorientation of the core values of teacher profession is high. This agrees with London College of International Business Studies, (2021) that

advocates that videos and social media tools can be used to inspire students in their course of study.

Conclusion

It is very important for student teachers to be equipped with the core values of the teaching profession before they fully start their career in teaching. Based on the results gotten from the data collected it is evident that the core values of the teacher profession are not stressed enough and a lot of students are not aware of these core values. Findings also reveal that a lot of students use mobile platforms /social media apps like Whatsapp, telegram, Facebook, Instagram on a daily bases and so can get reoriented on the values of the teaching profession via these platforms.

Recommendations

From the findings of the study the following recommendation were made:

1. Teacher Education educators should create social media accounts exclusively for fostering value reorientation.
2. Groups should be created on mobile platforms like Whatsapp, telegram, Facebook, twitter and Instagram for continuous delivery of the core values of the teaching profession.
3. Frequent seminars should be organized for student teachers. These seminars should be done online to gain full participation and of students.

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