

Factors Promoting Usage Of Social Media: An Exploratory Study Of Secondary Schools Headteachers Of Malawi

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ABSTRACT: *In the modern world for heads of institutions to effectively and efficiently progress in their daily duties, they need to active in the way they use the social media as well well as being semiconscious in the way they use the social media. This descriptive research was conducted to explore factors and challenges promoting and affecting use of social media by Headteachers and their level of enjoyment in usage of social media in schools of Malawi. In this survey, qualitative and quantitative study methods were used to collect relevant and detailed data. Simple random sampling was used to select 61 headteachers. A self-constructed questionnaire, 5 point Likert scale and interview questions were used to study the attitude of headteachers towards usage of social media in secondary schools. Mean differences, standard deviations and t-test are used for data analysis. The results concluded that principals have positive attitude towards use of technology in schools. Findings revealed that; need to search for new information and resources, conforming to the global village, availability of ICT equipment and need for easy communication are some of the factors promoting principals need use of technology in schools; interrupted power supply/ failure, lack of expertise-knowledge and skills including lack of equipment are some of the challenges faced in secondary schools when integrating technology and that headteachers enjoy using technology in schools. 98.36% of principals enjoy using technology which is significantly very high.*

Keywords: *attitude, social media*

INTRODUCTION: Social media has brought dynamism in socioeconomic and education settings in most developed and developing nations. Social media is becoming the core of the learning and teaching activities. Social media contribute to a number of usages in the academicians environment.

Research Method: Exploratory was used knowing it involves opinions held, practices taking place, development of effects and tendencies.

Four different types of attitudes: Attitude can also be looked at in four types as described by Hayati (2019); positive, negative, neutral and sikken.

Positive attitude: This is defined as keeping a positive mind-set and thinking about the greater good, no matter whatever the circumstances are. The benefits of a positive attitude are that a person who possesses it looks for the good in every individual with no regard to their bad behaviour or bad attitude.

Negative attitude: deals with individuals who don't see the good things in both themselves as well as others. Often they think of failure and success doesn't exist in their vocabulary.

Neutral attitude: a type of attitude in which the mind-set is impartial or unbiased. An individual has neither hope nor doubt.

Sikken attitude: this is considered the most hazardous type of attitude due to its nature of mirroring mind's negativity and exalts enough force to destroy images of every related thing coming in mind.

Media: Bertot, et.... (2012), defined Social media as a set of online tools that are designed for and centered around social interaction. In practice, social media serves as a catchall phrase for a conglomeration of web-based technologies and services such as blogs, micro-blogs (i.e., Twitter), social sharing services, text messaging, discussion forums, collaborative editing tools (e.g., wikis), virtual worlds (e.g., Second Life), and social networking services (e.g. Facebook, MySpace)

Research objectives;

1. To explore the factors promoting the usage of social media by headteachers in schools of Malawi.
2. To explore the challenges faced by headteachers in usage of social media in the schools of Malawi.
3. To explore the enjoyment level exhibited by headteachers in usage of social media in schools of Malawi.

Statement of the problem: Integrating social media usage in their administrative and managerial duties is equally not debatable. However, the challenge for headteachers is how to fuse into their administrative and managerial duties considering the increase in the number of challenges they encounter with the diverse nature of teachers and technological advancements proliferating in society.

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Operational definitions

Attitude: Attitude in this research is defined as what we think, thus the extent to which we lean towards the positive or negative in our judgement of a particular thing. A positive attitude denotes a kind of thinking that is principally agreeing and negative attitude denotes the kind of thinking that is principally disagreeing

Headteacher: The research paper defines headteacher as most important senior person in an institution. The headteacher is "a chief or head, particularly of a school" or "first or highest in the ranking of a school. The person in charge of a school, the principal, the presiding officer of a school

Social Media usage: Social media usage means the application and use of computer-based devices, information and skills with the aim of communicating and motivating students in case of teachers and employees in case of the principal of a school.

Delimitation of the research study: The data has been collected from private and public secondary schools of Southern-Eastern Division of Malawi. The division has five districts namely; Balaka, Machinga Mangochi and Zomba.

Sampling: The investigator took a sample of 61 secondary school principals the sample composed of South-Eastern education Division-Balaka, Machinga, Mangochi and Zomba

Sampling technique: To come up with a sample, random sampling technique was adopted. Such a technique of sampling provides a good representation of the whole population from which it is drawn.

Tool used:The main focus of the research was to explore factors promoting use of social media in schools. Self made 5point Likert scale and questionnaire was used

The scale contains 30 attitude items, 20 ICT availability items and six question with yes and no responses to explore the types of social media technologies used by headteachers in the

teaching-learning processes and the availability of ICT hardware and software in the school and questions on factors and challenges promoting and slowing use of social media. The coefficient of correlation was found to be 0.83. The validity was checked by experts.

Procedure of data collection: The researcher got permission from the Education Division Manager for the South Eastern Education Division. Tool distribution and collection was done by the researcher too.

Statistical technique: The researcher computed percentages using excel

Results and interpretation: A deep analysis of results shown in the Figure 1 below revealed that 22 (36.07%) of total sample agreed that the need to search for new information and resources; 17 (27.87%) agreed on conformity to the global village; 22.95% to availability of ICT equipment; 8 (13.11%) for easy communication. The interpretation is that; need to search for new information and resources, conforming to the global village, availability of ICT equipment and need for easy communication are some of the factors promoting principal's need use of social media in schools.

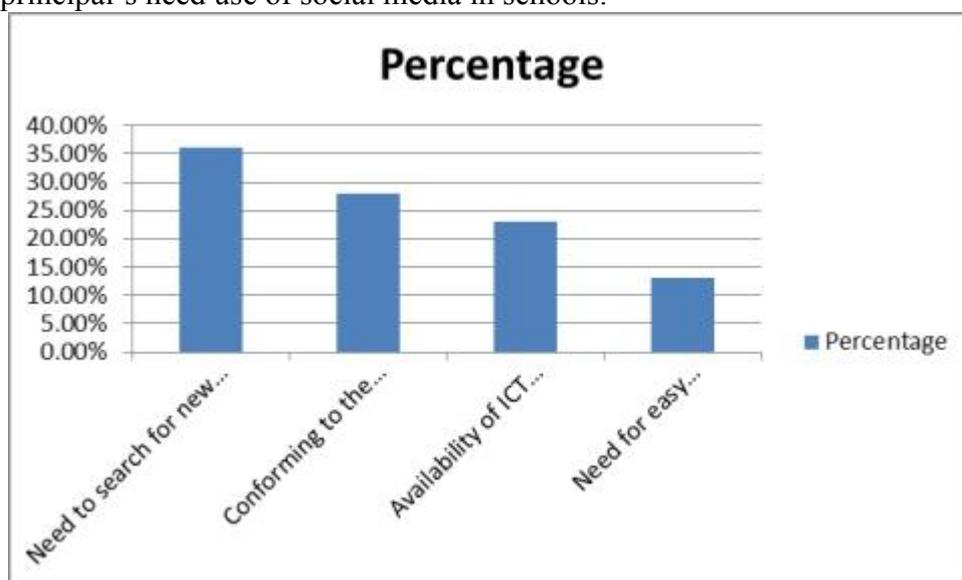


Figure 1: Percentage of factors promoting use of social media in schools by headteachers.

Table : Frequency and percentage of challenges faced by principals when using technology in schools.

From Figure 2, it is evident that 24 (39.34%) headteachers agreed to an interrupted power supply/failure; 19 (31.15%) to lack of expertise-knowledge and skills and 18 (29.51%) to lack of equipment as challenges affecting use of social media in schools. Therefore, interrupted power supply/ failure, lack of expertise-knowledge and skills including lack of equipment are some of the challenges faced in secondary schools when integrating technology.

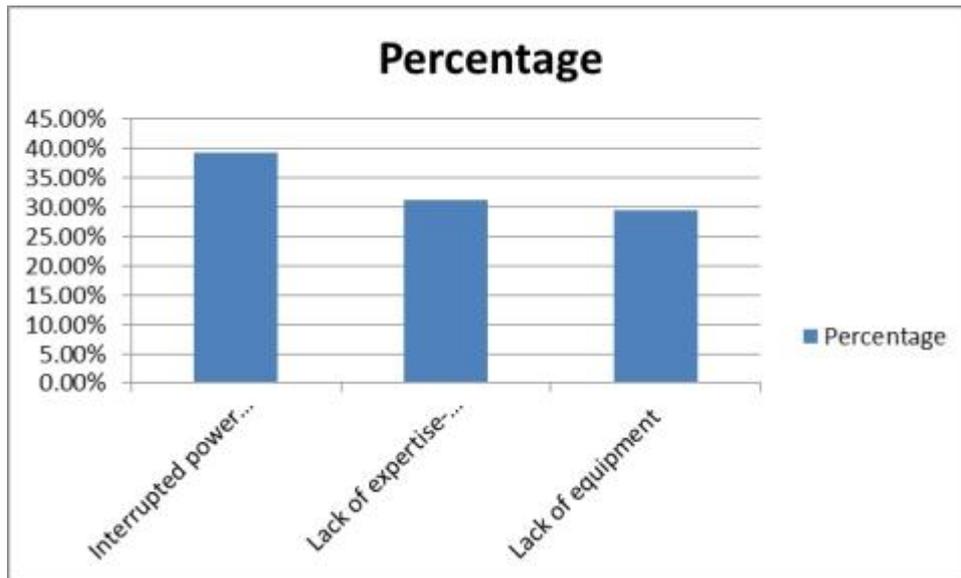


Figure 2: Challenges faced by principals when using social media in schools.

Figure 3: Table showing frequency and percentage of headteachers enjoying using technology in their profession.

Question	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
5	Yes	60	98.36%
	No	1	1.64%
	Total	61	100%

Figure 3 show that 60 which is 98.36% of sampled headteachers agreed that they enjoy using social media in their profession while only 1 representing 1.64% said did not enjoy using social media in their profession. The interpretation is principal enjoy using technology in schools.

Conclusion: Need to search for new information and resources, conforming to the global village, availability of ICT equipment and need for easy communication are some of the factors promoting principals need use of technology in schools.

Interrupted power supply/ failure, lack of expertise-knowledge and skills including lack of equipment are some of the challenges faced in secondary schools when integrating technology.

The interpretation is headteachers enjoy using technology in schools. 98.36% of principals enjoy using technology which is significantly very high.

On average 75% of headteachers have positive attitude towards usage of social media in schools. Despite facing a number of challenges, headteachers are still optimistic, motivated and enthusiastic to use social media in their schools.

Limitations: The study was conducted in the South Eastern Education Division of Malawi with a composition of 61 headteachers and included private and public schools.

Suggestions and Recommendations: Following are suggestion made by the researcher;

- Technology specialists in education should give appropriate training to school headteachers
- Government should support schools with adequate funds to sustain available ICT equipment in schools

- Need for headteachers to network and work together on how best they lobby for assistance from non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) should be periodically done for the headteachers to update themselves.
- Government to supply continuous power during working hours in the schools while school administrators look for alternative means.

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