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# **Assessment of the Impacts of Social Media on the Attainment of the Core Objectives of Distance Education among Universities in Enugu State**

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## **Abstract**

This paper assessed the impact of social media on the core objectives of distance education among universities in Enugu state, Nigeria. The paper adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population the study is 213 (126 tutors and coordinators from university of Nigeria, Nsukka and 87 from Enugu State university of Science and Technology, Enugu State). A researcher-developed questionnaire was used for data collection. The reliability of the questionnaire was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha statistics which yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.74. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Results of the showed among other things that: social media has impact on providing effective alternative pathway to wider opportunities in education through distance education; has impact on providing life-long learning among universities. Based on the findings of the study, conclusion was made and various recommendations were put forward as well.

**Keywords:** Social media, Distance education, Universities

## **Introduction**

The whole world is gradually being connected together, this is as a result of information and communication technology (ICT) in other words called social media. Social media is a web-based service that allows individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others

within the system (Picciano, 2012). In recent years, social media has been part of a new culture that facilitates communication and interaction among people through the

Internet (Mustonen, 2009). This has been made possible due to the development of new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) which offer a variety of services; they are readily available and in some cases are free. The appearance in the market of new devices—such as smartphones, tablets PCs, among others and the development of web applications, accompanies the emergence of new interactive experiences adaptable to users' requirements (Seamean & Tinti-Kane, 2013). Social media is not a new phenomenon in promoting education in some parts of the world.

Social media is a configuration of people connected to one another through interpersonal means, such as friendship, common interest, or idea. **Alsayyad (2013) defined social media as a web-based technology, which makes use of desktop computers and mobile technologies (for example smart-phones and tablet computers) to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals, communities and organizations can share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content or pre-made content posted online.** Boyd and Ellison (2007) defined social network sites as public web-based services that allow users to develop a personal profile, identify other users with whom they have a connection, read and react to postings made by other users on the site, and send and receive messages either privately or publicly (Kim, 2012).

Social media creates room for interactive learning. Its use in education, especially distance education in the developed countries facilitated the establishment of 100% ICT-based Universities known as Virtual Universities (Schwartz, 2012). Okoye (2014) noted that here in Nigeria, very few of our conventional universities are now carrying out their academic activities through one form of ICT-related technology (social media) or the other. The rapid expansion of social media in Nigeria offers an opportunity to consider its use in the promotion of Distance Education objectives. It offers students considerable benefits including, increased access to learning opportunities, convenience of time, and place, making available great variety of learning resources, improved opportunities for individualized learning and emergence of more powerful cognitive tools (Pierre, 2008). This in different ways, help in promoting distance education.

Distance Education (DE) is a system of education characterized by physical separation between the teacher and the learner in which instruction is delivered through a variety of media including print and other ICTs to a learner who may either have missed the opportunity earlier in life or have been denied the face-to-face formal education due to socio-economic, career, family and other related circumstances. Jegede (2003) defined Distance Education as education

provided by a mode other than the conventional face-to-face method whose goals are similar to and just as noble and practical as those of on-campus full time face-to-face education. As it applies to this study, Distance Education refers to that kind of education that makes use of ICT to take teaching and learning to different part of the world. However, as a force contributing to social and economic development, Distance Education is presently one of the most rapidly growing fields of education and training. It is fast becoming an accepted and indispensable part of the mainstream of educational systems in both developed and developing countries, with particular importance for the latter (UNESCO, 2010). Similarly, UNESCO (2015) continues to strengthen the role of Distance Education in the diversification of educational delivery systems, remarkably, encouraging co-operation and partnership between enterprises, professional bodies and distance teaching institutions. However, there is need to assess the impact of news media in promoting the core objectives of Distance Education.

The core objective of Distance Education according to Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN (2013) is to **provide an effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education, especially in higher education. There are different categories of potential learners; there are some who have never been able to enter into any institution of higher learning; there are some who just need additional knowledge in a particular discipline; there are still others who are in need of refresher courses to cope with the latest development in their professions. For all of these, there is need for distance learning or correspondence education. Provision of universal schooling is beyond the means of our country. Increasing population and limited resources is the predicament of our educational planners. It is difficult to allocate huge sums of money in a developing economy to match the required level of expansion for traditional schooling.**

Assessment is a synonym for evaluation. According to Bell and Cowre (2006), it requires both a description of any judgment regarding whatever phenomenon is being assessed, be it students learning, teacher's teaching, school climate, state level commitment and support or any other education related factor. Obioma (2011) defined assessment as the process of using the result obtained from measurement to take relevant decisions about a programme being assessed. Assessment according to Chauban cited in Anikweze (2005) is the practical application of measurement. Just as all types of testing could be subsumed under assessment, so could all measurement be subsumed under assessment. Posavae and Carey (2012) remarked that assessment is a collection of methods, skills and sensitivities necessary to determine whether a human service is needed and likely to be used, whether it is conducted as planned, and whether the human service actually does help people. Therefore, assessment of human service programmes like the use of social media in Distance Education is conducted to answer questions and address issues that are raised by stakeholders. Such issues could include attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Nigeria.

There are many universities in Enugu state that partake in Distance Education. Among the public universities are University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Agbani. The private universities include Caritas University Amorji, Nike, Coal City University, Emene, Enugu, and Godffery Okoye University, Thinkers Corner,

Emene, Enugu, among others. Most frequently identified barriers in Distance Education programme in these schools include; lack of technical support, lack of adequate libraries and equipment, lack of administrative support, insufficient amount of preparatory time required to create assignments, and student resistance. To be effective, distance learning programmes need to address several issues seeking appropriate and timely decisions on the nature of educational programmes and their learning strategies; their use of technology and equipment, their dealing with students' and instructors' concerns, organizational, governmental, and financial matters; hence the need to exploit the use of social media for Distance Education programmes. However, this study assesses the impact of social media on the attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to assess the impact of social media on the attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State.

Specifically, the study seeks:

- 1. To examine the impact of social media in providing an effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through Distance Education among universities in Enugu State**
- 2. To find out the impact of social media in providing life-long learning among universities in Enugu State; and**
- 3. To identify the major challenges in the use of social media in the attainment of core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State.**

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were stated in line with the specific purposes guided the study:

- 1. What is the impact of social media in providing an effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through Distance Education among universities in Enugu State?**
- 2. What is the impact of social media in providing life-long learning among universities in Enugu State?**
- 3. What are the major challenges of the use of social media in attainment of core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State?**

### **Literature Review**

Related literature materials were reviewed under this section of the study in order to elucidate the major concept of the study.

### **Distance Education**

Distance Education means the delivery of useful learning opportunities at convenient place and time for learners, irrespective of the institution providing the learning opportunity (Kaufman, Watkins & Guerra, 2011). The need for Open and Distance Education (ODE) in Nigeria is an

important issue for several cogent reasons. According to Okonkwo (2012), the first reason is that the vast majority of the population lives below poverty level. They are unable to attend urban based institutions and thus remain deprived of higher education despite their superior merit. Secondly, those who joined workforce without completing their studies or education due to family commitments are unable to combine their work with studies and very few of them who have strong desire for higher studies could not do so because of the limited offer in the traditional institution of higher learning. Thirdly, the tradition of childhood, early marriage and religious belief in the country deprives the majority of female population from higher education. Besides, there are some other usual factors like physical disabilities, remoteness of localities, exorbitant tuition fees in most privately owned Universities and so on. These are some of the major issues responsible for why millions of Nigerians are deprived of higher education despite their keen interest and eligibilities. ODE provides avenues for higher education for such a vast underprivileged population. Nigeria is generously endowed with human resources that need to be well equipped with literacy and skills to contribute to economic development, which is badly needed for this country. Thus, it is crystal clear that the way forward is to embrace ODE using both hands and supported by all necessary financial and infrastructural commitments (Okonkwo, 2012).

Since distance education has come of age in industrialized society, Nigeria can also make a success of the programme with adequate planning and conscious efforts to achieve success. Kaufman, Watkins, and Guerra, (2011) have suggested the framework for strategic planning, needs assessments and decisions making to achieve success in distance education. This is the Organizational Elements Models. The elements are Outcomes (e.g., future self-sufficiency), Output (e.g., distance learning), and inputs (e.g., course content or technology). Using this model distance education will not rely on conversions of conventional instructional instruction to a different mode of delivery rather it is concerned with the design of learning opportunities as well as linkages among the curriculum, the learner and completion of programmes (Kaufman, Watkins & Guerra, 2001). In planning, distance education will not be considered as a cost saving device, but rather as a mean of increasing access to education.

### **Social Media**

Social media did make the world a smaller place, now we have more information, more knowledge, and have better opportunities to use it. Social media improved our ability to absorb information, what would have seemed to be over whelming to someone 20 years ago is normal to us, we have an extreme ease in processing and we are evolving quickly. Social media has many positive impacts on the actualization of effective distance education. according to Kim (2012), the following are the Positive Impact of Social Media on distance education: by spending so much time working with new technologies, students develop more familiarity with computers and other electronic devices; with the increased focus on technology in education and business, this will help students build skills that will aid them throughout their lives; talents got discovered faster, students who were good at programming got their name out easily, student who were good in music, got their videos out and shared leading them to their dreams; a lot of the students were able to inform public about their issues – using social media which

brought awareness and helped solve a lot of problems; the ease with which a student can customize their profile makes them more aware of basic aspects of design and layout that are not often taught in schools; and the ease and speed with which users can upload pictures, videos or stories has resulted in a greater amount of sharing of creative works. being able to get instant feedback from friends and family on their creative outlets helps students refine and develop their artistic abilities and can provide much needed confidence or help them decide what career path they may want to pursue.

On the other hand, the prime bad effect of social media is addiction, which implies constantly checking Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, telegram and other social media updates for fun without using them for education purpose. Munoz and Towner (2010) stated that this addiction could negatively affect other valued activities like concentrating on studies, taking active part in sports, real life communication and ignoring ground realities. There are hundreds of thousands of fake accounts on social networks who are boys pretending to be girls to be friends with girls and in most case, this leads to embarrassments and disappointments which finally result in depression. Munoz and Towner (2010) further stated that if there is awareness about the risk of social media in our community it will not lead to anything bad but there is always lack of public awareness and as mentioned above that the graph of internet users is getting higher and higher while we are still far behind in the field of education thus public awareness is very difficult in societies with lack of education.

Similarly, the Negative impact of social media on distance education according to Munoz & Towner (2010) are that, the popularity of social media, and the speed at which information is published, has created a lax attitude towards proper spelling and grammar. Excessive use of social media reduces a student's ability to effectively write without relying on a computer's spell check feature; Many students rely on the accessibility of information on social media and the web to provide answers. That means a reduced focus on learning and retaining information. Our ability to retain information has decreased, and the willingness to spend more time researching and looking up good information has reduced, due to the fact that we got used to the ease of accessibility to information on social media; Students, who attempt to multi-task, checking social media sites while studying, show reduced academic performance. Their ability to concentrate on the task at hand is significantly reduced by the distractions that are brought about by YouTube, Facebook or Twitter; The more time students spend on social sites, the less time they spend socializing in person. Because of the lack of body signals and other nonverbal cues, like tone and inflection, social networking sites are not an adequate replacement for face-to-face communication. Students who spend a great deal of time on social networking are less able to effectively communicate in person (Munoz & Towner, 2010).

Studies have showed in recent years that social media use has positive impact in promoting long-life learning. Delors (2007) who noted that the term lifelong learning is now a mechanism for exclusion and control in a knowledge-based economy particularly with new emerging issues like globalization, technology and depressed economy; coupled with massive explosion in knowledge and expansion in the education system at both formal, non-formal and informal sectors, which is necessary to meet the growing market demand of the 21st century. Taylor

(2008) agreed that today, with less defined changes in life roles, it has become necessary to design new strategies through social media usage to motivate people towards embracing lifelong learning through available educational opportunities beyond conventional schooling in order to avert the problem of education now and the future. The author furthered that, Internet, especially **social media plays huge role in providing life-long learning**. Onuoha and Saheed (2011) concludes by stating that social media use cuts across all age groups, studies have however shown that it is predominant among young persons and students of institutions of higher education and has the potentials to impact positively on long-life learning among students.

Effective use of social media for distance education is affected by such challenges as erratic electric power supply, technophobia, inadequate digital skills to innovative use social media among the tutors who are majorly digital immigrants, low internet connectivity and bandwidth among others. Ezeja (2018) conducted a study on Problem militating against the implementation of distance education in Igbo-Eze South Local Government Area. The result obtained revealed that lack of manpower, poor planning without accurate data, impact of absence of legislation, lack of equipment and tools, and inconsistency in policies were problem militating against the implementation of distance education. Similarly, Mulatu (2014) found out that, the number of learners in a class during tutorial programs is not to the standard, the tutors' are responsible for one to two courses at a time and the remainder for more than two courses, assignments were too difficult for the ability of the students on the courses some learners do not receive modules before tutorial sessions and, consequently, some were forced to share modules, modules were not given long enough in advance of the actual tutorial sessions less commitment of stakeholders to realize the DL program. Urama, Onyeaboh and Ugwu (2019) also found out that, no access to internet, epileptic power supply among others are the challenges affecting the capacity building needs of social media for distance education effective learning in universities in Kano State. Also, poor ICT penetration which implies that in most African countries basic ICT infrastructures are inadequate. A study by Nigerian Information Technology Professionals in America in 2002 indicated that given current ICT penetration it may take Nigeria 50 years to catch up with America on the aspect of personal computer count per households (Iromanto, 2004). The most significant problem being the cost of Personal Computer. These problems if not addressed will impede proper implementation of open and distance education in Nigeria. Therefore, efforts should be intensified to improve electricity, telecommunication and other communication facilities in both urban and rural areas.

### **Research Methods**

The design adopted for this study is descriptive survey design. Nworgu (2015) stated that descriptive survey design is aimed at collecting data on, and describing in systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. The design was considered appropriate for this study because it is aimed at collecting data from the respondents on the assessment of the impact of social media on the attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education among Universities in Enugu State. The population of the study is 213 which comprised 126 tutors and coordinators from University of Nigeria and 87 in Enugu State



University of Science and Technology. The entire population of 213 tutors and coordinators from the two universities were studied since the size is small and manageable. Questionnaire was the major instrument used for collecting data for the study. The Questionnaire's overall reliability co-efficient using Cronbach Alpha is 0.74. This is considered high enough and shows that the instrument was reliable. Mean and standard deviation was used for data analysis using Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 23).

## Results

The data collected from the field were analyzed and presented in this section. Out of 213 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 205 were completed and returned, which represent 96.2% return rate which is considered high enough for the study.

**Research Question One: What is the impact of social media in providing an effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through Distance Education among universities in Enugu State?**

**Table 1: Mean response and standard deviation of respondents on social media and provision of effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through Distance Education**

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Social media are filled with fun, hence draws the attention of distant learners	3.17	0.72	Agree
2	Social media expose students to other ICT skills	2.76	1.09	Agree
3	Social media touch other areas that conventional method does not touch	2.77	1.23	Agree
4	Social media sites help fulfill communication needs of students which they may not easily get from lecturers/teachers	3.29	0.68	Agree
5	There are presence of pictures/videos to drive home points on social media	2.65	0.92	Agree
6	Social media create room to compare and contrast information gotten from different media	3.17	1.23	Agree
7	Social media can be used for more distant students at the same time	2.62	0.89	Agree
8	Information provided on student's profile is always available for access	3.10	1.90	Agree
9	There is room for expression of opinion as it regards innovations or new ideas	2.98	0.98	Agree

10	There is room for better opportunities abroad when universities work together to promote scholarships through social media	3.12	1.00	Agree
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>2.96</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of respondents on **the impact of social media in providing an effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through Distance Education among universities**. The table shows that all the items are agreed by respondents as **the impact of social media in providing an effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through Distance Education**. These items include: Social media is fun, hence draws the attention of distant learners ( $\bar{x} = 3.17$  and  $SD = 0.72$ ), Social media sites help fulfill communication needs of students which they may not easily get from lecturers/teachers ( $\bar{x} = 3.29$  and  $SD = 0.68$ ), Information provided on students profile is always available for access ( $\bar{x} = 3.10$  and  $SD = 1.90$ ), and There is room for better opportunities abroad when universities work together to promote scholarships through social media ( $\bar{x} = 3.12$  and  $SD = 1.00$ ) obtained higher mean score which implies that there was the major impacts of social media **in providing an effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through** distance education.

The overall mean score and standard deviation of the respondents are ( $\bar{x} = 2.96$  and  $SD = 1.06$ ). This implies that the identified items are perception of stakeholders towards the use of social media in attainment of core objectives of Distance Education.

#### **Research Question two: What is the impact of social media in providing life-long learning among universities in Enugu State?**

**Table 2: Mean response and standard deviation of respondents on impact of social media in providing life-long learning**

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Social media provide second chance programmes to combat educational disadvantage	3.11	0.85	Agree
2	Social networking sites can help students develop leadership skills	3.05	0.89	Agree
3	Social media tools and networking sites encourage students to engage with each other	2.90	1.15	Agree
4	Social media tools help students to express and share their creativity	2.70	0.86	Agree
5	Social media sites provide opportunity for individuals to present accurate self-image	2.17	1.13	Agree
6	Social media offer an assortment of tools that learners can match to best suit their individual learning styles	3.23	0.75	Agree

7	Social media can provide a shy student with information about events that facilitates face-to-face encounters with other students	2.89	0.78	Agree
8	Learning platforms based on social media place the control of learning into the hands of learners themselves	2.77	1.12	Agree
9	Social media create room for young people to be motivated to learn from their peers online	3.12	0.81	Agree
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>2.88</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of respondents on **the impact of social media in providing life-long learning among universities in Enugu State**. The table shows that all the items are agreed by respondents as **impact of social media in providing life-long learning among universities. These items include**; Social media provide second chance programmes to combat educational disadvantage ( $\bar{x} = 3.11$  and  $SD = 0.85$ ), Social networking sites can help students develop leadership skills ( $\bar{x} = 3.05$  and  $SD = 0.89$ ), Social media offer an assortment of tools that learners can match to best suit their individual learning styles ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$  and  $SD = 0.75$ ), and Social media create room for young people to be motivated to learn from their peers online ( $\bar{x} = 3.12$  and  $SD = 0.81$ ) obtained higher mean score which means that there the major **impact of social media in providing life-long learning among universities in Enugu State**.

The overall mean score and standard deviation of the respondents are ( $\bar{x} = 2.88$  and  $SD = 0.92$ ). This implies that the identified items are the **impact of social media in providing life-long learning among universities in Enugu State**.

**Research Question Three: What are the major challenges in the use of social media in attainment of core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State?**

**Table 3: Mean response and standard deviation of respondents on major challenges of the use of social media in attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education**

S/D	ITEM STATEMENT	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Lack of consistency in programme/policy implementation	2.87	0.72	Agree
2	Problem of electricity	3.06	1.09	Agree
3	Poor telecommunication facilities	3.17	1.23	Agree
4	Poor economic situations and its effects on middle level manpower	2.69	0.68	Agree
5	Poor ICT Penetration	3.25	0.92	Agree
6	Lack of access to the needed infrastructures	3.11	1.24	Agree

7	High poverty level leading to inability of rural dwellers to attend urban based institutions	3.00	0.89	Agree
8	Weak internet reception	3.10	0.90	Agree
9	Poor control of information sources on social media	2.71	0.98	Agree
10	Hijack of social media by unqualified authors/tutors	3.31	1.00	Agree
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.27</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation of respondents on **the major challenges in the use of social media in attainment of core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State**. The table shows that all the items are agreed by respondents as **major challenges in the use of social media in attainment of core objectives of Distance Education among universities**. **These items include;** Problem of electricity ( $\bar{x} = 3.06$  and  $SD = 1.09$ ), Poor telecommunication facilities ( $\bar{x} = 3.17$  and  $SD = 1.23$ ), Poor ICT Penetration ( $\bar{x} = 3.25$  and  $SD = 0.92$ ), lacks of access to the needed infrastructures ( $\bar{x} = 3.11$  and  $SD = 1.24$ ), Weak internet reception ( $\bar{x} = 3.10$  and  $SD = 0.90$ ), and Hijack of social media by unqualified authors/tutors ( $\bar{x} = 3.31$  and  $SD = 1.00$ ).

The overall mean score and standard deviation of the respondents are ( $\bar{x} = 2.88$  and  $SD = 0.92$ ). This implies that the identified items are the **major challenges in the use of social media in attainment of core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State**.

### Discussion of the Findings

#### Impact of social media in Providing an Effective Alternative path to wider Opportunities in Education through Distance Education among Universities in Enugu State

The study revealed that **social media has significant impact in the provision of effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through distance education as majority of the respondents** agreed that, social media is fun, hence draws the attention of distant learners, social media exposes students to other ICT skills and stimulates students' interest to learn. This implies that social media can facilitate effective distance education. **This is** in line with the views of Kaufman, Watkins, and Guerra, (2011) who suggested the framework for strategic planning, needs assessments and decisions making to achieve success in distance education. Kaufman et al (2011) further stated that the elements are outcomes (e.g., future self-sufficiency), output (e.g., distance learning), and inputs (e.g., course content or technology). Using this model Distance Education will not rely on conversions of conventional instructional instruction to a different mode of delivery rather it is concerned with the design of learning opportunities as well as linkages among the curriculum, the learner and completion of programmes.

### **Impact of social media in Providing Life-Long Learning among Universities in Enugu State**

The study revealed that social media has positive impacts in providing life-long learning i **among Universities in Enugu State** as social media provide second chance programmes to combat educational disadvantage, and complement inadequate physical infrastructures in universities. These will motivate life-long learning as learning becomes interesting. This is in line with the views of Delors (2007) who noted that the term lifelong learning is now a mechanism for exclusion and control in a knowledge-based economy particularly with new emerging issues like globalization, technology and depressed economy; coupled with massive explosion in knowledge and expansion in the education system at both formal, non-formal and informal sectors, which is necessary to meet the growing market demand of the 21st century. Taylor (2008) agreed that today, with less defined changes in life roles, it has become necessary to design new strategies to motivate people towards embracing lifelong learning through available educational opportunities beyond conventional schooling in order to avert the problem of education now and the future. Internet, especially **social media plays huge role in providing life-long learning**. Onuoha and Saheed (2011) concludes by stating that social media use cuts across all age groups, studies have however shown that it is predominant among young persons and students of institutions of higher education.

### **Challenges of the use of social media in attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education among Universities in Enugu State**

The findings revealed that, problem of electricity, poor telecommunication facilities, poor economic situations and its effects on middle level manpower, poor ICT penetration, lacks of access to the needed infrastructures, weak internet reception, and hijack of social media by unqualified authors/tutors are the **major challenges of the use of social media in attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education among Universities in Enugu State**. This is in accordance with Iromanto (2004) who agreed that several rural areas in Nigeria are yet to have electricity, while the urban arrears experience epileptic power supply. This will create problems for effective integration of most technological media in the delivery of distance education programme. This equally falls in line with the view of Okonkwo (2012) who stated that the poor state of the nation's economy has pauperized most Nigerians. Even an average middle-income earner cannot afford basic technological and communication gadgets. The study also revealed that poor control of information sources on social media and that the prime bad effect of social media is addiction. This is in line with the view of Munoz and Towner (2010) who stated constantly checking Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn other social media updates for fun without using them for education purpose. that this addiction could negatively affect other valued activities like concentrating on studies, taking active part in sports, real life communication and ignoring ground realities. There are hundreds of thousands of fake accounts on social networks who are boys pretending to be girls to be friends with girls and in most case, this leads to embarrassments and disappointments which finally result in depression. Munoz and Towner (2010) further stated that if there is awareness about the risk of social media in our community it will not lead to anything bad but there is always lack of public awareness and as mentioned above that the graph of internet users is getting higher and higher while we

are still far behind in the field of education thus public awareness is very difficult in societies with lack of education.

### Conclusion

The study assessed the impact of social media on the attainment of the core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State. Based on the findings the study concluded that, **social media has positive impact in the provision of effective alternative path to wider opportunities in education through distance education. It was also concluded that social media impact positively on the provision of long-life learning through encouraging individualized learning for students with special needs; encourages educative interaction among students and tutors;** learning platforms based on social media place the control of learning into the hands of learners themselves among others. Finally, the study concluded that, lack of consistency in programme/policy implementation, problem of electricity, poor telecommunication facilities, poor economic situations and its effects on middle level manpower, poor ICT penetration, lacks of access to the needed infrastructures, high poverty level leading to inability of rural dwellers to attend urban based institutions, weak internet reception, poor control of information sources on social media, Hijack of social media by unqualified authors/tutors are the major challenges associated with the **use of social media in attainment of core objectives of Distance Education among universities in Enugu State**

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, discussions and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made.

- i. Government should finance the installation of computer technology system in the distance learning institutions and create policy that will enable the adoption of social media in attaining the core objectives of distance education.
- ii. There should be adequate provision of ICT facilities to universities Distance Education centres enable the learners use them when phones or other means of accessing social media is not available.
- iii. Government should ensure there is stable electricity supply to maintain consistent and effective Distance Education programme.
- iv. Tutors/lecturers should be exposed to constant training, as this will contribute to improvement of the quality of distance education among universities.

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