
MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA, INTRANET/INTERNET IN THE NIGERIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract

The integration of social media platforms and intranet/internet systems into educational environments has transformed how students, teachers, and administrators interact, share information, and conduct academic activities. In Nigeria, the management of these tools presents unique opportunities and challenges due to infrastructural limitations, policy gaps, socio-economic inequalities, and varying levels of digital literacy. Properly managed, social media can enhance student engagement, foster collaborative learning, and create interactive educational communities, while intranet and internet infrastructures can improve institutional communication, administrative efficiency, and access to e-learning resources. Conversely, mismanagement can result in distractions, cyber insecurity, data privacy breaches, digital divides, and reputational risks for institutions. Drawing on national policies such as the National Policy on ICT in Education and the National Digital Learning Policy, alongside empirical evidence from Nigerian and global scholarship, this paper analyses the strategic management of social media and intranet/internet in Nigerian education. The paper highlights governance frameworks, capacity building, pedagogical design, and technical infrastructure as critical pillars for sustainable implementation. Recommendations include developing

institutional social media policies, phased intranet deployment, promoting digital literacy, and aligning institutional practices with national ICT frameworks.

Keywords: Social media, intranet, internet, ICT in education, Nigeria, digital learning, governance, educational management, policy, digital literacy.

Introduction

In the 21st century, technology has moved from being an optional support tool in education to becoming the very backbone of modern learning and administration. Across the globe, digital technologies are changing how students access knowledge, how teachers deliver content, and how schools and universities manage their internal operations. Social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter/X have become more than just spaces for entertainment or casual interaction; they are now extensions of the classroom where knowledge is shared, group discussions are held, and communities of practice are built. At the same time, the intranet and internet, two of the most critical digital infrastructures, serve as lifelines that connect learners to a wider body of information, peers, educators, and administrative services. In Nigeria, this digital transformation carries particular weight because of the country's struggle to balance rapid population growth, limited physical infrastructure, and the need to keep pace with global educational trends. Nigerian higher education institutions, such as universities, colleges of education, and polytechnics, face mounting pressure to provide inclusive, accessible, and quality education. Traditional face-to-face methods alone cannot meet the growing demand. Therefore, tools such as intranets for internal networking and internet-based platforms for online learning and administration are increasingly being deployed to bridge access gaps. Social media has also emerged as an informal but powerful complement to formal classroom teaching, offering cost-effective and widely accessible channels for student–teacher and peer-to-peer interaction.

However, the management of social media, intranet, and internet resources in Nigeria's education system is far from straightforward. While these tools offer immense promise, they also bring risks that cannot be ignored. Uncontrolled social media use can lead to student distraction, spread of misinformation, online harassment, and even cyberbullying. Similarly, reliance on internet platforms without proper safeguards exposes institutions to cybersecurity risks, data privacy issues, and unequal access, particularly for students from rural and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The tension between opportunity and challenge underscores the urgent need for thoughtful, strategic management of these digital tools. Government policies have recognised this reality. Documents such as the *National Policy on ICT in Education* (Federal Ministry of Education, 2019), and the more recent *National Digital Learning Policy* (Federal Ministry of Education, 2023) stress the importance of structured ICT governance in education. These policies set the tone for how institutions can develop frameworks to integrate technology responsibly, enhance learning outcomes, and align Nigeria's education system with global standards. This paper therefore examines the

management of social media, intranet, and internet resources within the Nigerian education system. It highlights how these tools can support effective teaching and learning, improve administrative efficiency, and promote sustainable development, while also acknowledging the pitfalls of poor or unregulated use. By doing so, the discussion aims to provide insights for policymakers, educators, and administrators seeking to strike a balance between leveraging opportunities and mitigating risks.

Policy and Conceptual Background

1. National ICT Policy Framework

Education in Nigeria is shaped not only by institutional practices but also by national policy frameworks that provide direction and legitimacy for action. The Federal Ministry of Education's *National Policy on ICT in Education* (2019), represents a landmark document that formally recognised ICT as an essential component of teaching, learning, and school administration. The policy emphasises the need for reliable infrastructure, digital skill development, and institutional governance frameworks. Its central vision is to create an education system that is both globally competitive and locally responsive through effective use of technology. The more recent *National Digital Learning Policy* (2023), builds on this foundation by providing specific guidelines for digital learning adoption. Unlike earlier policy efforts that were more aspirational, this policy is more pragmatic, focusing on issues such as data protection, digital content creation, and equitable access to internet resources. For instance, the policy advocates for digital repositories of learning materials, integration of local languages in digital platforms, and stronger collaboration between public and private stakeholders. Together, these policy frameworks highlight the importance of managing not just the availability of social media and intranet/internet technologies, but also the quality of their use. They stress that ICT integration should not be ad hoc but deliberate, guided by governance structures that ensure security, accountability, and relevance to local needs.

2. Social Media in Education

Social media can be understood as interactive platforms that allow the sharing of ideas, collaboration, and communication across wide networks of people. While these platforms were originally created for entertainment and social interaction, their role in education has grown remarkably in the last decade. For Nigerian students and teachers, social media platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, and YouTube have become indispensable. WhatsApp groups, for example, serve as “virtual classrooms” where lecture notes, voice explanations, assignments, and even recorded lessons are shared instantly. Telegram channels host large collections of learning resources, while YouTube provides access to free tutorials and visual demonstrations across various subjects, ranging from mathematics to engineering and medicine (Obizue, 2022). For teachers, social media is more than a convenience; it is a tool for expanding their teaching reach beyond the classroom walls. Teachers who are innovative in their use of social media create channels for interactive learning where students can ask questions outside official class hours, participate in group discussions, and collaborate on projects. Research shows that

these practices encourage active learning and foster student engagement, especially among digital-native students who are already comfortable with technology (Perez, Manca, Fernández-Pascual, & McGuckin, 2023). At the same time, however, the challenges cannot be ignored. Without proper regulation, students often misuse social media for non-academic purposes, leading to poor concentration and time wastage. Cyberbullying, the spread of misinformation, and the risks of exposure to harmful content also pose real threats. Thus, the challenge is not whether social media should be used in education, but how it should be effectively managed to maximise its benefits while minimising its risks.

3. Intranet and Internet Systems

Intranets and the broader internet represent more formal, structured systems of digital communication and knowledge sharing within educational settings. An intranet is a closed, secure, institution-specific network that allows controlled access to staff, students, and administrators. It can host learning management systems (LMS), internal communication tools, and databases of research and administrative resources. For example, universities that implement intranets can streamline processes such as student registration, grading, timetabling, and access to digital libraries. This not only reduces administrative bottlenecks but also fosters efficiency and transparency (Ogunsote, Ude, Prucnal-Ogunsote, & Olusoga, 2015). The internet, on the other hand, expands the horizon by linking Nigerian institutions to global knowledge networks. Through internet access, students can participate in virtual classrooms, access scholarly databases, engage with open educational resources (OERs), and collaborate with peers and researchers across borders. For lecturers and administrators, internet connectivity allows for participation in global academic conferences, publication opportunities, and exposure to new pedagogical approaches. However, as with social media, effective management of intranet and internet systems is critical. Poor bandwidth, unreliable electricity, high subscription costs, and lack of technical expertise often limit the effectiveness of these systems in Nigerian institutions. Moreover, data security remains a pressing concern, as sensitive academic and administrative records may be vulnerable to cyberattacks if not adequately protected. In summary, while social media provides informal but accessible educational benefits, intranet and internet systems offer more formal, structured solutions for communication, learning, and administration. Managing both effectively in the Nigerian education system requires clear policy frameworks, investment in infrastructure, and strong institutional governance.

Global Perspectives

Across the world, the role of social media and digital networks in education has been extensively documented. In many advanced economies, social media is not simply viewed as a leisure tool, but as an educational resource that encourages collaborative learning, peer-to-peer support, and learner engagement. Platforms such as YouTube, Twitter/X, and LinkedIn are being used to complement classroom instruction by allowing students to access lectures, join discussion forums, and interact with experts outside their immediate environment (Perez, Manca, Fernández-Pascual, & McGuckin, 2023). These platforms, when strategically

harnessed, help create a participatory culture of learning where students contribute actively to discussions rather than passively absorbing knowledge. Similarly, intranet and digital campus systems have transformed institutional practices globally. In universities in Europe and North America, intranets act as digital backbones for communication, student records, and academic resources. They provide repositories of knowledge that can be shared across faculties, increase transparency in grading and assessments, and streamline administrative procedures (Manca & Ranieri, 2016). For example, digital platforms like Moodle and Blackboard are now widely used for managing courses, providing feedback, and monitoring learning outcomes. Globally, therefore, the integration of social media, intranets, and internet-based systems is reshaping both pedagogy and educational administration.

Nigerian Context

In Nigeria, the story is more complex. While social media and intranet systems hold promise, their adoption within the educational system has yielded mixed results. Onun, Akuto, James, and Iordaah (2023), revealed that social media plays a dual role in shaping study habits: positively by fostering group collaboration, information exchange, and peer learning, but negatively by contributing to distraction, reduced concentration, and overreliance on non-academic online content. This mirrors a global trend, but it is particularly acute in Nigeria where regulatory frameworks for responsible use remain weak. Nigerian universities and colleges have increasingly introduced intranets, learning management systems (LMS), and internet-enabled platforms. Institutions such as the University of Lagos and Covenant University use LMSs for uploading lecture materials, online assessments, and student–teacher communication. However, persistent challenges such as unstable electricity, weak broadband infrastructure, and inadequate training for lecturers often limit their effectiveness (Ogunsote, Ude, Prucnal-Ogunsote, & Olusoga, 2015). The potential of these technologies to transform higher education in Nigeria is evident, but their full benefits remain constrained by systemic infrastructural and capacity challenges.

Challenges Highlighted in Literature

The literature underscores several recurring challenges that must be addressed for successful integration of social media and digital networks in Nigeria's education system:

- **Inadequate Infrastructure:** Nigerian educational institutions face frequent power outages, poor internet penetration, and limited access to affordable digital devices. These infrastructural gaps hinder both teaching and learning (Federal Ministry of Education, 2019).
- **Weak Policy and Governance:** Many institutions lack clear policies on social media use, intranet governance, or digital ethics. Without defined boundaries, the misuse of digital platforms becomes common, reducing their educational value (Onun et al., 2023).

- **Limited Teacher Training:** Many teachers lack the digital literacy skills required to integrate social media and intranet systems effectively into pedagogy. This results in underutilization of available platforms or misuse that does not enhance learning (Perez et al., 2023).
- **Cybersecurity and Data Privacy Concerns:** As institutions digitize, there are rising concerns about data leaks, hacking, and breaches of student privacy. NITDA (2020) emphasizes that without strong governance frameworks, educational data remains vulnerable to misuse. These challenges highlight the paradox in Nigeria's education sector: while digital technologies hold significant transformative power, the absence of adequate support structures continues to limit their impact.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on three theoretical perspectives that explain both the opportunities and the management challenges associated with social media, intranet, and internet use in education.

1. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM):

Davis (1989) introduced TAM to explain how users come to accept and use new technologies. The model suggests that two main factors perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use determine whether individuals will adopt a technology. In the Nigerian education system, lecturers and students are more likely to use social media and intranet platforms if they believe these tools make learning and teaching more effective, and if the platforms are user-friendly. For instance, many Nigerian students prefer WhatsApp study groups over official LMS portals because they perceive WhatsApp as more accessible and easier to use.

2. Constructivist Learning Theory:

This theory emphasizes that learners construct knowledge actively through interaction and collaboration. Social media platforms align well with constructivist principles because they create interactive environments where learners can co-create knowledge, share perspectives, and engage in critical dialogue. In a Nigerian classroom, for example, Facebook groups or Telegram channels can facilitate peer discussions on difficult concepts, reinforcing collaborative meaning-making and deepening understanding.

3. Information Systems Governance Theory:

Weill and Ross (2004) argue that effective governance structures are necessary to manage digital systems in complex organizations. Applying this theory to Nigerian educational institutions highlights the need for clear policies, accountability structures, and defined roles in managing social media, intranets, and internet usage. Without such governance, digital platforms risk becoming tools of distraction, cybercrime, or inequity, rather than instruments of educational advancement. Taken together, these frameworks help explain not only how individuals in Nigeria adopt and use social

media and digital networks, but also why robust management strategies are necessary for sustainable integration into education systems.

5. Management Challenges in Nigeria

Managing social media, intranet, and internet resources within the Nigerian education system is not without serious obstacles. Although policymakers and institutions acknowledge the importance of digital technologies, the realities on the ground present structural, technical, and pedagogical barriers that limit progress.

Infrastructure Deficits: Perhaps the most visible challenge lies in the area of infrastructure. Reliable internet access, stable electricity supply, and adequate ICT facilities remain scarce across many Nigerian schools and universities. In rural areas, the absence of broadband networks or consistent power means that even when institutions attempt to adopt digital platforms, their functionality is severely undermined. For example, a lecturer may prepare digital teaching materials but be unable to deliver them effectively due to power outages or low bandwidth. This infrastructure gap continues to widen the educational divide between urban and rural institutions (Federal Ministry of Education, 2019).

Governance Gaps: Another pressing challenge is the lack of formal governance frameworks within institutions. Many Nigerian universities and colleges do not have clear social media or intranet usage policies, leaving students and staff to operate in an unregulated environment. This often leads to misuse, ranging from unprofessional online behavior to reputational risks for institutions. Without guidelines that align with national policies, institutions struggle to balance the opportunities of digital platforms with the risks of misuse and abuse.

The Digital Divide: Beyond infrastructure, socioeconomic inequalities create a digital divide that affects access to online education. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds often lack smartphones, laptops, or reliable data subscriptions. In cases where such students can access devices, the high cost of internet data in Nigeria makes sustained engagement difficult. This reality reinforces inequality in learning outcomes, as privileged students benefit from digital resources while their peers are left behind.

Data Security Risks: The growing reliance on third-party platforms for online learning and communication exposes Nigerian educational institutions to data security and compliance issues. Many schools rely on commercial platforms such as Google Classroom, WhatsApp, or Zoom, often without putting in place data protection measures. This leaves sensitive academic records, student data, and institutional information vulnerable to breaches. NITDA (2020), stresses that such risks pose not only technical concerns but also legal and ethical ones, as institutions may inadvertently violate data privacy regulations.

Pedagogical Limitations: Finally, many teachers in Nigeria use social media in an informal, unstructured way. While WhatsApp groups or Facebook pages are popular for sharing notes and reminders, their use is rarely aligned with defined learning outcomes or assessment strategies. This limits the pedagogical value of social media, as platforms are not fully

integrated into curriculum design or supported by professional development for teachers (Onun, Akuto, James, & Iordaah, 2023). The result is that technology remains an add-on rather than a transformative tool in many classrooms. Together, these challenges illustrate that managing social media and digital networks in Nigerian education is not simply about introducing technology, it requires systemic reforms in infrastructure, governance, equity, and pedagogy.

6. Best Practices for Management

Despite the obstacles, a growing body of evidence and practice points toward strategies that can help Nigerian institutions manage social media, intranet, and internet systems more effectively. These best practices are not abstract recommendations but grounded responses to the specific realities of the Nigerian education landscape.

Governance and Policy: A strong starting point for institutions is the adoption of ICT and social media policies that align with national frameworks such as the National Policy on ICT in Education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2019). These policies should set clear rules on responsible use, data protection, academic integrity, and online conduct. When institutions establish clear boundaries, they create safer and more productive digital environments for learning and administration.

Phased Intranet Deployment: Implementing an intranet system across an entire university at once is often unsustainable given cost and capacity constraints. A phased approach beginning with a faculty or department allows institutions to test systems, build capacity, and resolve technical challenges before scaling up. Ogunsote, Ude, Prucnal-Ogunsote, and Olusoga (2015), emphasize that piloting intranet systems in manageable contexts increases sustainability and ensures better adoption rates among staff and students.

Capacity Building: Digital tools are only as effective as the people who use them. Teachers, students, and administrators need ongoing training in digital literacy, data privacy, and the pedagogical use of technology. This includes workshops on integrating social media into teaching strategies, developing digital learning content, and maintaining cybersecurity. By investing in capacity building, institutions empower users to maximize the educational benefits of social media and intranets rather than merely adopting them superficially.

Secure Technical Design: Beyond user training, the design of digital systems must prioritize security. Institutions should implement robust authentication systems, role-based access controls, encryption, and regular data backups. These measures help safeguard sensitive data and build confidence among users that their information is protected. Security by design reduces the risks of breaches, compliance failures, and reputational damage.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Finally, institutions should not treat digital adoption as a one-off process. Regular monitoring and evaluation of platforms through engagement metrics, feedback surveys, and learning outcome assessments ensures that policies remain relevant and effective. Perez, Manca, Fernández-Pascual, and McGuckin (2023), highlight that continuous

evaluation enables institutions to identify emerging challenges, refine practices, and adapt to evolving technological landscapes. By combining these best practices; governance, phased deployment, training, secure design, and evaluation. Nigerian institutions can move from ad hoc adoption of social media and intranets toward structured, sustainable digital transformation. Importantly, these practices are not merely technical solutions but also cultural shifts that require leadership commitment, investment, and collective ownership across the education community.

Recommendations

The successful management of social media, intranet, and internet resources within Nigeria's education system requires a coordinated effort across government, institutions, teachers, students, and researchers. The following recommendations provide a roadmap for ensuring that digital technologies fulfill their transformative potential:

1. Increased Government Investment in ICT Infrastructure:

National and state governments should play a central role by expanding investment in ICT infrastructure, particularly in underserved rural areas where digital exclusion is most severe. Subsidised internet access for students, such as student-friendly data packages, would make online learning platforms and digital resources more accessible. Without government intervention, the digital divide will continue to widen, leaving large segments of the student population unable to participate in technology-driven education.

2. Development of Governance Frameworks by Institutions:

Educational institutions must go beyond informal use of digital tools and create formal governance structures that guide social media and intranet adoption. These frameworks should outline acceptable use policies, protocols for data privacy, ethical considerations, and strategies for integrating digital platforms into academic work. Clear rules will not only protect institutions from reputational risks but also foster a culture of responsibility and professionalism in digital engagement.

3. Continuous Professional Development for Teachers:

Teachers remain the central drivers of learning. To maximize the benefits of social media and intranet systems, they require continuous professional development in digital pedagogy. Workshops, refresher courses, and peer-learning initiatives should focus on how to integrate technology into lesson delivery, assessment, and collaborative learning. When teachers are digitally confident, they are more likely to design meaningful learning experiences that extend beyond traditional classroom boundaries.

4. Digital Literacy and Responsible Use Training for Students:

Students should not only be consumers of digital tools but also informed, responsible users. Training on digital literacy, online privacy, and the responsible use of social media is essential for empowering students to navigate online spaces safely. Such programs will help reduce cyberbullying, misinformation, and misuse of platforms, while promoting ethical behavior and constructive engagement in academic communities.

5. Localised Research to Inform Policy Decisions:

Finally, researchers in Nigeria should conduct outcome-based studies that generate context-specific evidence on the impact of social media and intranet use in education. Too often, policies are shaped by global studies that do not account for Nigeria's unique socio-economic and infrastructural realities. Local research will provide policymakers with grounded insights into what works, what fails, and what adjustments are needed for sustainable adoption of technology in Nigerian schools and universities. Together, these recommendations emphasize that managing social media and intranet systems in education is not only a technical issue but also a social, cultural, and policy concern that demands collaboration across multiple stakeholders.

Conclusion

The integration and management of social media, intranet, and internet systems represent both an opportunity and a challenge for Nigeria's education system. On one hand, these tools offer immense potential to widen access to learning, strengthen collaboration between students and teachers, and improve administrative efficiency. On the other hand, without adequate infrastructure, governance, and capacity building, they risk deepening inequalities, exposing institutions to cyber threats, and reducing academic focus. What emerges clearly from this analysis is that technology itself is not a magic solution it is a tool whose impact depends on how it is managed, governed, and integrated into teaching and learning. Institutions that align their practices with national ICT policies (Federal Ministry of Education, 2019; 2023), invest in teacher training, secure technical designs, and foster digital literacy among students are more likely to harness the positive potential of these platforms. The path forward therefore requires **collective responsibility**. Governments must provide the backbone infrastructure and supportive policies; institutions must design governance frameworks and invest in capacity building; teachers must embrace continuous professional growth; and students must commit to responsible use. When these elements come together, social media, intranet, and internet systems can cease to be distractions or threats and instead become powerful engines of transformation in Nigerian education. In conclusion, the challenge for Nigeria is not whether to adopt digital technologies but **how to manage them effectively** so that they contribute to equitable, inclusive, and sustainable educational development. If addressed thoughtfully, these tools can bridge long-standing gaps, connect Nigeria to the global knowledge economy, and prepare its students for the demands of the 21st century.

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