# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN SABON GARI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract**
*This study examines the role of social media in youth economic empowerment in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the patterns of social media use among youths, assessed how social media is used to access empowerment-related information, identified the types of empowerment-related information accessed through social media, and examined the challenges youths encounter in using social media for economic empowerment. The study adopted a quantitative research approach using a descriptive survey design. The population comprised 223,135 youths in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, from which a sample of 384 respondents was selected using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, and the data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The findings revealed that youths in Sabon Gari LGA actively use social media for job-related searches, skill acquisition, business opportunities, and other income-generating activities. The study further found that social media provides access to business and entrepreneurship information, skills and tutorials, job opportunities, and market information. However, the economic benefits derived from social media are constrained by poor internet connectivity, inconsistent electricity supply, limited financial resources, cybersecurity risks, and inadequate digital skills. The study concludes that social media plays an important role in youth economic empowerment in Sabon Gari LGA; however, its full potential is constrained by structural, infrastructural, financial, and digital challenges.*

**Keywords:** Social media, youth economic empowerment, social media usage patterns, income generation

## Introduction

In the contemporary digital era, social media platforms have become important channels for communication, information dissemination, networking, and economic engagement. Platforms such as YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter),

Instagram, and LinkedIn provide users with access to real-time information, professional networks, and online marketplaces, thereby making them important tools for economic empowerment. Globally, youths increasingly utilize social media not only for social interaction and entertainment but also for accessing income-generating information, developing entrepreneurial skills, and creating alternative economic opportunities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

Conceptually, social media combines the words *social*, which refers to interaction and information exchange, and *media*, which refers to channels of communication. It encompasses a collection of internet-based applications and websites that enable users to create, share, and distribute content, including text, videos, images, and links (Roopak, 2021). These platforms have significantly transformed patterns of communication, business operations, and access to information, particularly among youths, who constitute some of the most active users of digital technologies (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

In Nigeria, the use of social media has increased considerably in recent years. Social media usage reportedly grew from approximately 18 million users in 2017 to about 36.75 million users in January 2024, representing approximately 16.2% of the country's total population (DataReportal, 2024; Thrive Media Africa, 2024, as cited in Omotoso, 2025). This growing digital presence has transformed social and economic interactions by enabling individuals and small business owners to reach wider audiences beyond geographical limitations. Entrepreneurs increasingly utilise the interactive features of social media to access online resources, establish strategic partnerships, and maintain closer relationships with customers and suppliers, thereby improving their market positioning and competitiveness (Ainin, Parveen, Moghavvemi, Jaafar, & Shuib, 2015).

With the growth of digital business activities, establishing and operating businesses through social media platforms has become increasingly important. Social media provides a relatively cost-effective medium for advertising products and services, communicating brand identity, and engaging directly with customers. Beyond entrepreneurship, social media has also influenced employment patterns by creating new forms of work and enabling flexible income-generating opportunities, such as digital marketing, content creation, online trading, and freelance services. As Vein (2013) argues, social media functions both as an industry that generates employment and as a tool that enables users to access non-traditional and flexible forms of work.

For youths, social media has emerged as an important medium for accessing, sharing, and utilizing information. Young people are increasingly connected to social media in their daily lives, making these platforms important sources of knowledge, skill acquisition, and empowerment. Through exposure to online tutorials, business ideas, marketing strategies, and peer networks, social media platforms play an important role in shaping youths' economic aspirations and capacities (OECD, 2019).

Despite these opportunities, Nigeria continues to experience serious socio-economic challenges, particularly poverty and youth unemployment. Youth unemployment remains a critical development concern; with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2023) reporting youth unemployment rates exceeding 30%. Similarly, labour force survey findings indicate that Nigeria's overall unemployment rate increased from 4.2% in the second quarter of 2023 to 5.0% in the third quarter of 2023, reflecting persistent labour market challenges (Aina & Olufemi, 2024). These conditions disproportionately affect youths, particularly

those living in semi-urban and peri-urban communities.

In semi-urban areas such as Sabon Gari Local Government Area, opportunities for formal employment are relatively limited. Consequently, digital platforms are becoming increasingly important for self-employment, business promotion, and income diversification. Youths in Sabon Gari increasingly leverage social media to acquire entrepreneurial knowledge, access market information, advertise products and services, and participate in online commercial activities. These practices suggest that social media has considerable potential as a tool for youth employment and local economic development.

Therefore, this study examines the extent to which social media contributes to youth economic empowerment in Sabon Gari Local Government Area by focusing on how information accessed through social media platforms supports youths' economic activities.

**Statement of the Problem**

Social media platforms, including WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, have become important channels for information sharing, learning, networking, and business development. Ideally, these platforms are expected to enhance youth economic empowerment by improving access to employment information, digital skills, entrepreneurial knowledge, and wider markets, particularly in contexts where formal employment opportunities are limited (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Castells, 2010). In developing economies such as Nigeria, social media increasingly serves as a practical platform for youth income generation through digital entrepreneurship and online marketing, thereby supporting livelihoods at the local government level (Nwankwor, Odanwu, Osarosee, & Arumede, 2024; Yusuf, Oludoyi, & Segun, 2025).

However, despite the growing adoption of social media, youth unemployment and economic hardship remain significant challenges in Nigeria, particularly in local government areas where employment opportunities are limited (Lain & Pape, 2024). In Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, many youths depend on small-scale enterprises and informal economic activities for survival. Nevertheless, a considerable proportion of these youths continue to experience difficulties in accessing reliable information relating to employment opportunities, skills training, and sustainable sources of income. In addition, structural and digital challenges, such as high data costs, poor internet connectivity, limited digital literacy, and vulnerability to online scams, may reduce the effectiveness of social media as a tool for economic empowerment (UNDP, 2021).

Despite the widespread use of social media among youths in Sabon Gari Local Government Area, there is limited empirical evidence demonstrating the extent to which social media use translates into tangible economic benefits, such as increased income, improved skills, and enhanced economic well-being. This gap in empirical knowledge raises important questions regarding the actual contribution of social media to youth economic empowerment at the grassroots level.

Consequently, this study examines the role of social media in the economic empowerment of youths in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

## Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To examine the patterns of social media usage among youths in Sabon Gari Local Government Area.
2. To assess how youths use social media to search for empowerment-related information.
3. To identify the types of empowerment-related information accessed by youths through social media platforms in Sabon

Gari Local Government Area, Kaduna State.
4. To identify the challenges youths encounter in using social media for economic empowerment.

## Literature Review

### Social Media and Youth Empowerment

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for youth empowerment by facilitating knowledge sharing, networking, peer learning, and access to economic and social resources. Through interactive platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Instagram, youths can acquire information, exchange ideas, develop digital skills, and participate actively in communities that support personal and professional development. These platforms provide spaces through which youths can express themselves, build social capital, and access opportunities that were previously constrained by geographical and socio-economic barriers.

One of the major empowerment functions of social media is its ability to connect job seekers with employment and income-generating opportunities. Online employment marketplaces and digital platforms have reportedly assisted millions of individuals globally by linking them with employers, clients, and collaborators across national boundaries (Fab-Ukozor & Ojiakor, 2020). Through digital marketing, freelancing, content creation, and e-commerce, youths increasingly leverage social media to access flexible forms of work and entrepreneurial opportunities, thereby reducing their dependence on formal employment.

The contemporary digital era is characterized by rapid advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs), with youths constituting one of the most active groups of users. While young people have traditionally used the internet primarily for entertainment and social interaction, there is increasing recognition of the need to redirect their engagement towards productive and developmental purposes. As Amita (2016) argues, empowering youths through digital literacy and awareness can enable them to harness social media and ICTs for innovation, civic participation, and national development rather than merely engaging in passive consumption.

Empowerment, in a broad sense, refers to the process of enabling individuals, groups, and communities to gain greater control over decisions and resources that affect their lives while reducing feelings of powerlessness and dependency (Chandra & Liang, 2017). In the context of youth empowerment, this process involves enhancing youths' capacity to access relevant information, acquire marketable skills, and utilize available opportunities to improve their socio-economic well-being. Social media contributes to this process by reducing barriers to information access and providing platforms for learning, collaboration, and self-expression.

According to UNICEF (2018), youth empowerment involves creating environments that enable young people to develop competencies, participate meaningfully in society, and achieve economic independence. Social media may enhance youth agency by facilitating interaction with mentors, participation in online training and educational programmes, and engagement in entrepreneurial and professional communities. Through such interactions, youths can gain access to new ideas, business opportunities, and income-generating strategies that support their empowerment.

The potential of social media to generate income for youths is further supported by empirical evidence. According to George and Aleena (2025), approximately 80% of youths in India use social media as a significant source of income, particularly through online brand promotion, digital advertising, and content creation. Social media platforms enable users to

showcase their abilities and, with substantial followers and viewership, potentially generate income. These findings demonstrate the transformative potential of social media as a tool for youth empowerment and income generation in developing economies, although differences in socio-economic contexts should be considered.

Overall, social media contributes to youth empowerment in various ways by facilitating information access, skill development, economic engagement, and self-reliance. It has become an important tool for promoting youth empowerment and sustainable livelihoods, particularly in situations where formal employment opportunities are limited.

**Social Media as a Tool for Income Generation**

Social media platforms have developed into online marketplaces and information centres that enable youths to identify, access, and utilize a variety of income-generating opportunities. Youths can participate in economic activities such as online trading, freelancing, digital marketing, content creation, and e-commerce through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp, and X (formerly Twitter). These platforms are particularly attractive to youths in contexts where formal employment opportunities are scarce because they lower barriers to entrepreneurship by providing relatively inexpensive tools for advertising, customer engagement, and market access.

The growth of the digital economy has transformed traditional labour markets by introducing new forms of work that are mediated largely through digital and social media platforms. For youths, occupations such as content creation, social media management, influencing, digital advertising, and online brand promotion have become viable sources of income. Kassi and Lehdonvirta (2018) argue that although digital labour platforms provide access to international markets and flexible working conditions, they also present challenges relating to job security, income instability, and the absence of traditional employment benefits such as health insurance and pensions. Despite these challenges, many youths are attracted to these platforms because of their income potential, flexibility, and autonomy.

Social media platforms increasingly provide built-in monetization features that support income generation. Advertisements, sponsored content, business collaborations, affiliate marketing, live-stream gifts, and fan subscriptions are among the mechanisms through which entrepreneurs and content creators on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube generate income. According to Kapoor, Dwivedi, Piercy, and Reynolds (2021), monetisation is an important process through which individuals can convert digital engagement and online influence into financial resources.

Empirical research also suggests that effective social media use may be associated with positive economic outcomes for youths and small-scale business owners. Mwaura (2019) found that the effective use of social media marketing among youth-owned businesses increased business exposure, customer reach, and revenue generation. Similarly, Okoro, Chukwu, and Nwafor (2020) found that social media use, particularly among young entrepreneurs in emerging economies, contributes to higher income levels, business expansion, and the development of digital skills. These findings suggest that social media not only provides financial opportunities but also supports the development of skills that may enhance long-term employability and entrepreneurial capacity.

Therefore, social media serves as a platform for learning and innovation as well as a source of economic opportunity, highlighting its importance as a tool for youth economic empowerment and income generation.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the Diffusion of Innovations Theory and Empowerment Theory.

Empowerment Theory views human challenges within broader social, political, and economic contexts. The theory suggests that access to opportunities, resources, and information enhances an individual's ability to achieve social and economic goals (Zimmerman, 2000). In the context of this study, Empowerment Theory provides a useful framework for explaining how access to social media may increase youths' access to information, economic opportunities, and resources that support their livelihoods.

The Diffusion of Innovations Theory, developed by Rogers (2003), explains how innovations and new ideas spread within a social system. In this study, social media represents an innovation whose adoption may facilitate the spread of knowledge, income-generating ideas, entrepreneurial practices, and digital skills among youths. The theory helps explain the role of peer influence, early adoption of online income-generating strategies, and the circulation of economic information within the local social system.

Empowerment Theory is particularly relevant because of its emphasis on agency, participation, and access to resources. It provides a people-centred perspective for understanding how social media can enhance youths' access to income-related information and strengthen their economic confidence (Zimmerman, 2000). Similarly, the Diffusion of Innovations Theory provides explanatory insight into how digital practices, entrepreneurial ideas, and income-generating opportunities spread among youths through social media networks (Rogers, 2003).

However, both theories have limitations. Empowerment Theory may place considerable emphasis on individual agency while structural factors such as poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and unequal access to technology may limit individuals' ability to convert social media opportunities into sustainable economic outcomes. Similarly, the Diffusion of Innovations Theory may assume relatively equitable access to innovations and communication channels, which may not adequately reflect differences in financial resources, internet access, and digital literacy among youths.

Despite these limitations, the combination of the two theories provides a useful framework for analyzing both individual empowerment processes and the broader diffusion of digital knowledge and practices among youths.

**Contextual Studies in Nigeria**

Studies conducted in Nigeria indicate that social media assists youths in addressing employment challenges and generating income. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn support networking, skill development, and the promotion of small businesses, thereby enabling young people to participate in entrepreneurship even in the absence of formal employment opportunities. However, challenges such as poor internet access, limited digital literacy, and the dissemination of false information continue to limit the effectiveness of social media as a tool for economic empowerment (Okoro et al., 2020; Adesina & Adeyemi, 2021).

Nwankwor, Odanwu, Osarosee, and Arumede (2024) examined the impact of social media entrepreneurship on youth unemployment reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design, the researchers collected data from 400 youths selected from a population of over 2.7 million using the Taro Yamane formula. The data were analysed using

SPSS. The findings revealed that social media marketing supports virtual sales and job creation, while social media content creation increases youth participation and self-employment. However, inadequate digital skills and poor network connectivity were identified as major challenges. The study recommended increased awareness and improved internet infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, and concluded that social media entrepreneurship has significant potential for reducing youth unemployment.

Similarly, George's (2024) study examined the extent to which social media serves as a source of income for Nigerian youths. Using a descriptive survey of 100 active users, the study found that platforms such as YouTube and Instagram were widely used for income-generating activities. Although social media provided opportunities for micro-businesses and self-expression, most respondents earned relatively low incomes because of intense competition and limited profit margins. The study therefore recommended that youths combine digital engagement with other income-generating strategies and concluded that social media may be more suitable as a supplementary rather than a primary source of income.

Within the framework of the Uses and Gratifications Theory, Fab-Ukozor and Ojiakor (2020) investigated the contribution of social media to youth economic empowerment in Anambra State. Data were collected from 143 social media users aged between 23 and 37 years using a mixed-method approach, while descriptive statistics and ANOVA were used for data analysis. The findings revealed a high level of awareness of the empowerment potential of social media. However, only a small proportion of respondents used the platforms for learning, skill development, or employment opportunities. Instead, most respondents primarily used social media for recreational activities such as chatting and social interaction. The study also identified gender differences in social media use and emphasised the need for mentorship and structured capacity-building programmes to promote productive engagement.

Studies conducted outside Nigeria have also demonstrated the potential of social media for income generation. For example, Sanyam, Sharma, and Mishra (2022) found that social media marketing has a substantial influence on income generation in service industries. Social media improves brand visibility, customer engagement, and business performance, highlighting its potential importance for Nigerian youths seeking to overcome employment challenges.

Overall, the reviewed studies indicate that although social media provides Nigerian youths with economic and empowerment opportunities, its effectiveness is constrained by limited technical skills, intense competition, and inadequate infrastructure. Improved digital infrastructure, supportive policies, and capacity-building programmes are therefore necessary to maximize its potential.

## Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of youths aged 15–34 years residing in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. According to the 2025 population projections of the National Population Commission, the youth population in the study area was estimated at 223,135. The population comprised youths of different genders, educational backgrounds, occupations, and age categories.

A sample of 384 respondents was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure that members of the population had an equal opportunity of

being selected, thereby reducing the likelihood of sampling bias and improving the representativeness of the sample.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into relevant sections. The instrument covered respondents' demographic characteristics, patterns of social media use, income-generating activities associated with social media, and indicators of economic empowerment, including skill acquisition and income improvement. The questionnaire was designed to ensure clarity and ease of response while generating data suitable for quantitative analysis.

**Response Rate**

| Description | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Questionnaires distributed | 384 | 100.0 |
| Questionnaires returned | 384 | 100.0 |
| Questionnaires not returned | 0 | 0.0 |

The response rate indicates that all 384 questionnaires distributed were successfully retrieved, representing a 100% response rate. The complete retrieval of the questionnaires may be attributed to effective follow-up during the data collection process. The high response rate reduced the likelihood of missing data and ensured that all selected respondents were represented in the analysis.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Sabon Gari Local Government Area (N = 384)

| Variable | Category | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 15–18 | 52 | 13.5 |
| | 19–22 | 105 | 27.3 |
| | 23–26 | 117 | 30.5 |
| | 27–30 | 92 | 24.0 |
| | 31–34 | 18 | 4.7 |
| Gender | Male | 214 | 55.7 |
| | Female | 170 | 44.3 |
| Education | No formal education | 5 | 1.3 |
| | Primary school | 9 | 2.3 |
| | Secondary education | 128 | 33.3 |
| | Tertiary education | 242 | 63.0 |
| Occupation | Student | 178 | 46.4 |
| | Self-employed | 137 | 35.7 |

*Source: Field Results*

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of respondents in Sabon Gari LGA. The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents were between 19 and 30 years of age. This age group represents a major

proportion of the economically active youth population and consists predominantly of Generation Z, with a smaller proportion of Millennials. This concentration suggests that social media-based empowerment activities in Sabon Gari LGA primarily involve youths who are at important stages of career development and income exploration.

The gender distribution shows slightly higher male participation than female participation, although the distribution is relatively balanced. This suggests that social media-driven economic activities in Sabon Gari LGA are not exclusively associated with one gender, although cultural and economic factors may influence levels of participation and outcomes. The findings also indicate relatively high levels of educational attainment, with most respondents possessing secondary or tertiary education. Such educational exposure may enhance youths' ability to navigate digital platforms, understand online information, and apply acquired skills productively. From the perspective of Empowerment Theory, education may strengthen individual capacity and self-efficacy, which are important components of economic empowerment (Zimmerman, 2000).

The occupational distribution shows that students and self-employed youths constituted a substantial proportion of the respondents. This reflects the educational and commercial characteristics of Sabon Gari LGA and suggests that many youths may rely on social media as an alternative source of information and opportunities for income generation.

**Table 2: Social Media Usage Patterns among Youths in Sabon Gari LGA**

| Variable | Category | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Daily time spent on social media | Less than 1 hour | 16 | 4.2 |
| | 1–2 hours | 95 | 24.7 |
| | 3–4 hours | 129 | 33.6 |
| | 5 hours or more | 144 | 37.5 |
| Platform usage | Use of multiple platforms | Majority | – |

*Source: Field Results*

As shown in Table 2, most respondents spent three hours or more daily on social media and used multiple platforms simultaneously. This high level of engagement indicates that social media is deeply embedded in the daily lives of youths in Sabon Gari LGA. The finding suggests that these platforms provide considerable opportunities for communication, learning, networking, and economic engagement.

From the perspective of the Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the widespread and sustained use of social media among youths suggests a high level of adoption of digital communication technologies within the study area (Rogers, 2003).

Table 3: Use of Social Media for Empowerment-Related Information

| Item | Response | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Use social media for personal or business-related information | Yes | 367 | 95.6 |
| | No | 17 | 4.4 |
| Frequency of applying online information | Always | 135 | 35.2 |
| | Often | 138 | 35.9 |
| | Sometimes | 111 | 28.9 |

*Source: Field Results*

The results in Table 3 show that an overwhelming majority of respondents use social media to access personal or business-related information. Furthermore, most respondents reported that they always or often apply information obtained online. This indicates that social media functions as a practical source of knowledge and information rather than merely as a platform for entertainment.

The finding supports Empowerment Theory, which emphasizes access to relevant information as an important foundation for individual and economic empowerment (Zimmerman, 2000). In Sabon Gari LGA, where access to formal business advisory services and employment information may be limited, social media may serve as an alternative channel for accessing empowerment-related information.

**Table 4: Types of Empowerment-Related Information Accessed through Social Media**

| Information Type | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Business and entrepreneurship tips | 58 | 15.1 |
| Skills and tutorials | 51 | 13.3 |
| Job opportunities | 16 | 4.2 |
| Market trends and prices | 9 | 2.3 |
| Combination of two or more categories | 250 | 65.1 |

*Source: Field Results*

As indicated in Table 4, respondents accessed various forms of empowerment-related information through social media, including business and entrepreneurship tips, skills and tutorials, job opportunities, and market information. The majority accessed a combination of two or more categories of information.

This pattern suggests that youths use social media strategically to obtain diverse forms of information that may support income generation and entrepreneurial activities. The tendency to combine different types of information also reflects the potential of social media to serve as a multifunctional platform for learning, business development, and economic engagement.

**Table 5: Perceived Effectiveness of Social Media in Youth Economic Empowerment**

| Perception | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Very effective | 113 | 29.4 |
| Effective | 131 | 34.1 |
| Neutral | 67 | 17.4 |
| Ineffective | 54 | 14.1 |
| Very ineffective | 19 | 4.9 |

*Source: Field Results*

The results in Table 5 show that the majority of respondents perceived social media as effective or very effective in promoting youth economic empowerment. This positive perception may be associated with benefits such as access to relevant information, skill acquisition, business promotion, and opportunities for supplementary income.

However, the presence of neutral and negative perceptions indicates that the benefits of social media are not equally experienced by all youths. Differences in access to digital infrastructure, financial resources, digital skills, and other socio-economic factors may influence the extent to which individuals benefit economically from social media.

**Table 6: Challenges to Social Media-Based Income Generation in Sabon Gari LGA**

| Challenge | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Poor internet connectivity | 96 | 25.0 |
| Inconsistent electricity supply | 44 | 11.5 |
| Limited financial resources | 29 | 7.6 |
| Cybersecurity risks/fraud | 53 | 13.8 |
| Lack of digital skills | 12 | 3.1 |
| Combination of challenges | 150 | 39.0 |

*Source: Field Results*

The major challenges identified in Table 6 include poor internet connectivity, inconsistent electricity supply, limited financial resources, cybersecurity risks, and inadequate digital skills. A substantial proportion of respondents also identified a combination of these challenges.

These findings reflect broader infrastructural and socio-economic constraints that may affect the productive use of social media for economic activities. From the perspective of Empowerment Theory, individual empowerment is more likely to be sustained when supportive structural conditions are available. Therefore, the persistence of these challenges may limit the sustainability and scalability of social media-based economic activities in Sabon Gari LGA despite the high level of social media engagement among youths.

**Summary of Findings**

The major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. Youths in Sabon Gari LGA are active users of social media. Most respondents fall within economically active age categories, with relatively balanced

gender participation and generally high levels of educational attainment.
2. Social media use is intensive, with many youths spending several hours daily on platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.
3. Youths use social media to access various forms of empowerment-related information, including information on jobs, skills, business ideas, entrepreneurship, and market trends.
4. Information obtained through social media is applied to different economic and income-generating activities and contributes to skill acquisition and opportunities for supplementary income.
5. The effectiveness of social media as a tool for youth economic empowerment is constrained by poor internet connectivity, inconsistent electricity supply, limited financial resources, cybersecurity risks, and gaps in digital skills.

**Conclusion**

The study concludes that social media plays an important role in youth economic empowerment in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Through frequent engagement with digital platforms, access to empowerment-related information, skill acquisition, networking, and participation in income-generating activities, social media provides youths with alternative opportunities for improving their economic circumstances in an environment characterized by limited formal employment opportunities.

However, the economic benefits derived from social media remain constrained by infrastructural deficiencies, limited financial resources, cybersecurity risks, and uneven digital competencies. Although social media has been widely adopted among youths in the study area, its capacity to serve as a sustainable pathway to economic independence has not yet been fully realized.

Therefore, social media represents a promising tool for youth economic empowerment in Sabon Gari LGA, but its full potential will depend on improvements in digital infrastructure, digital skills, financial support, and online safety.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Sabon Gari LGA authorities, educational institutions, and non-governmental organisations should implement structured programmes aimed at equipping youths with relevant digital skills and social media entrepreneurship competencies.
2. Relevant government agencies and stakeholders should invest in reliable internet connectivity and electricity supply to support the consistent and productive use of social media for economic activities.
3. Access to micro-grants, low-interest loans, and start-up capital should be improved to enable youths to establish and expand social media-based businesses and other digital economic activities.
4. Youths should be educated on cybersecurity, online safety, and responsible digital practices. In addition, social media entrepreneurship should be integrated into youth development and poverty-reduction programmes in Sabon Gari Local Government Area.

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