Original Research Article

Social Media and Proselytizing of Islam: A Study of Muslim Students in Selected Higher Institutions of Learning in Northern Nigeria

Muhammad Maga Sule[1]*, Muhammad Maishanu Aliyu[2]

[1]Department of Islamic Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria
[2]Department of Islamic Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria

*Corresponding Author
Muhammad Maga Sule

Abstract: This research centered on the use of social media platforms by Muslim students in proselytizing the religion of Islam in Tertiary Institutions of Learning in Northern Nigeria. The paper examines social media as a tool which has shaped a new social facet in the lives of Muslim students. Social media has advanced and raises their levels of religious, educational and social awareness. It is argued in the paper that, social media has provided an avenue for getting information in many aspects of everyday lives, making one to become more knowledgeable which is valuable especially for Muslim students to use for Islamic da'wah. The objective of the paper therefore, has examined the level of Muslim students' awareness of social media and using same in the proselytizing of Islamic faith to Muslims and non-Muslims in their various institutions of learning. A cross sectional survey was conducted among Muslim students in some selected tertiary institutions of learning in Northern Nigeria, and quantitative methodology was used. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The paper found out that most of the Muslims students surveyed were aware of the social media sites that proselytize and extent the true teachings of Islam to Muslims and non-Muslims. Some of the social media sites utilized by Muslim students are: Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Ummaland, Signal, You Tube and Muslim Social.

Keywords: Social Media, Muslim Students, Proselytizing Islam, Tertiary Institutions, Northern Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. All praise is due to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, May His Peace and Blessing is upon Prophet Muhammad, members of his family, his companions and all those who follow his guidance till the Day of Resurrection.

Islam is one of the rapidly expanding religions in the world [1]. It is becoming popular among young people who are linked to the social media. Access to social media explores the unprecedented uses by several religious, individual persons and organizations. Therefore, the focus of the paper is on the role that social media plays in broadcasting Islamic faith between social media users universally. The major concern of the paper is on how social Media platforms have distinctly affected the social life of several Muslims, as well as their spiritual practices, their religiosity, teachings, issuing large Fatwas and structuring their fundamental communities in accordance with the Muslim typical societies.

The development of social media platforms is a recent phenomenon. From their inception, social media have fascinated many university students as well as their lecturers [2]. These social media may be centred at sharing cultural views, spread religious belief and promote regional politics among others [3]. Boyd and Ellison explain that since their appearance, social media sites have drawn millions of users who have 'integrated these sites into their daily practices [4]. Wilson *et al*. suggest that social networking sites have come to play such a significant role in enabling communication and relationship building for many individuals, in particular, young people, that it would be crucial to investigate the various factors that influence their usage [5]. Today communication has gradually evolved into the use of facilities like the satellite TV, telephones, billboard, social networks such as Facebook, twitter, and so on. These social networks are today known as the social media because they invariable support the spread of information and in the least controlled manner also [6]. These modern media tools will in most cases serve to promote the traditional role of mass media as

defined by the media practitioners which is to inform, educate, and to persuade the people by providing them with the right information and education on critical and trivial matters within and outside their environments [6]. The media can bring changes in behavior and attitude of the people by emphasizing certain issues.

Similarly, developing a critical understanding of multimodal representation and communication is an essential factor in studying Muslim engagement with the internet [7]. In recognition of the central place social media occupy in 21st century among students, Bobko, states that it has become pertinent for the school administrators to learn about the social networks before they set policies, educate students or control the usage among the students [8] However, Lane Jefferson, concluded that institutions of higher learning have little or no control over the information posted in the social media. Therefore, the liberty and freedom of expression that accompanied social media may be counterproductive to Islam if left unchecked [9]. Thus, this study would identify who is responsible for the control of students that utilise social media in the area studied, whether it is the responsibility of the faculty or university administrators to educate the students on how to use the social media and the internet.

In line with the above introduction, this study seeks to answer the following questions; to what extent Muslim students become aware of activities that are allowed on social media platforms from an Islamic perspective? The objective of this study, therefore, is to examine the extent on how Muslim students use social media platforms for proselytizing the religion of Islam.

Review of Related Literature: Social Media
This section intends to review literature regarding the phenomenon under discussion. Kaplan and Haenlein defined Social media as a group of internet based application that allows the creation and exchange of user generated content [10]. But according to Kietzmann et-al, social media use mobile and web-based technologies to create interactive platforms which individuals and communities share, create, discuss, and modifies user's generated content. It also discussed some of the social media sites like Facebook, Hi5, Friendster, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Flickr, and also identifies Identity, Conversations, Sharing, Presence, Relationship, Reputation and Groups as the functional building blocks of social media [11].

From an instrumental aspect, Drury defines social media as online resources that people use to share content: video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humor, opinion, gossip and news [12]. But Dykeman [13] defined social media as the means for any person to; publish digital creative content; provide and obtain real-time feedback via online discussions, commentary and evaluations, and incorporate changes or corrections to the original content.

Social Media and Muslim Students
On social media and Muslim students, Shuriye, Adeyemi & Huud [6] in their work "Impacts of New Media Technology on Muslim- West Religion" explained that the media and information technology plays an indispensable role in disseminating news and education relating to social, economic, political and religious concerns. Those social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitters, and YouTube are used by the public as communication tools in disseminating information that is significant to the Muslim world.

According to Sanusi, Ahmad & HadiAshara [14] some of the functions of social media is to connect, interact, share information and chat with friends and family. And also, mentioned some of the widely used social media sites like WhatsApp, Facebook, Snapchat, 2go, BB Messenger and Badoo. According toGehad, Mahdi & Azizah [15] explains that, with the inception of Social Media, numerous University students have been attracted especially Muslim Students use social media in shaping and sharing their religious identity and socio-political affiliation. The work also discussed the Islamic perspective and how it is being used in communication among Muslims.

Mustafa, Zulkiple, Abdul Rahim, Roslizawati, Fazrul & Zainol [16], expounded in their work "Facebook as Social Media Tools among Muslim Youths in Malaysia" discussed that the existence of social media has created a more independent sphere among the citizens. At the press of a button or a touch of a finger on the screen, users are able to channel out opinions to get chains and chains of feedback globally for that matter. Social networking sites such as My Space, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter etc., have allowed users to chat, to exchange information and also to be persuasive, unlike radio and television.

Accordingly, many previous research conducted has shown the influence of the Internet on the lives of individual Muslims. Internet use is not just limited to activities related to finding jobs or to communicate with contacts, but it also involves many activities of everyday life. This proves that the effect of the Internet on the Muslim society is inevitable. Currently, there is a propensity among the Muslim Students to use the Social Media for the purpose of conveying the *Da'wah,* deliver Religious Lectures, search and retrieve information related to Islamic teachings and also answers related to the tenets and rituals of everyday problems. This is seen as a very good development and a positive impact on the Muslim community in Malaysia and due to the diversification effect and the role of the internet on the Muslim community [16]. Makarfi [17] explains the value of the knowledge of science and technology to Muslims and the services they offer to the understanding of the Glorious Qur'an and Hadith. It further explains Communication as a means which Muslims use in *Da'awah* through the print and electronic media which social media also plays a role in educating the public.

Relatedly, Dauda [18] discusses information and communication technology and how it impacted on the Muslim Youths. It also explains the various constituents of ICT (Information and Communication Technology), the Internet and GSM and how the Muslim Youths uses them in learning and other online activity. It is especially popular among young people who are connected to the social media platforms. This entry explores the different uses of Social Media by many religious individuals and organizations [19]. Social Media plays an important role in disseminating Islamic knowledge among Social Media adopters worldwide. It will, thereby, focus on how social digital platforms have markedly impacted the social life of many Muslims, including their religious practices, their religiosity, their preaching, their issuing *fatwas*, and their building virtual communities in the Muslim-majority countries or in Diasporas. Just as other regions the Muslim majority countries have witnessed a rapid diffusion and adoption of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in recent times [19].

Furthermore, in the Arab world has led some scholars to expect that its impact on religious life will rise. The common argument is that social media has the potential to change people's religiosity and practices of piety [19]. The impact of Social Media on religious behavior of individuals and communities in environments characterized by conservatism and traditionalism, it is argued, will be more profound than in environments characterized by liberalism and openness. Like for the followers of other book-based religion in the Abrahamic tradition, communicating and winning the hearts and minds of believers and non-believers through *Da'wah* is a central commitmentof many Muslims and Islamic leaders. Social Media has become an invaluable means to pursue the path of *Da'wah* and dissemination of the knowledge of the Glorious Qur'an. Only very few voices condemn the use of the new digital media as incompatible with Islamic practices.

For instance, Abdul Aziz Al Shaikh, Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, advances a critical stance towards Social Media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter because, as he says, they disseminate lies and may destroy established relationship and Muslim families in the offline real world [19]. In a similar line, religious authorities in some Islamic countries issued *fatwas* against the use of Social Media like Twitter, arguing for its incompatibility with Shari'ah because of trading accusations and promoting lies. While some of the Islamic religious leaders advise their followers not to use Social Media platforms, the overwhelming majority of scholars and preachers capitalize on the effectiveness and efficiency of Social Media in engaging with the community of believers and enhance their fidelity and loyalty of users [19]. In the first generation of the Internet, there were some traditional websites like online Islam that acted as one stop shop for religious information and comprehensive services to the Muslim *Ummah* [19]. Social Media also created an Islamic popular diplomacy. This involves the global mobilization of believers through virtual platforms in case of individual or group attacks on the Noble Prophet or the Glorious Qur'an [20].

It has been established that people from all over the world are able to discuss issues related to Islam through available online discussion forums. Muslims and non-Muslims can take part in the online discussions. Everybody in the forum can raise questions. Paltalk and Yahoo Messenger are examples of free accessible software for online discussions that can be downloaded and used to participate while writing or speaking. Many Islamic talks and discussion rooms are run by different scholars are accessible in Paltalk 24 hours a day [20].

Consequently, social media facilitate unmanaged and untapped online conversations. This helps Islamic religious workers to get closer views and concentrate on Islamic topics which people need [21]. Social Networks and Media have definitely changed the spread of Islam and the perception of Muslims in the minds of many, said author and professor at DeVry University, Suzy Ismail in an email interview [20]. The impact of Facebook and Twitter in changing entire nations was seen during Arab Spring which relied largely on social media as a means of communication that fueled and ignited the protests and protesters who over threw the Presidents of Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia while Syria has been in protracted turmoil since 2013. It can also be deduced and relate same to Islam's relation with social media. Social media presents a huge opportunity for Muslims to reach out to people who have little or knowledge about Islam and Muslims. Hundreds of thousands of Americans had never met a Muslim in their life but they have access to us through social media [20]. The ever-expanding use of social media, especially mobile media devices, enables potential publics to be engaged with organizations and businesses almost continually, and decision makers within these organizations must exercise behavioral soft skills that connect at the right level [22].

Social Media and Proselytizing of Islam

From the foregoing discussion, it has revealed that the social media has been playing a vital role in the Proselytizing of the message of Islam. Proselytizing means to convey a message using suitable and effective tools. Throughout history, all schools of thought and people trying to deliver their message to others have used different methods and tools. In today's world, extensive Proselytizing is carried out by various schools to attract people to different thoughts and beliefs and the leaders of those schools are trying to familiarize people with their opinions and beliefs and to recruit new followers using suitable Proselytizing tools and techniques [23].

The five means of propagating Islam First: the individual method; that is, to invite the person individually if the matter pertains to him specifically. Second: public or mass Proselytizing such as in lectures or exhortations that benefit the generality of people. Third: private lessons to students each in his specialty. This is the task of the scholars who specialize in their disciplines. Forth: Proselytizing through writing, correspondence, and authorship with guidance and benefit for those who are called. Fifth:

Proselytizing using modern means of communication to advance the cause of truth (www.islamquest.net/en/archive/question/fa4154). Similarly, since the mission of Islam as the last and a perfect religion is an eternal and a global mission, Proselytizing and acquainting people with divine law and knowledge as well as giving good tidings and warning people are of high importance. Almighty Allah says;

> …This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion… (Qur'an, 5:3).

That is because Islam is the religion of guidance and it has considered guidance to be of paramount importance. It is, therefore, impossible to guide people unless they are familiar with the goals, knowledge, and teachings of Islam (www.islamquest.net/en/archive/question/fa4154). According to Qari Muhammad Asim[29], Social Media would tremendously benefit from it and convey the positive and beautiful message of Islam. For instance, we can now learn about our faith and the language of the Quran as well as its recitation within the comfort of our homes. We can also potentially share Islamic messages with billions of people around the globe through the use of social media platform and electronic devices. In terms of *Da'wah*, a five-minute video on the activities of a mosque, featuring a friendly-faced scholar giving a virtual tour of the place could work wonders [24].

Similarly, social media are tools for rejuvenating the ethos of Islam in terms of its political virtues, moral principle, and spiritual ethics. In recent times the social media has turned the most vital tool in projecting ideas to every nook and cronies of every society. It is important to note that if we are desirous of blending with this modern trend, we must develop our conceptual framework to guide the Muslims in the proper and lawful use of social media facilities [25].

Accordingly, if we sit back and watch, then the rest of the world will move on while we remain static. We should in earnest make use of Facebook, Twitter, My Space, Whats App[30], Blackberry messenger etc. in promoting, projecting and disseminating the teachings of Islam among Muslim students and students of other faiths [25].

More so, it is a relatively inexpensive way to give people who would not normally have the courage to ask questions about Islam or to see the inside of a mosque, the opportunity to look inside. With all the advantages of social media, it is taking up a lot of our time and affecting other aspects of our lives. On average, we may be spending 2-3 hours a day on social media, without realizing how much time we are spending on our phones, iPads, and computer screens [25].

Moreover, famous Muslim Scholar Zakir Naik who is head of IRF (Islamic Research Foundation) and running most watched Islamic *Da'wah* TV Channel Peace TV has said that Social media is a very effective tool so Muslims should use this Media for the *Da'wah* of Islam to non-Muslims. I totally agree with this statement of Zakir Naik. Social Media has grown so much and now it has billions of users. That Muslims can really use it to give a message of Islam to Non- Muslims, but the sad truth is that Most of Muslims are not doing it. So many Muslims got non-Muslims friends on Facebook and other social sites but they never tell them about Islam. Instead, they keep on wasting time in useless posts and chat [26]. Another sad thing is that most of Big Islamic Pages on Facebook just keeps on sharing Pics of *Kaaba, Masjid Al Nabawi*, so called miracles or Muslim babies so that they can get more likes, shares, and fans, they never do real Islamic *Da'wah*. Muslims should use Social sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus in proper way to give Message of Islam to non-believers because its responsibility of each and every Muslim and we will be answerable for it on the day of Judgement. Allah SWT has clearly said in *Surah Al-Asr* that those men are in loss who doesn't call others towards *Haq* [26].

Additionally, Islam benefits more of social media in propagating its true image against the narrative being pursued by traditional media, which at best, shows a watered-down secular version of Islam and at worst, presents Islam as nothing but evil. Social media being an open platform empowers Muslims to be the authors of their own narrative. The open communication nature of social media on one side can allow Muslims to challenge those distorting the true image of Islam, and on the other side encourage others to have open discussions with Muslims. As shown, when it comes to effectiveness it is the message, the relevance and the delivery that is more important than the accumulation and investment of a vast amount of capital [27].

In order to carry out an empirical study based on the above phenomenon, the researcher has adopted a methodology. Below is the detail of the methodology adopted:

METHODOLOGY

This section present detailed methodology employed for this research. It contained two items; data collection procedures which comprise of process of selecting respondents and the instruments used for collection of data, the questionnaire administered and the descriptive statistics for analysis. Therefore, the cross-sectional study was purely quantitative which utilized survey technique in the data collection during fieldwork. It is considered suitable for this research because according to Busha, it is a method which allows the investigator to gather information about target population without undertaking a complete enumeration which no doubt will enable one to generalize, as well as save time and money without sacrificing efficiency, accuracy and information adequacy in the research process [28]. However, one of the major weaknesses of cross-sectional survey is that the respondents are restricted to the

options provided by the researcher in the questionnaire. The respondents are not given the opportunity express their feelings; which greatly affects the richness and depth of the data and reliability of the findings in reflecting the views and perceptions of the people.

Data Collection Procedures

The data for this study were gathered from the survey questionnaire administered to 500 Muslims students from the selected Tertiary Institutions during MSSN (Muslim's Student Society of Nigeria) gathering and *Masjid* during *salat*. Muslims students were instructed to provide feedback about their experiences using social media in proselytizing Islam in their respective institutions.

Data Presentation and Discussion of Findings

During the cross-sectional survey, 500 questionnaires were administered but 442 questionnaires were retrieved. The retrieved questionnaires were collated; analysis using the SPSS statistical software for the descriptive statistics.

Table-1: Name of Institutions of Respondent

Institutions of Respondent	Total questionnaires administered	Percentage (%)	Total questionnaires Retrieved	Percentage (%)
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi (ATBU)	200	40.00	171	38.69
Nasarawa State University, Keffi. (NSUK)	160	32.00	144	32.58
Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto. (SSCOE)	140	28.00	127	28.73
Total	500	100	442	100

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 1

From the above distribution, two hundred (200) or 40.00% questionnaires were administered to Muslim students at ATBU but (171) or 38.69% were returned. At the Nasarawa State University, Keffi one hundred and Sixty (160) or 32.00% questionnaires were administered but (144) or 32.58% were retrieved while one hundred and forty (140) or 28.00% questionnaire were administered at SSCOE, Sokoto, but (137) or 28.73% were returned. This implies that the responses of the Muslim students from ATBU dominate these findings. This is because of the location of the institution in a predominantly Muslim State of Bauchi though Sokoto State has larger percentage of Muslim compared with Bauchi but the population of College of Education is lower compared to the University. Similarly, Nasarawa State University Keffi also has sizeable population of Muslim student partly due to its location in a heterogeneous State where there is a mixture of people of different faith.

Table-2: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18- 24	126	28.50
25- 31	175	39.60
32 – 40	109	24.67
40 and Above	32	7.23
Total	442	100

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 2

The table above shows that the ages of the majority of the students of the Higher Institutions of Learning under study range from 25 –31 which is (165) or 41.25% while the lowest is (24) or 6.00% from 38 and above. It could be deduced from the above distribution significant proportion of the respondents are young people which further established that the use of social media is more common among young people below the age of 30. The high number of students below 30 years in the Nigerian tertiary institutions can attributed to the policy of one year mandatory national service under National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) which stipulates that any Degree graduate above 30 years is exempted from the scheme; though those exempted are given exemption certificate but it affect exempted at the job market where most employers require not more than 27-30 years for first degree holders.

Table-3: Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	258	58.38
Female	184	41.62
Total	442	100

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 3

      The table above shows that (258) or 58.38% of respondents were males while (184) or 41.62% were females. This implies that the majority of students in the higher institutions of learning sampled were male. Male preference over male in most Muslims families accounts for the male dominance over female in the tertiary institutions in Northern Nigeria. In this region of Nigeria, most Muslims parents prefer to give out their daughters to marriage immediately they finished Secondary or High School. Based on Islamic teachings or cultural belief and fear of wayward behaviour that result in premarital sex, pregnant out of wedlock and contracting sexually transmitted infections by the girls, only small proportion of parents allowed their daughters to further their education beyond secondary school.

Table-4: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	324	73.30
Married	103	23.30
Divorced	13	2.94
Widow	2	0.45
Total	**442**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 4

      According to the table above, the highest number of respondents (324) or 73.30% were single while the lowest percentage numbers (2) or 0.45% are widow. This is attributable to the fact that most of the students proceeded to Higher Institutions of Learning from post primary institutions through Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) are single. It can be deciphered from the above table that most of the Muslim student in tertiary institutions sampled are single this is because majority of them are male which tend to deferred marriage until after graduation and gainfully employed.

Table-5: Means of accessing Social Media by Muslim Students' under the study

Means of accessing Social Media	Frequency	Percentage (%)
iPad/Laptop	25	5.65
iPad	32	7.23
Smart Phone	218	49.32
Laptop/ Smart Phone	72	16.29
iPad/ Smart Phone	18	4.08
Smart Phone/ Ordinary Phone	77	17.42
Total	442	100

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 5

      The above table shows that (25) or 5.65% of the respondents owned iPad/Laptop while (32) or 7.23% of the students uses iPad. (218) or 49.32% of the respondents had smartphone. (72) 16.29% of the students are using Laptop/Smartphone while (18) or 4.08% of the respondents owned iPad/ smartphone. (77) or 17.42% uses smartphone/ordinary phone. This indicates that the most commonly used communicating device by students under study is the smartphone. This could be attributed to the growing awareness about social media among students.

Table-6: Use of Internet

Use of internet	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	442	100
No	-	-
Total	**442**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 6

      From the table, above, (442) or 100% of the respondents do have access to the internet. This shows thatmajority of the Muslim Students of the Higher Institutions of Learning under study have access to the internet. The widespread use of internet among students can attributed to the availability of wireless connectivity enabled by wireless fidelity (wiffi) and cable connected computers in almost the tertiary institutions. In the same vein, the proliferation of smart phones and its possession by most of the student has further eased the use of social media among Muslim student which they can purchase internet bundle at cheap amount of money.

Table-7: Usage of Specific Social Media by Muslim Students

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
WhatsApp	272	22.19
Facebook	316	25.78
Salamworld	30	2.44
Twitter	167	13.62
MySpace	34	2.78
YouTube	48	3.91
Instagram	61	4.98
Imo	88	7.18
Muslim Social	41	3.34
We Chat	76	6.20
Signal	23	1.88
Ummaland	70	5.70
Total	**1226**	**100**

Note: the total frequency is more than the total number of respondents because the respondents were asked to tick as many options as appropriates.
Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 7

From the table, above it can be observed that (272) or 22.19% the respondents know how to manipulate Facebook while (272) or 25.78% of the students know how to use WhatsApp. (30) or 2.44% do navigate Salamworld while (167) or 13.62% use Twitter. (34) or 2.78% have an accounton MySpace and (48) or 3.91% can manipulate YouTube. (61) or 4.98% of the respondents have experience on how to use Instagram while (88) or 7.18% of the students use imo. (41) 3.34% uses Muslim Social while (76) or 6.20% the respondents know how to use We Chat. (23) or 1.88% of the respondents navigate through Signal and (70) or 5.70% the students know how to surf Ummaland. This indicates that majority of the Muslim students frequently connect to Facebook and WhatsApp.

Table-8: Motive for connecting to Social Media by Muslim Students

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Chatting, Proselytizing Islam and World News	129	29.19
Entertainment and Proselytizing Islam	62	14.02
Proselytizing Islam	69	15.61
Learning Materials/Chatting	32	7.23
Entertainment	24	5.42
Chatting	49	11.09
Sports and World News	77	17.42
Total	442	100

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 8

The above table shows that (129) or 29.19% of the respondents connect to social media for the purpose of Chatting, Proselytization of Islam and World News while (62) or 14.02% navigate it for Entertainment and Proselytization of Islam. (69) or 15.61% of the respondents do join social media for Proselytizing Islam while (32) or 7.23% connect to social media for Learning Materials/Chatting. (24) or 5.42% do utilize the social media for entertainments. (49) or 11.09% utilized it for chatting, while (77) or 17.42% do used it for Sports and World News. This implies the most important reasons for connecting to Social Media by the group under study were learning new things or ideas, Proselytizing Islam and the sharing of new ideas.

Table-9: The Social Media Platforms that spread Islam according to the Muslim Students under the study

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	73	16.51
Ummaland	37	8.38
Muslim Social	41	9.28
WhatsApp	78	17.64
YouTube	34	7.70
Twitter	30	6.79
Signal	24	5.42
Muslim Social and Facebook	14	3.17
Salamworld	18	4.07
WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter	44	9.95
Twitter and YouTube	23	5.20
Facebook, and Ummaland	26	5.89
Total	**442**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 9

The above table shows that (73) or 16.51% of the respondents indicated that Facebook are used in the proselytizing Islam. (37) or 8.38% indicated Ummaland as the social media platform that can be used in proselytizing Islam. (41) or 9.28% of the respondents indicated MuslimSocial. (78) or 17.64% of the respondents indicates that WhatsApp are used in proselytizing Islam. (34) or 7.70% of the respondents indicated that YouTube are utilised in proselytizing Islam while (30) or 6.79% of the respondents indicated Twitter. (24) or 5.42% of the respondents indicates Signal while (14) or 3.17% indicated Muslim Social and Facebook. (18) or 4.07% of the respondents indicated Salamworld while (44) 9.95% indicated WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter as the social media platforms that are use in proselytizing Islam by Muslim students. (23) or 5.20% of the respondents indicated Twitter and YouTube as social media platforms that spread the teachings of Islam. (26) or 5.89% of the respondents indicated Facebook, and Ummaland. This shows that majority of the students under study are aware that Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, Muslim Social, Twitter and Ummaland as social media platforms that are utilized by Muslim students in proselytizing Islam and its true teachings.

Table-10: How to utilize Social Media to Proselytizing Islam

Response	Frequency	Percentage %)
Calling people to the true Teachings of Islam	39	7.25
Protecting and Portraying the image of Islam and Muslims on Social Media Platforms	78	17.25
Discussing issues related to Islam and its Teachings during chatting	67	15.50
Spreading Islamic knowledge on Social Media Platforms	61	15.25
Posting the character and manners of the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)	46	10.25
Creating group for Proselytizing Islam	62	12.50
Posting and sharing the contents of the Qur'an and Hadith	41	10.25
Posting and sharing the Messages of Islam	48	11.75
Total	**442**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 10

The above table shows that (39) or 8.82% of the respondents indicated that Calling people to the true Teachings of Islam is one of the ways to use Social Media in the spread of Islam while (78) or 17.64% indicates that Protecting and Portraying the image of Islam and Muslims on Social Media Platforms is another means of spreading Islam on social media platforms. (67) or 15.15% indicated Discussing issues related to Islam and its Teachings during chatting while (61) or 13.80% indicated that one of the ways of proselytizing Islam is by sharing Islamic knowledge on social media platforms. (46) or 10.40% indicated posting the character and manners of the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) while (62) or 14.02% indicates Creating group for Proselytizing Islam. (41) 9.28% shows that posting and sharing the contents of the Qur'an and Hadith is another way of proselytizing Islam through social media platforms and (48) or 10.85% indicates that one of the ways to use social media for proselytizing Islam is by Posting and sharing the Messages of Islam on the platforms.

Table-11: Pages on Social Media Platforms for Muslims to like that proselytize the Teachings of Islam according to Muslim Students

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
About Islam	58	14.75
MimbarinMalamai	97	21.75
Focus on Islam	78	18.25
Darul Fikr	39	4.75
Learn Arabic and Qur'an	37	9.25
Muslim Central	20	5.75
ZaurenFiqhu	45	8.75
MajalisinAhalus- Sunnah	46	11.00
Glorious Qur'an, A Complete code of Life	22	5.75
Total	**442**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2017.

Discussion on Table 11

According to the above table, (58) or 13.12% of the respondents indicates About Islam while (97) or 21.94% of the respondents indicated Mimbarin Malamai. (78) or 17.64% indicated Focus on Islam. (39) or 8.82% of the respondents indicates Darul Fikr, (37) or 8.38% of the respondents indicated Learn Arabic and Qur'an while (20) or 4.52% indicates Muslim Central as one of the pages that proselytize the teachings of Islam. (45) or 10.19% of the respondents indicated Zauren Fiqhu as one of the pages, (46) or

---

10.40% indicates to the *Majalisin Ahalus- Sunnah* while (22) or 4.98% of the respondents indicated Glorious Qur'an, A Complete code of Life. This indicates that Muslim students are aware of the pages on social media platforms that proselytize the teachings of Islam.

Discussion of Major Findings

The study assessed the use of social media by Muslim students in tertiary institutions of learning in Northern Nigeria to proselytize Islam. The findings are believed to be representative of the Muslim Students in higher institutions of learning in Northern Nigeria. The study found out that most of the Muslim students in the tertiary institutions are male below the age of 30. It has further discovered that most of the students are single and possessed Smartphone; which provided them with the opportunity to navigate the social media platforms due to the availability of internet connectivity provided by the institutions or data bundle purchased by the students.

The findings also established social media, its knowledge and used to proselytize Islam among the respondents for the study was relatively high. It could be deduced from study that the high level of social media users among Muslim Students was aided by the proliferation of Smartphone and internet connectivity in virtually all tertiary institutions of learning in the sampled areas. Related to the above, the findings revealed that majority of the Muslim students gained access to social media sites with the use of Smartphone. It also indicated that 99% of the Muslim students have access to the internet which enables them to surf and login into social media platforms. In the same vein, the findings portrayed that majority of the Muslim Students have accounts with WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter hence revealed the level of usage and utilization of social media by Muslim students sampled who were mostly young and unmarried hence have avalanche of time and resources to spend on the internet and social media platforms.

Furthermore, the research found out that significant majority of the respondents preferred chatting and proselytizing Islam and World News on social media platforms more than other information sites. However, the findings also indicated that significant proportion of the Muslim students are aware of the social media sites that spread the teachings of Islam like Facebook, WhatsApp, Ummaland, Muslim Social, Twitter and Signal. Additionally, the study established that large percentage of the Muslim students surfed and navigated the social media sites to educate Muslims and non-Muslims about the true teachings of Islam through creating groups for proselytizing Islam, posting and sharing the messages of Islam, spreading Islamic knowledge on Facebook and WhatsApp, Posting the character and manners of the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), posting and sharing the contents of the Qur'an and Hadith and protecting and portraying the image of Islam and Muslims on social media platforms. This has greatly educated the public about Islam and significantly reduced the stereotype against Islam and Muslim. More so, the study shows that the pages that proselytize the teachings of Islam were created Muslim students suggested to fellow Muslim students within and outside the campus like; MimbarinMalamai, Focus on Islam, Darul Fikr, Zauren Fiqhu, Majalisin Ahalus- Sunnah, Glorious Qur'an, A Complete code of Life and Muslim Central. The pages became the reliable sources of information regarding anything Islamic and platform for listening and sharing sermons, preaching and lectures free of charge.

CONCLUSION

Social media has provided an avenue for virtual and real-time chatting, sharing and posting of messages and information which the Muslim students in the tertiary institutions diverted from platform of discussing, chatting and positing of worldly affairs to Islamic affairs. The open platform provided by the social media for open discussions occurred when students that have passion for Islam and the need to educate the public through the use of social media with the objective of Proselytizing Islam more than behind-the-doors, controlled one-way transmissions where only elite, professionally-created content exists and used before the emergence of social media. However, this should not negate the importance of real world activism which is also a vital and necessary component of making a cyber-movement successful.

In sum, it is safe to conclude that as the world shifts towards the new media in the age of globalisation, specifically social media, from the tightly controlled traditional mass media. It is drawn from the findings that the introduction and emergence of social media has changed the nature and forms of communication and dissemination of Islamic messages and information. This is because the social media allows better grounds for the proselytizing of the true message of Islam. Therefore, findings showed highly encouraging efforts by the Muslim students to form educative groups in order to proselytize the unaltered and authentic teachings and practices of Islam, at the same avoid misusing the media at the expenses of their religions.

However, as the Muslim students are using the social media for the proselytization of Islam, there are social media which non-Muslim used to creates pages with Islamic inscription, spreading misguided messages and information that creates confusion and divisions among the Muslim. In the same vein, there are numerous social media platforms that are devoted to attack Islam and criticize the basic tenets of the religion as revealed to Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Islamic centres, institutes and organizations should also develop and sustain ways of using social media to proselytize Islam and Islamic teachings.

- Muslim students should also emphasis to one another the importance of creating *Da'wah* groups on social media platforms for effective Proselytizing of the true teachings of Islam.
- Conferences and seminars should be organized to address the best means and technical aspects/ mechanisms to adopt in the use of social media platforms in proselytizing Islam among Muslim Students in the Nigerian Universities and Muslim *Ummah* in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

1. Tricia Escobedo. (2017). "The world's fastest growing religion? Islam," last modified March 17, 2017. http://edition.cnn.com/2017/03/16/world/islam-fastest-growing-religion-trnd/index.html.
2. Bandura, A. (1986). Social foundations of thought and action. *Englewood Cliffs, NJ*, *1986*.
3. Ashitari.(2009)."Social Networks in Islamic perspectives", *Journal of information science,* 12.
4. Boyd, D. M., & Ellison, N. B. (2009). Social networking sites: definition, history and scholarship. *J of Computer-medicated communication*, *19*.
5. Wilson, K., Fornasier, S., & White, K. M. (2010). Psychological predictors of young adults' use of social networking sites. *Cyberpsychology, behavior, and social networking*, *13*(2), 173-177.
6. Shuriye AO. Impacts of New Media Technology on Muslim-Western Relation. 2013.
7. Salem Safy, R., Sadatian, R., Ashraf Rezaei, B. N., Moshirie, Z., & Bani Adam, A. (2009). Evaluation of Urmia Medical University Faculty member views about research obstacles. *The Journal of Urmia Nursing and Midwifery Faculty*, *7*(3), 142-151.
8. Lee, C., Bobko, P., Christopher Earley, P., & Locke, E. A. (1991). An empirical analysis of a goal setting questionnaire. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *12*(6), 467-482.
9. Lane, Jefferson. (2009). Social Networks Media in Academia, journal of Information Science, *2*.
10. Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, *53*(1), 59-68.
11. Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business horizons*, *54*(3), 241-251.
12. Drury, G. (2008). Opinion piece: Social media: Should marketers engage and how can it be done effectively?. *Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice*, *9*(3), 274-277.
13. Dykeman, D. (2008). How do you define social media? Broadcasting Brain.
14. Buhari, S. R., Ahmad, G. I., & HadiAshara, B. (2014, April). Use of Social media among students of Nigerian Polytechnic. In *International Conference on Communication, Media, Technology and Design* (pp. 24-26).
15. Sharaf, G. M., Musa, M. A., & Rahman, A. A. (2012). An Examination of Social Networking Sites Usage among Muslims Student in Islamic Perspectives. *International Journal of Engineering and Advanced Technology (IJEAT)*, *1*(4), 273-278.
16. Mustafa, M.Z., Zulkiple, A., Abdul, Rahim, Zumrah., Roslizawati, Mohd Ramly., Wan., Mohd., Fazrul., Azdi and Zainol Abidin Ahmad. (2013). "Facebook as Social Media Tools among Muslim Youths in Malaysia." *American International Journal of Social Science, 2*, 8(2013): 173- 177.
17. Makarfi, S.M. (1998). "The Value of Science and Technology to Muslims*",* In *Islam and the Development of Science and Technology*, Seminar Series No.1, Edited by Aminu S. Mikailu, Jafaru M. Kaura and Muhammad Tabi'u, Sokoto: Islamic Research Centre.
18. Dauda, A.I. (2012). "The Impact of Information and Communication Technology on Muslim Youths with Particular Reference to Minna, Niger State." M. A Dissertation Department of Islamic Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria.
19. Ibahrine, M. (2014). "Islam and Social Media" In *Encyclopedia of Social Media and Politics*, edited by Harvey, K. 9, 737-739. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452244723.n299.
20. Javeria, Salman. (2011). "Impact of Media and Social Media on Islam and Muslims" The Message International Magazine. http://messageinternational.org/impact-of-media-and-social-media-on-islam-and-muslims/.
21. Nassar, I. A., Hayajneh, J. A., & Almsafir, M. K. (2013). Relation between social network and Da'wah to Islam: A case study on Jordanian students. *International Journal on Islamic Applications in Computer Science and Technology*, *1*(1), 9-18.
22. Gill, R. (2013). The use of social media for constructive discussion in an academic events management unit: An Australian practice-based case study. *European Journal of Academic Research*, *1*(1), 1-12.
23. Kirat, M. (2008). Spreading the message: Public relations and Communication in the life and work of Prophet muhammad (PBUH). *Journal of Global Communication*, *1*(1), 16-35.
24. Khan, M. M. (1995). *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an: In the English Language*.
25. Kurfi, M. H. (2018). *Religion, gender and civil society: the role of a Muslim Women's Association in the evolution of Nigerian society* (Doctoral dissertation, Boston University).
26. Zakir, Naik. (2016). Muslims must use Social Media for Dawah. zakirnaikfansofficial.blogspot.nl/2016/04/muslims-must-use-social-media-for-dawah.html?m=1.
27. Sayyid Muhsin Anwar Jafri. (nd.). (2017). Islamic Proselytizing in the Age of the New Media. Accessed December 16, 2017. Islamicpulse.tv/articles/society/Islamic-Proselytizing-in-the-age-of-the-new-media.
28. Busha, H., Charles. (1978). *Method for Social Science Research*. New York: Macmillan
29. Qari., Muhammad., Asim. (2016). How are you using Social Media this Ramadan? Accessed December 3, 2016.imamsonline.com/blog/how-are-you-using-social-media-this-ramadan/
30. "What were Islam's Proselytizing Methods"?(2008). Last Modified December 31, 2008. www.islamquest.net/en/archive/question/fa4154.