

Does Social Media Enhance Productivity in The Civil Service?

A Case Study of Chipata City Council.

(Paper ID: CFP/1560/2020)

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ABSTRACT

Lately in Zambia the government has introduced the presence of the use of new technology by implementing E-governance and ICT's in most government institutions. Social media being part of this technology the government has however not done much in using this media in terms of enhancing the communication in local authorities and citizen participation. The research aimed at investigating if social media can enhance productivity in the civil service specifically the local authorities and to what level. It also identified the benefits that lie ahead for the employees at the local authority (council) and the citizens as a whole.

A local authority (Chipata City Council) was used as a case study for the research and a questionnaire was used for the collection of data. This tool revealed the required information needed by the researcher. In order to collect the relevant information, both primary and secondary sources of data were used. For the analysis of data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Excel was used.

However, in line with the findings of the study which revealed that social media is indeed effective in local authorities as it can increase the levels of communication among employees, it can also create

citizen participation which encourages issues such as transparency and the authority's accountability to its citizens, which will increase the levels of interaction and the authority getting feedback on some matters of concern.

Literature review was included in order to incorporate some works that have been done by other scholars in relation to the research. It revealed that social media can actually enhance the productivity of employees and encouraging citizen participation. Recommendations were given on how this platform can be applied in the public sector.

Keywords: Social media, productivity, civil service.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In recent times the world is changing on a daily basis in terms of technology and means of communication. This can be looked at in terms of how the public sector used to communicate and access information in the early years and how that has changed. New technology has given a rise to a raft of different media, and people have developed a variety of ways to spend their leisure time and digital technologies have enabled new interactive forms of communication, Fridolf (2011).

According to Investorword article (2019), the public sector is, “the part of the economy concerned with providing basic government services. The composition of the public sector varies by country, but in most countries the public sector includes such services as the police, military, public roads, public transit, primary education and healthcare for the poor” this sector looks at the services that are provided by the government to its people. These services include the police, military, public transit, health care and primary education and local authorities.

Previously the only media which were used for communication where Newspapers, Television and radios where all the important information was disseminated. The good part about these media like newspapers, television and radio was that it was easy to access in that most people could easily find them especially those in urban setups. Although they had limited coverage because not all areas have access to newspapers and not all people can afford to own a radio or television set especially in remote rural areas. (Ibid 2019)

So, the government used to make most use of these kind of media as a means of communication to inform or make necessary changes in different public

sector ministries. Moreover, within these ministries’ memos, or notice boards where used to disseminate important notices. Although the public sector might provide services that non-payer cannot be excluded from (such as street lighting), services which benefit all of society rather than just the individual who uses the service (such as public education), and services that encourage equal opportunity.

However, there has been a slight shift in ways in which communication is done in most government public sectors today which is through online/social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest. This is because nowadays most governments are going into what is known as the electronic governance which takes in the use of technology to do most tasks and social media can also enhance that change. Social media to governments and the public has become one of the biggest tools in communication that has brought the whole world to meet in one place.

Just as Kaplan and Haenlein, (2009) state that social media is a group of internet-based applications that build on the technologies of web 2.0 that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content. Communication is done through Social Media by the use of online sites and media. Government ministries have their own websites, which have found it useful to also develop a presence on Web 2.0 websites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and twitter as well.

The web 2.0 was further explained by Alexander and Levine, (2008) who identified two essential features that are instrumental in distinguishing web 2.0 projects from the rest of the web: micro content and social media. The micro content feature enables authors to create small pieces of content, with each piece conveying a primary idea or concept. The pieces are smaller than websites and are meant to be reused in multiple ways and places.

Examples of such pieces can be found in YouTube comments, Picasa images, blog posts and wiki edits which are only few thousand bytes. According to Ministerial statement which was passed in 2018 by the Honorable Minister of Transport and Communication Mr. Mushimba, says that the availability and penetration of e-platforms for business and social interactions has to a great extent, changed and continues to do so, our social attitudes, community values between individuals and also changing our workplaces and workplace interactions.

Now Productivity Enhancement can be achieved on a larger scale in the public sector via social media. Basically, because it, supports the digital transformation that brings more efficiency in serving citizens, Mushimba, (2018). This implies that Facebook, twitter etc. are means of accomplishing productivity through the internet. These platforms have made easy access to not just connecting close people (friends, relatives) globally but also to bring public sector employees close to their employer which is the government, updates on the whole world in terms of news can at least reach people within the shortest period of time. Social networking sites can increase the levels of employee performance and satisfaction when used wisely and efficiently.

Aguzenya and Ahmad, (2012). It has also helped in building a good relationship and opening up of new opportunities for the growth in the public sector and nation at large. So basically, nowadays it is even an essential need for any public sector to be using social media as it is convenient and less time consuming. Unlike the traditional way of communicating the use of social media can reach a larger targeted population within the shortest possible time. It is even more convenient in instances where there are emergency meeting or conferences which need to take place at short notice, messages can just be posted on one site

which each employee has access to and arrange a conference video meeting where every person can be present regardless of their location.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Zambia is a developing nation and the issues of social media communication are still a new age in public service. This is due to reasons such as some civil servants are still not very conversant with the use of some of the new online media because of time difference, age and failing to adopt to the changes. However, from the few that have adopted to the changes it makes them very unproductive and inefficient in performing the tasks as they spend more time chatting with family and friends instead of doing the job. Yeshambel et al, (2016) said their research showed that 68.4% of employees spent most of their time enhancing personal networks and 86% used hours to visit social networks. That being the case there is also the challenge of accessibility of internet as the whole process depends on it and not all areas in Zambia have good network systems. On social media, information moves very quickly but the question comes in on how credible and reliable the data is and the source where it's coming from. Moreover, it is a question which most of the times remains unanswered. Additionally, there are issues of security of information. Cybercrime is one of the major drawbacks of social media. Where some people's personal accounts have been hacked by the cyber space hackers by using their personal details for their own benefits. In 2008 alone a total of 34 cases have been flagged with over 627 victims. Over K600, 000 has been stolen from victims with the majority of the money being sent outside the country through commercial banks, Mushimba, (2008). Therefore, this research will focus on how social media enhances productivity in civil servants in the Zambian public sector.

1.3 Objectives of the study

General Objective

The main objective of the study is to determine how the use of Social Media can enhance the performance of Civil Servant's levels of productivity.

Specific Objectives

1. To assess employees understanding of social media
2. To determine the depth of the usage of social media at Chipata City Council
3. To assess the knowledge of ICT's in the local authority
4. To identify the benefits and challenges of social media in the local authority

1.4 Research question

1. What is social media?
2. How can social media be useful at Chipata City Council?
3. Do you understand the meaning of ICT?
4. What are the benefits and challenges a government ministry face due to social media?

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Social Media

Social media is defined as websites which allow profile creation and visibility of relationships between users, Boyd and Ellison, (2008). It is further defined by Leonardi et al, (2013) as, web-based platforms allowing workers to, communicate messages with specific co-workers or broadcast messages to everyone in the organisation; explicitly indicate co-workers as communication partners; post, edit and sort text and files; and view the messages, connections, text, and files communicated, posted, edited and sorted by anyone else in the organisation at any time of their choice.

2.2 Social media and Civil service productivity

Social media provides government with innovative ways to facilitate engagement between government and citizens. By its own nature, social media is collaborative and participatory. The coming of social media to this public sector will show a slight increase in workers' productivity as it will reduce on cost and time management. Social media help governments to become more transparent by providing citizens with better service and information access, opening an active communication channel with them, and finally, empowering citizens and making them more involved, Atari, Stewart-Weeks et al, (2011).

Thus, social media bridges the gap between the employer who is the government and the employees who are the actual civil servants in this case by leaving no questions unanswered on their part in terms of how open they are about their activities and services to the people or citizens. It also creates a platform where citizens can freely speak out and access information regarding to them being participative in the growth of the nation.

According to (OECD, 2007), public authorities are increasingly turning to new ways of interacting with citizens to increase their own efficiency and to be more pro-active in their citizen's relations. In this case, social media has been seen to be a very powerful tool in the enhancement of the performance of civil servants in that it creates an environment where employees can engage with each other on different levels regardless of their ranks or status in the sector and in different developmental projects.

Further, it also improves the skills of employees on different levels in different departments in the ministry be it communication skills and other developmental skills. According to, Khan and Swar, (2019), Public sectors around the world are using social media in the day to day activities for different purposes, such as, to disseminate useful information, to foster mass collaboration, and to enforce laws and regulations. The use of social media for civil servants improves the way in which awareness programs are done and how they are transmitted to the citizens who are the people concerned with the activities that affect their day to day lives.

Aside from that social media improves the work delivery of the employees in that certain timely tasks and projects are completed on the estimated period. This platform increases the dissemination of information as it is done at any convenient time and it reaches a targeted number of people who need that particular information.

However, Khasawneh R. (2013) also looked at social media as an important tool in the decision making process by the government as it will know the audience group to target by saying, it is an important issue to consider is that social media tools are new social type of dashboards that aid decision makers in their understanding of how citizens interact with

issues posted on the page and how to react to such measures.

Social media sites used by the civil service

As social media is dominating, civil servants today use different platforms and types of media to communicate and make work more effective.

These platforms that are used are Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, twitter, LinkedIn, blogs just to mention a few. Most employees are sharing their personal lives on social media pages just to find friend. With this trend most civil servants have created communication groups on these platforms to share different ideas be it work related issues, business ideas and other matters that affect them in life generally. WhatsApp groups are the most created ones in work places as it somehow limits their conversation to only the people who are part of the contact lists in their personal phones.

Moreover, this makes it easier for the administration to communicate about meetings that are to be taking place, seminars and workshop via the WhatsApp groups. Plus, the exchange of ideas is done easily without any personal confrontations among people physically and advice can be taken from a large group in the shortest period of time to reach a final decision.

Some portals have also been created for public service ministries in line with their work on Facebook to make it more convenient for the employees and the general public. These pages are created to offer services to the general public at a large scale as it even considers those who are not within the geographical reach. The use of social media can lead to increased transparency and immediacy and make it possible for all the users to participate directly in the process of communication

through the distribution of contents, comments, tagging, Postman (2009).

It simplifies the work as one can send or post whatever matters they have to the page and get the assistance they need without them actually making any travelling plans from wherever they are. Complaints, advice and suggestions are mostly open from the public to be given on this platform.

Social media and governance

Governance basically deals with having control over a certain jurisdiction area with a level of authority which is to be used in handling the decisions and actions that have to be taken in the implementation process. (Mkandawire, 2007; Stocker, 2006) says that, governance is the authority within a particular arrangement that generates order and control with the purpose of determining processes required for decision making and managing actions that are generated by multiple actors. It is also providing a domain through which new methods, systems, structures and processes are explored for supporting continuous information in the delivery of services.

It is important for governments to have a presence on social media sites in order to build a high level of people trust especially if governments use social media to provide citizens with an active information channel to ensure that governments not only listen or monitor the process but also respond. Most government agencies use social media to assist in the way democratic issues can be handled in partnering it with the activities that are conducted on a daily basis. In as much as it is used for the purpose of interaction it can also be used as a change agent in changing the work atmosphere in most offices as motivational topics can be posted to help in inducing a positive behavior among the workers.

Averweg (2011), even went on to local authorities and the use of social media by saying, in some country's municipalities have been updated to use websites even though at times issues come in on the part of upkeep and how to sustain them. Social media, however, seems appropriate to consolidate government websites with social networks in order to accentuate the engagement process with citizens and communities. However, it is very appropriate in many aspects of councils as if social media is used continuously it will totally reduce the dependence and use of all other traditional means of service delivery and communication patterns which used to delay the process of reaching certain targets set. Additionally, the use of websites by municipalities in this day and age is quicker and more effective as online operations are easy to access.

Municipalities will need to accelerate their initiatives towards the rapid growth of social media to avoid to falling behind the technology adoption curve they need to identify how social media channels should be integrated into their existing citizen and community engagement frameworks, (Ibid 2011).

The opinion of the public plays one of the most important roles in the way the policies are formulated and their outcome. Mostly it is through the public cry and demands that government and other organisations are influenced in terms of what decisions to take and implement. For instance, considering the decisions that concern public interest such as on the angle of politics in the society and how it contributes to issues like citizen rallies, the electoral process and the government as a whole.

In the implementation of a strategy for corporate dialogue, as stated by Postman (2009), the use of social media can lead to increased transparency and immediacy and can make it possible for all the users

to participate directly in the process of communication through the contribution of contents, comments, tagging, etc. Halavais, (2009) explains how the users of a participative web platform need to receive specific feedback from the entity in order for both parties to obtain benefits.

It is important to get an overall view of the current status of corporate dialogue between local governments and citizens, assuming that it exists in some form. Public authorities are increasingly turning to new ways of interacting with citizens to increase their own efficiency and to be more proactive in their citizen relations (OECD, 2007).

2.3 E. Governance and ICT

Lately the Zambia government transitioned to move towards the use of electronic systems in government departments. The policy goal is 'to improve public sector management as well as efficient and effective delivery of public goods and services through the implementation of e-government systems. As a first step, national government has mobilised resources to connect MLGH to all the provincial offices and councils in Zambia, (Zambia country profile 2017-18).

Local governments should develop capabilities to assemble resources that support e-government development strategies, and need organizational commitment to management for e-government results in order to clarify the strategy of continuous e-government investment and development Kim, (2009). The e-government sector is very important in a national as it assists in the running of some developmental projects which relate to formulating strategies that will help in the expected good service delivery which is efficient and effective.

The E. governance also gets to cover important components such as the e-participation, e-administration and e-services.

E-participation

However, e-participation can encourage a more conducive environment where the government and the citizens can interact more frequently without physical meetings on different matters that affect them by engaging citizens in dialogues that will help in coming up with very feasible solutions to the problems that are being faced.

E-administration

On the part of e-administration the public sector can also improve on levels of how things are handled on different government levels. This can be on issues that have to deal with how administrators are accountable on the projects that are being done and also how honest they are in performing their duties. Additionally, this is an advantage to the public sector as it will improve the public investment in ICT in order to strengthen the transparency and accountability of public bodies, both at a national and local level, in the way they function. This component is often linked to the reform of public administration and to modernization of the state, (Ibid 2010).

In this case even the questions that citizens have on how the public sector administrators' function can be clearly seen as the expected feedback is being given to the citizens on time and per their expectations.

E-services

Public investment in ICT in order to strengthen the effectiveness and transparency of public institutions in the way in which they provide public services in all sectors, (Ibid 2010). This can be seen in the way public service workers actually provide services to the citizens in terms of how effective they are. With

the introduction of e-services less workload is needed in provision of a service to the clients as this service makes them to be faster and efficient unlike the traditional old systems which were used before.

2.4 Benefits of social media to the public sector

Social media has a lot of benefits to the public sector of many nations where some of the benefits are mentioned below according to Swar et al, (2014). Social connectivity and involvement: This actually help the public sector to maintain a certain level of relationship with the government and its citizens. It also gives a positive picture to the citizens and other organisations if the government can have good mutual understanding with its public service workers as it builds a certain level of trust in their work. Online platforms also enable participants to exchange advice, information, and support through interactions promoting social support, Drentea (2005).

The other benefit is information attainment: Information is easily obtained via social media on various topics of interest the sector needs. In the public sector it makes it easier for interactions and receiving important information, which can also lead to the quick responses and feedbacks depending on the matter in question between the citizens, public service workers and the government. In the public sector, social media act as a medium to receive vital information on various contexts from citizens, which can be difficult to obtain, Swar, (2014).

To add on, it is very cost effective in terms of time and money. This is the sense that it cuts off the need for costly movements as the information can still be passed on in a much faster and easier channel. It also cuts on costs of using other forms of electronic and print media as one can access information by just clicking on certain page icons.

It can actually bring about changes in the work environment through online collaborations across board that is in terms of the government and how it formulates its policies and how the implementation process is done and how the other public sector departments plus the citizen's participation in the process of change.

By its own nature, social media is collaborative and participatory. It provides a platform for citizens to form human networks by connecting and forming communities of interests, sharing information, achieving common goals and ultimately engaging government (Bertot, Jaeger and Hansen (2011); Bryer (2011); Landsbergen ,2010).

Social media also serves as a public relations and education tool, allowing government employees to inform residents about programs and services Newman, (2009). Moreover, some agencies use social networking sites to provide better customer service to residents, increase government transparency and accountability, link users to the agency's main webpage, and release job announcements Bertot et.al, (2010).

Challenges of Social Media

The first challenge in social media communication comes in with the issues of trust which cannot at times be guaranteed by the social media operators. There is fear in most governments where they are not guaranteed that their services may not reach the targeted group of civil servants. Very often it has been seen that most of the people who have opened accounts in social networking sites does not reveal their true identity leading to fake personal information and misleading people, Baruah T. (2012).

However, the other challenge is that of network failure. If the network providers in a country have not

upgraded their internet accessibility there is always a huge problem in terms of accessing social media. This is because one cannot be able to track the civil servants who are in need of the information if there is no internet connection available and no feedback can be given from both sides.

Additionally, there is also congestion or traffic on the internet, so this can delay or frustrate other users to access some pages on the sites

However, those factors above which would encourage genuine citizen participation in decision-making through the technical tools put in place by governments or even civil society itself are not fully instituted and developed. Citizen participation, although a reality, is still in its infancy and exists on a small scale. The countries of this region face immense challenges and competing priorities: poverty, lack of infrastructure, poor access to health care, etc. It is therefore essential to emphasize the crucial importance of establishing innovative participation channels and citizen-centric policies for the global effort to promote human development. (Ibid, 2009)

Infrastructure is one of the necessities of accessing information on the social networks. One has to have a smart phone with Internet connectivity to function. This presents a big challenge in communities where the daily concern is about where to find the next meal. Lack of such infrastructure widens the digital divide between those who have and those who do not have.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of study

This study was conducted at the Chipata City Council Offices in Chipata district of eastern province.

3.2 Research design

The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. Considering this research focus which is on does social media enhance productivity in the civil service, specifically the local authorities which are councils the researcher took both the qualitative and quantitative approach of collecting and analyzing data.

3.3 Sample size

The sample size constituted about 50 respondents of both gender, male and female at the Ministry of Local government, this is because of the nature of the work the ministry does, which cross cuts among all ministries and is a true reflection and representation of all citizens in the country.

3.4 Targeted Population

The targeted population included, male and female employees at the Chipata City Council offices. These where employees in all the different departments that are found at the Chipata City Council

3.5 Data collection methods and tools

In this study, the researcher used the questionnaires to collect data from Chipata City Council.

Data management and analysis

The collected data was analysed and presented in graphical forms of charts and tables, using data analysis tools such Statistical Package for Social

Sciences (SPSS) and excel. Data collected was entered for analysis and data sets formation.

3.6 Sampling Technique

Sampling techniques provide a range of methods that enables one to reduce the amount of data one need to collect by considering only data from a sub-group rather than all possible cases or elements. The sampling technique that was applied in this research is triangulation.

3.7 Ethical consideration

Before the interview the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents and confidentiality of the information provided was assured.

The researcher got consent from the person to be interviewed and applied the issues of privacy. The consent forms enabled the researcher to seek permission from the district administrative officer to provide the researcher with the required information. The researcher was ethical in conducting the research properly and legally.

CHAPTER FOUR– FINDINGS

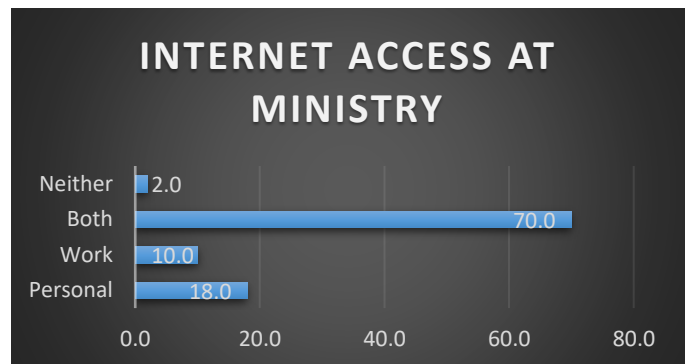
Table 1 showing meaning of social media

What is social media and give examples		
SOCIAL MEDIA		PERCENTAGE
	It is a platform where information is circulated. E.g WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram	38%
	It is where people interact via internet. E.g WhatsApp, Facebook, Viber, Wechat, Tango, Facetime	34%
	It is media found online. E.g Facebook, WhatsApp, Facetime, LinkedIn	26%
	No idea	2%

Source: Field data

The table shows responses on how the majority understood social media, (38%) said social media is a platform where information is circulated. E.g. WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram, (34%) it is where people interact via internet. E.g. WhatsApp, Facebook, Viber, we chat, tango, Facetime and (26%) said it is a media found online. E.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, Facetime, LinkedIn and (2%) said no idea.

Figure 1, showing internet access at the ministry

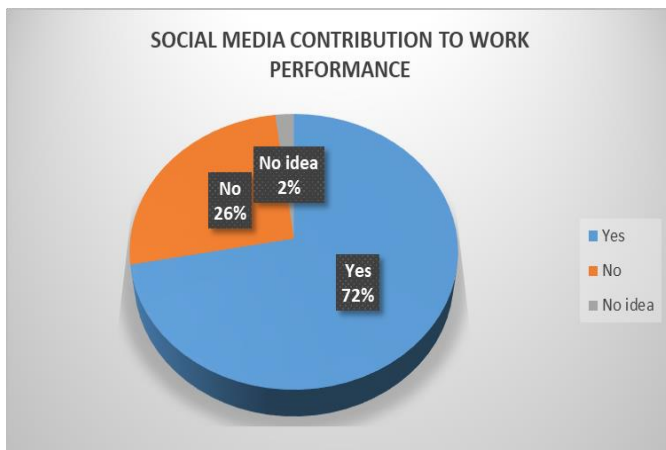


Source: Field data

On the access to the internet at the ministry level respondents were in four groups where some said they accessed internet only at a personal level, work level others said both work and personal and neither of the earlier mentioned which means no access at all. Those who said personal only were (18%), work only (10%), both work and personal (70%) and the least was (2%) who said neither work nor personal internet.

Figure 2, showing social media contribution to work performance

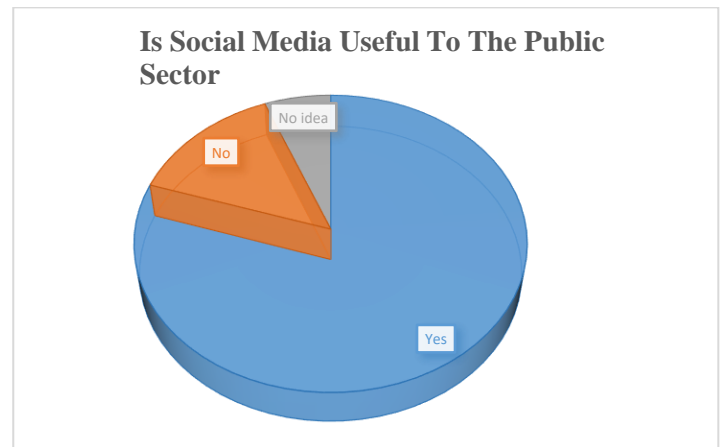
When asked the question if social media enhances the performance of civil servants at the Council offices, the respondents gave the following responses.



Source: Field data

On the contribution of social media to work performance 3 responses were given by the respondents in terms of Yes, No and No idea. In this case (26%) said No, (2%) No idea and the rest (72%) said yes which basically means it does contribute to work performance.

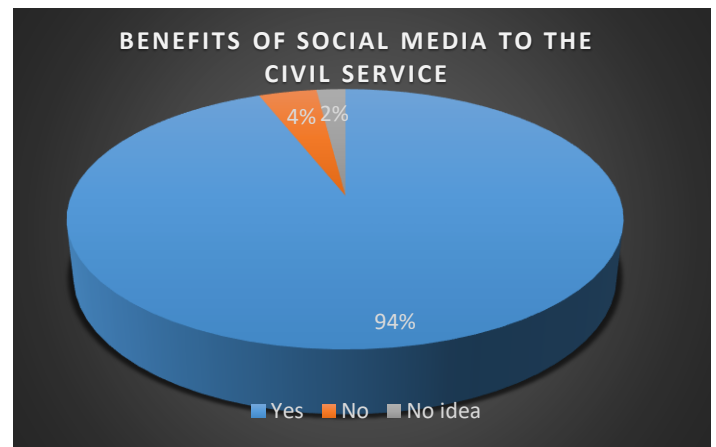
Figure 3, showing if social media is useful



Source: Field data

Respondents gave the following responses to if social media is useful to the public sector, (6%) said no idea, (14%) No and (80%) said Yes, meaning it is very useful to the public sector.

Figure 4, showing benefits of social media to the civil servants



Source: Field data

This chart depicts benefits of social media to the civil service and respondents gave the following responses, (2%) No idea, (4%) No and the remaining which was 94% said Yes.

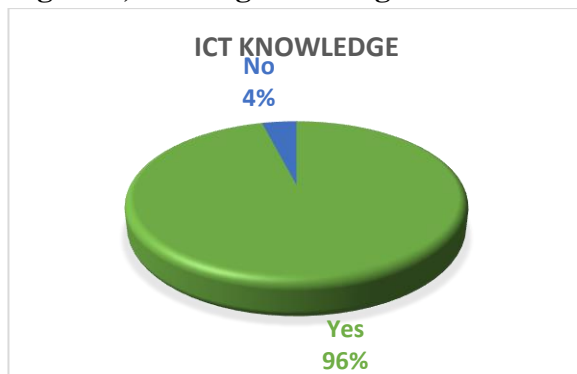
Table 2 Showing, what is the best way of using social media platforms

The best way of using social media platforms in Zambia	Percentage
Through sensitization programs	20%
Giving awareness and educating the public on matters of concern	24%
Workshops and seminars	14%
Emergencies as the news will run faster	2%
Office meetings and announcements	18%
No idea	4%

Source: Field data

The table above shows some of the responses that were given by respondents in terms of the best way of using social media platforms in Zambia. Respondents who said through sensitization programs were 20%, 24% said giving awareness and educating the public on matters of concern, those who said it can be best used for workshops and seminars were 14%, 2% said for the purposes of as the news will be delivered faster, others said it is best used for office meetings and announcements then lastly 4% said they had no idea on how best this media can be used in Zambia.

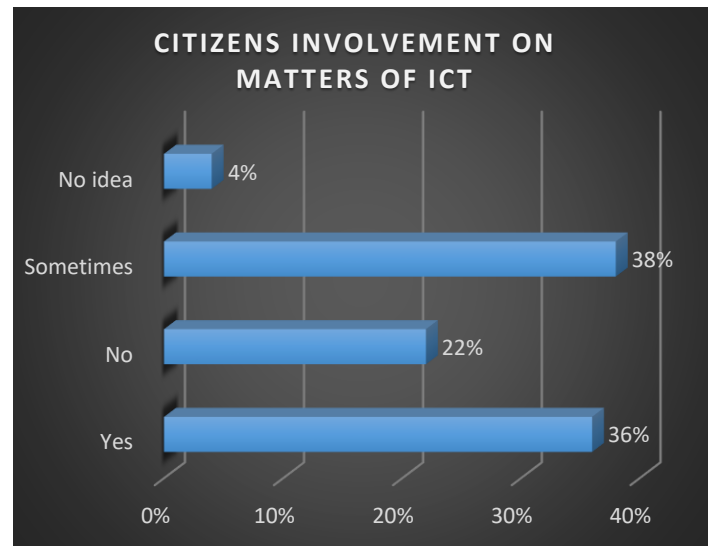
Figure 5, showing knowledge of ICT



Source: Field data

On account of the respondent's knowledge to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), (4%) said No they not know what ICT is and the rest 48 which is 96% said they have knowledge on what ICT is all about.

Figure 6, showing citizens involvement on matters of ICT



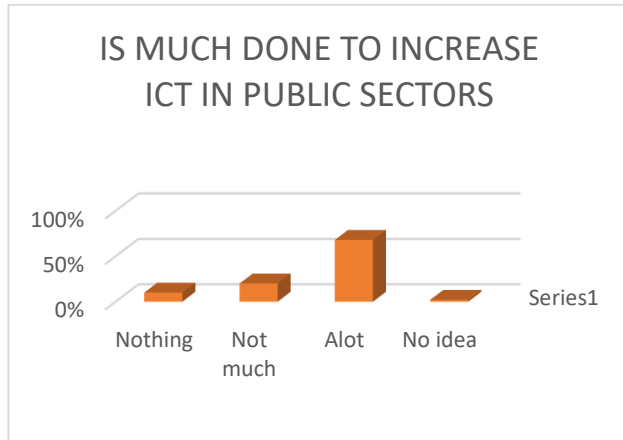
Source: Field data

Furthermore, another question was asked considering if the citizens or the general public is involved or consulted in any of the changes that are made to the ICT sector. The respondents gave their responses were some said yes, others no and the rest fall in the group which said sometimes and no idea. For those who said Yes were 36%, No 22% and the highest number was for those who said that sometimes they citizens are consulted and sometimes they are not which leads to the least number of 4% of those who had no idea.

Figure 7, showing how much is done to increase the use of social media in the public sector

From the chart below is showing how respondents view if much is done in the public sector to increase the use of ICT. The responses were given

accordingly in the following percentages, those who said nothing is done to increase it where 10%



Source: Field data

then those who also said not much is being done where 20% and the highest percentage was 68% as it was for those who responded that a lot has been done of late to increase ICT access in public sectors, lastly only 2% said they had no idea to whether much or nothing was done.

CHAPTER FIVE - DISCUSSION

Section 1

5.1.1 Assessing social media

Table 1, shows the responses to the question of the meaning of social media where answers were given in different ways but then only analysed the most common responses. From the responses received 38% said, It is a platform where information is circulated via Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram then 34% said It is where people interact via the internet e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, we chat and tango and last but not least 25% said It is media found online e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp and twitter. This can be also be seen in the literature where Leonardi et al, (2013) says, social media are web-based platforms allowing workers to, communicate messages with specific co-workers or broadcast messages to everyone in the organisation; explicitly indicate co-workers as communication partners; post, edit and sort text and files; and view the messages, connections, text, and files communicated, posted, edited and sorted by anyone else in the organisation at any time of their choice.

This is evidence that shows that at least 98% of the employees found at Chipata City Council understand what social media is because they were able to give the meaning which is very clear and understandable to the researcher.

Moreover, social media in this context can be used for many purposes which can also assist in effectively supporting the employee's communication from the individual perspective up to the authority's level. As social media is the widely used platform of communication these days different information can be transferred and shared with from one employee to the other and also from one office to the other without any person having to move and

carry the documents that are required by a fellow employee or the top management employees.

Social media provides a platform for establishment of such networks and when used effectively supports the establishment of sustainable relationships between government and citizens (Heidemann, Klier, Probst, 2013; Haron & Din, 2012)

Additionally, from these findings which show that a majority understand what social media is all about it leads us to answering the other question which is if they are able to access the same social media. As this platform will only depend on them having some kind of access to the internet which makes it possible to connect and be connected to the rest of the world.

5.2 Section 2

5.2.1 Benefits of social media

Considering the (Figure 4) that depicts objective number 4 which looks benefits of social media to the local authority (Chipata City Council) where 94% of respondents said yes. This can be used an open opportunity for the council to do business with the public.

Moreover, councils may be allowed to enter into contracts which may assist them in the discharging of its functions to the general public. So long a person entering into a contract with a council shall not be bound to inquire whether the standing orders of the council which apply to the contract have been complied with, and all contracts entered into by a council, if otherwise valid, shall have full force and effect notwithstanding that the standing orders applicable thereto have not been complied with, states the Act. This can be a good opportunity for the local councils (Chipata City Council) to do business and other projects with not only the local people but even other investors who see potential in certain areas which need development. So social media will

open up some dormant platforms which have been used in the past years as a means of rating increase in terms developmental growth.

Social media has other benefits such increasing the communication cycle among the employees in that interactions will not be done among those who know each other on a personal level but also with those who are part of the work environment who are in the different departments at different levels. Regarding this, even sharing of ideas will be done easily especially when one is not very clear on how to handle certain matters that people may present to the office. He/ she can just use this social platform by asking from those who may have an idea of handling such issues without the complainants noticing that the person has less knowledge about what they have brought to the office.

This can also take the evidence of (Table 2), which shows that 24% said social media can be used for awareness and educating the public on matters of concern, so this can be seen and applied in the sense whereas councils are also the ones in charge of collecting taxes such ground rates even though they work hand in hand with the lands department, owner's rates, business permits rates, social media can play role in making the taxes readily available for the public to see and know when and how much to pay depending on the locational area of that particular individual or company.

Moreover, when funds are from these taxes as it the one used for improving and developing public infrastructure such as markets, roads, street lights etc. In big cities their even involved in the keeping the environment clean. Social media can be the best platform to hear other innovative ideas and suggestions that citizens can have on how to improve their local areas and which projects can be more beneficial to people in the grassroots.

According to the (Review on the local authorities 2016), Chipata Council had an establishment of three hundred and ten (310) positions out of which one hundred and fifty-five (155) were filled and one hundred and fifty-five (155) were vacant as at 31st December 2017. Out of the one hundred and fifty-five (155) vacant positions, some were key to the smooth running of the organisation such as Director of Valuation, Chief Building Inspector and Information Technology Manager, among others. This can be observed already as a challenge in the running of other duties as some vacancies were for very vital positions.

Considering the above scenario it is very possible that even today some seats are not occupied so looking at this technology can play a role in finding people who are suitable for certain positions, if online media can be used in this case for the general public to be made aware that certain skills are lacking at the council it will have a huge pool of talent to select from. As this pool will have different age groups of which some of them have great ideas on how to effectively run some projects due to experience in other fields and the like. In an instance were within the ministry or local authorities no one was qualified enough to pick the role of information technology manager, social media can be used by let's say creating a Facebook page where all vacancies that are available at council offices can be posted so as to attract the right people from different sectors to apply for the job when they have the required qualifications needed. Moreover, this can reduce on costs of printing out adverts on paper and posting them on public notice boards around town.

5.3 Section 3

5.3.1 Knowledge on ICT in the local authority

On account of the respondent's knowledge to Information and Communication Technology (ICT),

figure 5 shows, (4%) said No they do not know what ICT is and the rest which is 96% said they have knowledge on what ICT is all about. From these findings it can be seen that most people are aware of what ICT is all about, as mainly ICT deals with some technology and it also helps in the way communication is being done.

Social media such as Facebook could be a measure by which to assess the ability of citizens to participate in the process of selecting their leaders for elected offices. Moreover, it could also be used to examine the freedom of association and expression enjoyed by the same citizens in mechanisms of universal suffrage that culminate in the election of officials, Afutu-Kotey (2017).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the researcher collected the different responses which were given by the employees of Chipata City Council on, does social media enhances productivity in the civil service. From the revealed findings the study showed that some employees at Chipata City Council understood what social media is and the introduction of E-governance and ICT use in most government sectors, while others had no idea of what it meant. If social media use can be utilized to its fullest it can somehow lessen the dependency of other media such as print media, radio and television when disseminating information. Recently, there has been a rise in most countries in the use of social media use by the government in public sectors.

In the coming future, social media will allow the local authorities in performing different tasks starting from improving the dissemination of relevant information to fellow employees. It will also help in the delivery of services to the citizens as it will encourage participation in important developmental matters which affect them as people in the grassroots.

The adoption of social platforms/tools shows that it enhances the way work will be done at the local authorities as most things will be moving quicker and unnecessary movements and costs can be reduced, it will also assist in catching a large crowd as most people use smart phones in today's age.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research carried out on does social media enhance productivity of civil servants, the researcher(s) made the following recommendations were made;

- The government must ensure that keen interest is taken by all civil servants at the ministry of local government (council offices) in implementing the use of social media.
- Policy guidelines and ethics must be created to make sure that the media platforms are used specifically for work related matters.
- The government must continue in developing the Information and Communication technology sector by providing more IT related infrastructure.
- Awareness and sensitization must continue if the development of E. Governance and ICT is to be more effective and efficient in most public sector ministries.
- Social media platforms must be created for the benefit of interaction and idea exchange between the government and the citizens with certain restrictions which will make it open for public forums but less prone to cybercrime and hackers.
- A proper security system must be created where no person from the outside can corrupt the system or hack into the system meaning

specialized IT technicians should be the only people running the system at the ministry.

- Creating very innovative campaigns that will last a taste of time by using social media as it can keep on reappearing even after sometime. This is so because social media has the ability to store information for longer periods of time so this can even be used as the best system of longevity of information. However, certain items can be considered such as providing appropriate explicit local and temporal context of information in order to prevent misleading people into thinking it is currently posted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to thank the almighty God for the blessings showered on me in all the stages in the journey of my task of completing my thesis work.

I stand indebted in gratitude to our beloved, the founder and members of Information and Communication University (ICU) for all the facilities provided at the institution.

Finally, I thank the whole research department and Mr. Kelvin Chibomba for their valuable support to finish this thesis.

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