

The Impact of Ban of Twitter on the Psychomedical and Socioeconomic Life of Young Health Professionals and Trainees in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

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Short Communication

On Friday the 4th of June 2021 the Nigeria minister of information Hon. Lai Mohammed announced an indefinite ban of the micro-blogging app "Twitter" from the Nigerian internet space [1]. This directive was almost immediately carried out within 24 hours by mobile phone companies in the country [2]. Although the government has its reservations and reasons for such action, it has a lot of potentially harmful prognosis on the lives of the average Nigerian. This paper aims to communicate some of these short comings' health workers will face. Firstly, twitter has served as a coping mechanism for healthcare workers. As the Nigerian healthcare worker is almost always over worked and burnt-out, having a medium to intermittently clear the mind is almost the only consolation some get. This is not synonymous to social media addiction, as it rather has a positive correlation with work burnout, but an intermittent stress relieves medium [3]. Twitter has been that medium. As health workers often come online during their

leisure time to jokingly lament about their stressful days and get consolations and cheers from fellow (often distant) colleagues on the app. Who in turn share their own tale? Thus, creating a seemingly round table conversation with stressed peers.

Furthermore, as upcoming trainees and young health professionals, there are a lot of uncertainties and mysteries still faced in the profession. This challenge had been solved by senior, more experienced and more diverse colleagues helping juniors in the profession with professional and patient centered managerial advises. Senior colleagues such as Dr. Ojay Femi, Dr. Peter Atang (FirstDoctor), Dr. Fidelis Egemba (Aproko Doctor), Dr. Chioma Nwakanma Akanno (Dr. Zobo), Dr. Nma Halliday, Dr. Dr. Henry Njeakor (Osheguy) and many others were always very prompt on this end. Moreover, twitter had also provided a means for non-certified but validated up-to-date Continued Medical Education (CME), which is a requirement in medical practice. As the field

of medicine is a bulky and ever changing one. Researchers in the field often also uploaded summaries and links to their works on the application for other colleagues to access; (Cand-Pharm) Melody Okereke (Cand-Med) Progress Agbola, (Cand-Med) Daniel Otobo, MLS. Gabriel Oke, Pharm. Adebisi Yusuf and many others were popular for this. Although the healthcare profession boasts of repute, the financial doggedness of a lot of her young professionals is appalling. While tagging handles of those who are either responsible or can help alleviate the situation, twitter has served as an extended protest ground of unfair treatment by government, security agents, unpaid salaries and unfair salary cuts of young healthcare professionals. Due to poor funding and health insurance plans for healthcare staff and trainees, they are often financially incapable of affording good health services for themselves in some emergency, chronic or severe medical conditions. Thanks to twitter, it has served as a medium to publicly appeal and beg for the medical and even educational funds via a "Go-Fund Me" appeal. Also, twitter has acted as a voice against oppression in the medical field. Oppression from senior colleagues and agitated family members of patients, amongst others.

Finally, a community. It is unarguable that healthcare personnel have a community on twitter. This is called "Med twitter". It is an indiscriminatory space of both young and old, senior and junior colleagues on the app. Where we interact, learn, joke and exchange ideas. One of the most invaluable and priceless advantages of

this space is the ability to communicate and learn about new national and foreign opportunities like scholarships, Masters, Ph. D openings, tips on foreign and home examination. With ever willing informal mentors to show you how to successfully achieve them. While twitter may be a mere social media application to some, to Nigerians it was way more. It was a voice, solace and a community, with a milieu for everyone. Healthcare workers are not excluded.

Recommendation

The twitter ban should be lifted.

Conflict of Interest

The Authors declare no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgement

We will like to acknowledge the role of our dear colleagues who always make twitter a relatable solace and point of continuous medical education.

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