



Adoption and Use of Social Media Influencers for the Promotion of Face-Mask Campaigns during COVID-19 Pandemic in South-West, Nigeria

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Abstract

The use of face masks during COVID-19 was widely promoted on the conventional media of communication such as radio, television and newspaper. The use of social media for face mask campaigns was largely neglected during COVID-19. However, studies are unclear about how social media influencers affect the intention of their followers to embrace the use of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic. This study investigated the adoption and use of social media influencers for the promotion of face-mask campaigns during covid-19 pandemic in south-western Nigeria. The study adopts a mixed research method with the aid of structured questionnaire and in-depth interview to collect data from the respondents. Findings showed that socio-economic status is a major factor in the adoption of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic. Findings equally showed that credibility of the social media influencers informed their followers' adoption of face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic and findings showed that barriers inherent in the adoption of masks among people are the religious, cultural beliefs and poor attitude to health issues. Thus, it is recommended that Local Government Areas deemed to be closer to the people should take the issues of social investments and empowerments very seriously. An association of social media influencers and a regulatory body must be established to regulate their online activities of the social media influencers in our society. Also, enlightenment programmes must be initiated by online and offline media to educate people about the embracement of health campaigns initiated on social media. In spite of the seeming distrust of social media messages, some of the anchors on social media still enjoy some level of credibility.

Keywords: Social Media, Influencers, Face Mask Campaigns, COVID-19, Pandemic

1.0 Introduction

Social media influencers are also known as internet celebrities. Social media has presented a new health promotional strategy where health workers, policy makers and governments form alliance with social media influencers to effect certain health behavioural or attitudinal changes (Guinez-Cabrera et al., 2020). Social media influencers are the opinion leaders of modern society, especially among millennials. They influence their followers in so many ways (Castro, 2023). Using social media influencers has become part of health promotion strategies to reach target audience in order to persuade them to embrace certain health behavioural or attitudinal change in most societies of developing nations. Social media influencers initiate and maintain a set of communication skills for building and managing trust between themselves and their followers (Castro, 2023). Social media influencers are young people who have achieved enormous followership, popularity, and influence due to their constant online presence on

global social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter (Castro, 2023). Social media influencers are capable to influence the attitudes, opinions, views, behaviour, and perceptions of their massive followers (Castro, 2023). Health promotion messages spread by social media influencers reach both the intended and unintended target prospects on social media. At the turn of the millennium, the health sectors across the globe have witnessed the rise in the use of social media influencers to promote health messages across the world (Cox and Paoli, 2023). Social media influencers are able to partner health professionals and policy makers to reach young members of the public because of the pervasive nature of social media (Alam et al., 2024). The perceived credibility and trust of social media influencers by their followers determine the adoption or rejection of health-related messages propagated by the SMIs. Compared to health promotional strategies on conventional media of mass communication, social media influencers are more reliable and effective in influencing the attitudes and behaviour of target audience for which health campaigns are meant (Liu and Zheng, 2024).

Although, people can choose to wear or not wear face mask during COVID-19 pandemic, studies have shown that face masks, to a large extent, has curtailed the spread of COVID-19 pandemic (Yin and Lee, 2024). Post-pandemic era has even witnessed the surge in the use of face masks to prevent respiratory diseases among health-conscious people. Available information on the adoption and use of face masks as influenced by social media influencers is lacking in South West, Nigeria. Although, social media influencers affect the behaviour and attitude of their followers towards a certain action, studies are unclear about how social media influencers affect the intention of their followers to embrace the use of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic (Roldan-Gallego et al., 2023). The modern health education campaigns have witnessed the use of social media influencers in collaboration with the mainstream media to enlighten young people about certain health issues such as COVID-19, HIV/AIDS, Ebola among others. In spite of the declining in the issues of coronavirus, airports, public places and many government facilities still require the use of face masks (Zhang et al., 2024).

The adoption of social media influencers to promote the use of face-masks during pandemics has not caught the attention, and therefore, remain understudied. Literature is very scanty about the adoption of SMIs as a means of promoting the use of face-masks during COVID-19 pandemics. This calls for empirical and systematic investigations.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. understand ways by which social media influencers affect intention to embrace the use of face masks among people in South West;
2. know the factors that account for the adoption of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic in South West;
3. know how social media celebrities' personality traits influence the adoption of face masks campaigns among people in South West,
4. ascertain ways in which online followers of social media influencers emulate their behaviours; and
5. ascertain the barriers that exist in the adoption of social media influencers for the promotion of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic in South West.

2.0 Literature Review

Face mask is a personal protective mechanism against the spread of the virus from the infected persons to healthy individuals. The use of face masks as a barrier to infection of coronavirus is still very important in spite of the reduction in the menace of the disease globally.

2.1 Conceptual Review

COVID-19 Pandemics

COVID-19 has continued to ravage the world in spite of the availability of vaccines, social distance and the use of face masks to end the pandemic and keep the lives of the citizens (Mokeddem et al., 2024). To prevent the spread of coronavirus, the World Health Organisation (WHO) suggested the use of face masks to curtail the spread of the virus (Zhang et al., 2024). COVID-19 has resulted in the death of 6.9 million people globally and 772 Coronavirus worldwide (Zhang et al., 2024). The estimated users of face masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Africa are about 7 million people, while they were about 2.2 million users during COVID-19 in Asia (Amin et al., 2024). People were forced to wear face masks during COVID-19 pandemic in South-Western Nigeria to prevent the spread of the virus. One of ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus in the crowded areas is the use of face masks. Face masks are inexpensive but are effective in the prevention of the spread of coronavirus (Tomina et al., 2024). Respiratory droplets such as coughs, sneezes, talks are expelled from mouths, and noses. Respiratory droplets are a route for the transmission of contagious diseases. However, face masks serve as a barrier that impedes the contagion of COVID-19 virus in the process of inhaling and exhaling (Goncalves and Weon, 2024). The improper and long use of face masks can reduce their effectiveness against coronavirus. Regular replacement of face masks is very important, but challenging in poor homes and communities (Kim et al., 2024). Social media influencers lead many online subjects or citizens, and can affect their health behaviour.

Social Media Influencers and Face Mask Campaigns

A contemporary issue in the public health sector is the potential of social media influencers to effect certain health behavioural change among people (Powell and Pring, 2024). There is an increased level of health recommendations and advisories offered by social media influencers on different social media platforms (Pfender and Bleakley, 2024). Social media influencers are good endorsers of the use of face-masks during COVID-19 pandemics (Yildirim, 2021). Social media influencers are divided into five types: idols, lifestylers, artists, activists and experts. Idols are highly popular social media influencers and their main focus is on themselves. Lifestylers are social media influencers who hold discussions about lifestyles such as leisure activities, beauty, health, tourism and cooking. Artists, as social media influencers, use their artistic knowledge to create artifacts. Activists, as social media influencers, present their interpretations of diverse issue bordering on social justice, feminism, human rights among others. Experts, as social media influencers, hold certain skills of a particular field and demonstrate their knowledge to enlighten others on social media (Cho et al., 2022). The important roles of social media influencers became more evident during COVID-19 pandemic. Social media influencers can affect how people perceive health issues by sharing videos, posts and other forms of content on social media platforms. The importance of social relationships and interactions for people's well-being, especially during restriction of movement cannot be far to seek (Levesque et al., 2023). Social media influencers filled in the vacuum of physical interactions during COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on social learning theory. Social learning theory assumes that individuals learn by way of observing others and modelling their behaviours (Mangal et al., 2024). The theory is propounded by Bandura in 1977. The main assumptions of the theory are that individuals are inclined to learn and adopt the behaviours and attitudes of their role models by emulating their behaviours, dresses and even manner of speaking. Role models, in this context, are the social media influencers and celebrities, who, because they command a large followership, influence the behaviour, attitudes and thoughts of their followers. Surfers of internet and users of social media are persuaded to embrace the use of face-masks to prevent the spread of the contagious coronavirus through modelling inspirational behaviour (Awaale, 2024). As social learning theory assumes, imitative conduct is learnt and adopted through the observation of significant role models such as social media influencers and internet celebrities (Tashiha, 2024). social learning theory is helpful; in the explanations and understanding several imitative behaviours such as dressing like one's social media influencers, plaiting one's hair like that of one's social media role models and even talking like one's social media preferred celebrities (Tasbiha, 2024).

Social learning theory is relevant to this study in diverse ways. The use and the online talks about face-masks by social media influencers and celebrities influenced their followers to embrace the use of face masks. While COVID-19 lasted, many social media influencers encouraged and talked their followers into adopting the use of face masks to curtail the spread of the contagious coronavirus. While many followers adopted the use of face masks because their social media influencers were using it, others were persuaded before they started its use.

2.3 Empirical Review

Kim and Kim (2022), examined the relationships between social media influencers' attributes and perceived social responsibilities of the e-influencers among Consumers in USA. The study obtained and analysed data from 388 social media users in the United States through Amazon's Mechanical Turk with multivariate analyses to test the hypothesized associations among the variables in this research work. The findings showed that perceived friendship was most importantly affected by language similarity, as well as self-disclosure, but it did not have a significant effect on psychological well-being of the people. Also, perceived friendship was majorly impacted by psychological well-being and loyalty, and psychological well-being was apparently impacted by loyalty. The gap identified was a lopsidedness of data collected from the social media influencers and data collected from the consumers in this study.

Essa *et al.* (2021) conducted a study on face masks, the use of respirators, social distancing and personal hygiene in the course of the coronavirus pandemics in Iraq. The authors found that certified face masks and respirators, their compositions and filtration mechanisms should be made known to prevent confusion and misinformation about coronavirus pandemics. The gap inherent in the study is that no targeted segment of human population was mention. Also, the use of media of communication for enlightenment campaigns about coronavirus was missing.

Cheng *et al.* (2020) examined the effect of community-wide mask usage to control coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Interview was used to collect data from patients presenting with respiratory symptoms at outpatient clinics or hospital wards were screened for COVID-19 per protocol. The findings indicates that incidence of COVID-19 in Honk Kong was significantly lower in Hong Kong than in Spain, Italy and the UK. The gaps identified was that Africa was not included in the study.

3.0 Materials and Methods

The study adopts a mixed research method with the aid of structured questionnaire and in-depth interview to collect data from the respondents. Survey method is popularly used to test and examine the opinions, attitudes, behaviour, views and attitudes of a group of individuals on a subject-matter of investigation. Survey design, as Ali et al., (2022) averred, is best used to gain information about a large number of people and measure public attitudes and behaviour in a large population. In-depth interview attempts to foster knowledge about individual experiences and views on an issue under investigation (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

Sampling Techniques

The South-Western geo-political zone of Nigeria has six different states: Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Lagos, Ekiti and Ondo States. Each of the six states has urban-urban, rural-urban and rural-rural areas. Thus, a multi-stage sampling was used to select samples for the study. A multi-stage sampling was adopted to divide the south-west geo-political zone into six states. A multi-stage sampling allows researchers to collect samples from the clusters until the selection of random sample of subjects is accomplished.

Using a purposive sampling, the state capital of each of the six states was selected for the study. A purposive sampling is used because of its features that are relevant to the study. The state capital of each of the six states was selected because it is home to most social media influencers in south-western Nigeria. Thus, Ibadan in Oyo State, Abeokuta in Ogun State, Ado-Ekiti in Ekiti State, Osogbo in Osun State, Ikeja in Lagos State, Akure in Ondo State were selected. The six state capitals were chosen because social media influencers in those state capitals had knowledge of face-mask campaigns and promotion during COVID-19 pandemic in south-western Nigeria. with the use of purposive sampling, researchers further selected areas that have the concentration of widely exposed and enlightened individuals who are able to express their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, views and knowledge about the use of social media influencers for the face masks campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic in south-western Nigeria. As a result, Ikeja was selected in Lagos, Agbowo was selected in Ibadan, Nelson Mandela Freedom Park was selected in Osogbo, Adebayo Area was selected in Ado-Ekiti, Asero Area was selected in Abeokuta and Alagbaka Area was selected in Akure metropolis. In-depth interview was used to harvest the opinions and views of the social media influencers on their use for face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic in the south-western Nigeria. Since it is hardly possible to meet social media influencers face-to-face for the in-depth interview session, convenience sampling was used to select the in-depth interview participants. Since it is impossible to interview all the social media influencers in the six capitals of the south west, two most prominent social media influencers were selected in each of the states of the south west. They were selected on the basis of their knowledge about campaigns for the use of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, one Lagos-based TikTok influencer and one Lagos-based Facebook influencer were selected in Lagos State, one Ibadan-based TikTok influencer and one Ibadan-based Facebook influencer were selected in Oyo State, one Osun-based TikTok influencer and one Osun-based Facebook influencer were selected in Osun State, one Akure-based TikTok influencer and one Akure-based Facebook influencer were selected in Ondo State, one Ado-Ekiti-based TikTok influencer and one Ado-Ekiti-based Facebook influencer were selected in Ekiti State, while one Abeokuta-based TikTok influencer and one Abeokuta-based Facebook influencer were selected in Ogun State. Through in-depth interview guides, structured interviews were forwarded to the personal emails and Whatsapp platforms of the selected social media influencers.

2006 Projected Population of the State Capitals in the South-West of Nigeria

States	Projected Populations of their State Capitals	Sample Size
Ekiti (Ado-Ekiti)	308,621	
Osun (Osogbo)	156,694	
Ondo (Akure)	360,268	
Ogun (Abeokuta)	449,088	
Lagos (Ikeja L.G.A)	313,196	
Ibadan (Ibadan North East L.G.A)	374,772	
Total	1,960,639	Approximately 400

Source: 2006 Population Census

For the in-depth interviews, twelve social media influencers were selected in all the six state capitals in the south west. According to 2006 National Census, the projected population of six state capitals in the South-West geo-political zone of Nigeria stands at 1,960,639. However, for the survey method, using Taro Yamane sample size selection technique, 400 respondents were approximately arrived at. Thus, 400 respondents were selected to fill the copies of the questionnaire. Two social media influencers were selected in each of the states in the south west. On the basis of the differentials in the population of the selected state capitals and the demographic characteristics of the respondents, all of the respondents were purposively selected in various state capitals of the South West geo-political zone of Nigeria. Thus, 80 respondents were selected in Ikeja, Lagos State, 65 respondents were selected in Ibadan Oyo State, 65 respondents were selected in Osogbo, Osun State, 60 respondents were selected in Akure, Ondo State, 60 respondents were selected in Abeokuta, Ogun State, while 60 respondents were selected in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. Out the 400 copies of the questionnaire administered in the six state capitals, 394 copies of the questionnaire were returned and found useful. The respondents in the respective states were selected on the basis of the population of each of the state capitals in the south west. Data collected were analysed using frequency and simple percentage. Data collected through the in-depth interviews were analysed using explanation building and equally analysed thematically in sync with objectives of this study.

Ethical Considerations

The in-depth interview session maintained a high sense of ethical standard and confidentiality because the identities of social media influencers who participated in the in-depth interview session were never disclosed.

4.0 Results and Discussions**Quantitative Data Analysis and Interpretation****Table 1: Knowledge of factors that account for the adoption of face masks**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Socio-Economic Status	171	43.4%
Educational Status	98	24.9%

History of Allergic Diseases	40	10.2%
COVID-19 Vaccination Status	85	21.5%
Total	394	100%

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork, 2025

Table 1 shows that 171 respondents representing 43.4% stated that socio-economic status accounted for their adoption of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic, 98 respondents representing 24.9% affirmed that educational status accounted for their adoption of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic, 40 respondents representing 10.2% averred that history of allergic diseases accounted for their adoption of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic, while 85 respondents representing 21.5% maintained that their COVID-19 vaccination status accounted for their adoption of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2: Understanding of how Social Media Influencers' Personality Traits Influence the Adoption of Face Masks Campaigns

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Affability to the Audience	9	2.3%
Credibility of the Social Media Influencers	251	63.7%
Quality Content Creation	44	11.2%
Appearance of the Social Media Influencers	90	22.8%
Total	394	100%

Source: Researchers' Fieldwork, 2025

Table 2 shows that 9 respondents representing 2.3% averred that affability to the audience informed their adoption of social media influencers' face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic, 251 respondents representing 63.7% affirmed that credibility of the social media influencers informed their adoption of face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic, 44 respondents representing 11.2% stated that quality content creation by social media influencers informed their adoption of face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic, while 90 respondents representing 22.8% maintained that online appearance of social media influencers informed their adoption of face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic.

4.1 In-Depth Interview Reports

Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretations

Theme 1: Ways Social Media Influencers Affect Intention to Embrace the Use of Face Masks

Data from the in-depth interview showed ways by which social media affect intention of the respondents to embrace COVID-19 during pandemic. The discussions revealed that social media influencers are regarded as innovators by their online followers. Providing more insights about a social media influencer based in Lagos State said:

Many of our online followers regard us as innovators that create new ideas for their enlightenment and education. Although, many social media influencers are opinion leaders in

different areas and each can only be an innovator on a particular subject-matter. Like me, I treat issues about health and many women love to listen to me when I discuss issues that border on women and children's health. However, in the COVID-19, my dresses and other discussions online usually bordered on the prevention of the disease. As a matter of fact, I advocate and recommend the use of face masks to people during the time. I usually enlightened my followers that that they can sew their face masks themselves at home because I understood that some people may not be able to afford face masks, especially the one that are expensive. Many of my online followership during my programme also asked questions regarding different kinds of face masks that people use and the convenience in using them. They ask questions mostly in the comment section, and I replied at my convenience because not all messages you can attend to during the programme.

Another in-depth interview participant, who is a social media influencer in Ibadan, said:

Enlightenment discussions whenever I resumed my online programmes have actually made many of my online followers to embrace the use of face masks. As a matter of fact, many of them also commented on the advantages and benefits of the face masks during my live programmes. They usually did this in the comment section. Some of them are nurses, medical doctors and other health workers who also dropped messages that could benefit our online followers in the comment section. Most of the online followers prefer to even source their information from our platform because they believe that unlike radio, television, newspaper, they can express their view regarding the subject-matter of discussion unlike what obtains on radio, television, newspapers and other mass media.

Theme 2: Ways Online Followers of Social Media Influencers Emulate their Behaviours

Data from the in-depth interview showed barriers in the adoption of social media influencers for the promotion of the face masks campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic. The discussions revealed that online followers do not only emulate dress sense of social media influencers because of the credibility attached to the programme, but also embrace enlightenment discussion we make available online. Providing more insights about ways online followers of social media influencers emulate their behaviours, a social media influencer based in Osogbo, Osun State, said:

We got to know that our enlightenment discussions online about COVID-19 pandemic really had impacts on our numerous online followers through their comments and postings, especially after the programme. And the beauty of online programme we do is that all my online followers could always have access to our programmes whenever they come online unlike the messages of other electronic media such as radio and television which are transient. Many of our followers online post the videos of different kinds of face masks their family members used during COVID-19 to prevent the transmission of the disease. In fact, at times, we used to allow phone-in section where our online followers would discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different face masks. Health workers among the callers usually gave a brief lecture about the importance and benefits of face masks for the enlightenment of other online followers.

Another in-depth interview participant, who is a social media influencer in Abeokuta, Ogun State, said:

Most of our online followers are youths. And you know that many of the youths like to behave the way their role models behave. Therefore, most of our female online followers dress the way we did including the use of face masks. Some of them even pass complimentary remarks about my dresses in the comment section. However, due to the fact that government at that time was making the use of face masks compulsory, especially in crowded places, we had no choice but

to also repeatedly urge our online followers to make use of the face masks, especially when they were going to markets, supermarkets, malls and other places that have a concentration of people.

Theme 3: Barriers in the Adoption of Face Masks among people

Data from the in-depth interview showed barriers in the adoption of social media influencers for the promotion of the face masks campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic. The discussions revealed that barriers inherent in the adoption of masks among people are the religious, cultural beliefs and poor attitude health issues. Providing more insights about the barriers inherent in the adoption of face masks among people, a social media influencer based in Akure, Ondo State, said:

As important as the use of face masks was during COVID-19 pandemic, some online commenters maintained that COVID-19 pandemic was never real. Some of our online commenters never believed in the existence of the communicable disease. Some of them usually preached against the use of face masks. Some of the even talked about the use of local medicinal herbs for the cure of COVID-19 in lieu of use preventive mechanism like face masks. Some commenters even said the disease is not peculiar to African continent. They usually claimed that we have hot climate and that they cannot be affected by the communicable disease. Besides, some men seemed not help in the spread of caution messages we made available on our online programmes. Some male adherents of a religious sect never allowed their wives and children to use the face masks.

Another in-depth interview participant, who is a social media influencer in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, said:

Barriers to the use of face masks among people in Ado-Ekiti here are varied. Many of Ekiti towns and villages, apart from those in the state capital here, never get exposed to our online messages because of the agrarian and rural nature of this state. Few individuals who are resident in the state capital had enlightenment messages about the issue of face masks use during COVID-19 pandemic. Other issues that impede the use of face masks among our numerous online followers are the unreasonable religious beliefs among some people. Many of our religious followers do not seem to take precautions about the COVID-19 pandemic, instead, they tended to heap blames on unforeseen evil forces. Besides, some of the online commenters usually prescribed some herbal medicines for the cure of the disease in place of taking to the recommended means of preventing and curing the communicable disease.

5.1 Discussions

Findings showed that socio-economic status is a major factor in the adoption of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic. The findings are in sync with the position of Liu and Zheng (2024) who found that the threats of hunger, poverty and other socio-economic realities have hindered people of developing countries like Nigeria to abandon the prevention of the menace of COVID-19 pandemic to looking for ways to sustain their family members.

Findings showed that credibility of the social media influencers informed their adoption of face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic. The findings are in sync with the position of Liu and Zheng (2024) who found that perceived credibility and trust of social media influencers by their followers determine the adoption or rejection of health-related messages propagated by the SMIs. Compared to health promotional strategies on conventional media of mass communication, social media influencers are more reliable and effective in influencing the attitudes and behaviour of target audience for which health campaigns are meant.

Findings showed that social media influencers are regarded as innovators by their online followers. The findings agree with the position of Johnson (2021) who found that social media influencers have become agents of change on health issues in the developing nations of the world. He further maintained social media have capability to mobilise the young and the old to embrace certain health behaviours.

Findings showed that online followers do not only emulate dress sense of social media influencers because of the credibility attached to their online programme, but also embrace enlightenment discussions we make available online. The findings agree with the position of Aw and Chuah (2021) who found that unprecedented interactivity of social media has enabled the social media influencers to develop close relationships with their online followers. As Aw and Chuah (2021) found, social media influencers do not only influence the behaviour of their online followers but also their followers dress sense, including the use of face masks, especially during COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings showed that barriers inherent in the adoption of masks among people are the religious, cultural beliefs and poor attitude health issues. The findings agree with the position of Littlejohn et al., (2021) who found that cultural and religious barriers are hinderances to the pervasive use of face masks among people during COVID-19 pandemic in South-Western Nigeria. Littlejohn et al., (2021) also note that cultural barriers impose obstacles to a more productive engagement between the social media influencers and their online followers.

5.2 Conclusion and Recommendations

Socio-economic status is a major factor that affects the use of face masks during COVID-19 pandemic. Not many online followers are actually financially empowered to obtain face masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. Developing nations like Nigeria have a lot to do regarding the social empowerment of the downtrodden in developing societies to attain development. Development is not about building bridges and constructing roads, but it is about taking people out penury and make them to be gainfully engaged to earn decent livelihoods. Thus, local government areas deemed to be closer to the people should take the issues of social investments and empowerments very seriously.

The perceived credibility of the social media influencers informed their adoption of face mask campaigns during COVID-19 pandemic. Credibility is an important issue in the operations of online and offline media. Thus, an association of social media influencers and a regulatory body must be established to regulate their online activities of the social media influencers in our society.

Social media influencers are regarded as innovators by their online followers. Since social media influencers command enormous respect among people, especially the youths, governments at all levels must use them to propagate messages about the prevention of COVID-19 disease in their various states and at local government levels.

Online followers do not only emulate dress sense of social media influencers because of the credibility attached to their online programme, but also embrace enlightenment discussions we make available online. Social media influencers are very influential set of people and they create either positive or negative impressions about many issues. Therefore, their online appearance must give credibility to issues they intend to discuss online.

Barriers inherent in the adoption of masks among people are the religious, cultural beliefs and poor attitude health issues. Enlightenment programmes must be mounted by online and offline media to educate people about the embracement of health campaigns mounted on social media.

In spite of the seeming distrust of social media messages, some of the anchors on social media still enjoy some level of credibility.

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