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IT Strategies for Social Media Implementation in Liberian Enterprises

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

The rapid proliferation of social media platforms has globally transformed organizational operations, creating unique opportunities for direct consumer engagement. However, some Liberian organizations face challenges regarding effective social media implementation. Addressing this issue is critical for enabling Liberian businesses to compete internationally and maximize the potential of social media platforms. Grounded in the diffusion of innovations theory, the purpose of this qualitative pragmatic study was to explore effective IT strategies for integrating social media into Liberian enterprises. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, observations, and field notes from eight IT managers in Monrovia who had integrated social media within the past four years. Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis technique, and the following themes emerged: (a) social media literacy and adoption, (b) active and informed social media engagement, and (c) streamlining operations with strategic social media integration. A key recommendation is for IT managers to develop and implement comprehensive social media strategies that address data security, privacy risks, regulatory challenges, and digital literacy concerns within their organizations. The implications for positive social change include the potential for IT managers to enhance organizational cohesion, increase digital engagement, and expand market reach, ultimately contributing to Liberia's economic development by making its enterprises more globally competitive.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study with immense gratitude to my wonderful wife, Maggie, whose unwavering support and understanding have been a cornerstone throughout my educational journey, particularly during my time-consuming doctoral studies. The support of my three children, Abegail, Daniel, and Malia, has been indispensable. I extend my heartfelt thanks for their patience and encouragement, allowing me the necessary time for academic pursuits, even when it meant stepping away from the shared moments of joy and recreation.

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maternal support and encouragement, propelling me forward. Her contributions are deeply appreciated, and I thank her for all she has done to pave the way for my achievements.

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I am profoundly grateful to the participants who generously contributed their time, enriching this study. This achievement would not have been possible without the collective support of everyone mentioned. Lastly, my gratitude goes to Walden University and its dedicated staff, including all the instructors who helped make my dream a reality.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Background of the Problem

In 1847, Liberia declared independence, becoming the first African nation to achieve sovereign state status (Kanagasabai & Ballah, 2022; Mark-Thiesen & Mihatsch, 2022). However, Liberia's journey towards nationhood was fraught with complexities, culminating in the outbreak of its first civil war in 1989 (Young, 2023). This conflict was rooted in decades of governance mismanagement, widespread political and economic marginalization, a disconnect between growth and development, and the growing threat of political militancy, eventually gaining international recognition. The consequences of this civil war included a significant decline in Liberia's economic stability, a sharp reduction in formal sector employment, and a decline in entrepreneurial activities compared with the pre-conflict period (Ikenze, 2016). This protracted socio-economic crisis places Liberia among the nations facing third-world challenges, marked by persistent economic and social issues. As a result, the unemployment rate in Liberia has consistently hovered at an alarming 80% to 85% among the working-age population (Diallo et al., 2023). The post-conflict development path for Liberia, hindered by the lasting effects of a weakened economy, presents a challenging landscape for potential investors. In this intricate scenario, the growth of micro- and small-scale businesses, especially in rural areas, holds promise for economic recovery.

Businesses rely on effective administrative strategies to thrive, often viewed as the driving force behind national economies. Remarkably, the emergence of social media platforms has caused a substantial transformation in this domain. The trend towards

direct consumer engagement, facilitated by bypassing intermediaries, has created a unique market opportunity for businesses and organizations. This trend, driven by the appeal of directly targeting audiences, has gained traction, even among major corporations like Apple, which initially had reservations but later embraced social media marketing as a strategic tool (Akpor et al., 2023). The persistent evolution of this emerging marketing paradigm parallels the transformative disruptions witnessed in the early days of conventional marketing techniques. However, the landscape for African businesses, particularly in Liberia, is characterized by a need for effective social media implementation strategies. This significant gap, limiting Liberia's ability to participate in the global economy, is a pressing concern that deserves careful examination.

Research on social media strategies for organizations has been conducted in various sectors for business and information technology (IT) improvement (Cawcutt et al., 2022; Muninger et al., 2019). Despite the recognized utilization of social media, numerous Liberian organizations still need to harness its potential benefits. Existing literature reveals a noticeable need for better-structured processes tailored to facilitate successful social media adoption by Liberian organizations. Therefore, the primary aim of this study is to review the current IT framework as it relates to social media implementation strategies, emphasizing the crucial alignment between social media objectives and organizational goals. The available literature has yet to delve into IT strategies for implementing social media in Liberian enterprises. This research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the strategies employed by IT managers in implementing social media within Liberian enterprises.

Problem Statement

The current landscape of organizations and business enterprises has undergone a significant transformation due to the pervasive influence of social media, offering unprecedented business opportunities, virtual storefronts, expanded client bases, and global market access (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). However, in Liberia, IT managers need help with a deficiency in IT knowledge and the strategies needed to navigate the evolving landscape of social media technology effectively (Denton, 2020; Diallo et al., 2023). This research addresses the general IT problem of the hindrance faced by Liberian enterprises in fully leveraging IT strategies for implementing social media, impacting their ability to compete in this domain. Specifically, this research focus on the IT problem of the need for IT strategies among IT managers in Liberian enterprises to integrate social media within their organizations effectively. This deficiency in expertise exposes vulnerabilities, results in a lack of focus, and hinders the competitiveness of Liberian organizations and enterprises on the global stage (Mellish, 2016).

Purpose Statement

This pragmatic qualitative study aims to investigate IT strategies for seamlessly integrating social media into Liberian enterprises, with the ultimate goal of achieving competitive parity with organizations worldwide (Borah et al., 2022). This research explores the practical leadership skills and essential considerations for implementing social media as a transformative IT strategy.

The sample size for this study includes eight IT managers from diverse Liberian organizations based in Monrovia, Liberia, who have undertaken social media integration

within the past 4 years. Further implications for positive social change from this study is to identify strategies that IT managers in Liberia can employ to implement social media in their organizations for enhanced communication and overall organizational performance (Ahmadin, 2022; Borah et al., 2022).

Nature of the Study

The choice of research methodology is crucial in addressing the specific IT problem of the need for IT strategies among many IT managers in Liberian enterprises and the need to integrate social media effectively. Three fundamental approaches - qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods - comprise the spectrum of research methodologies. Qualitative research, employed for its capacity to delve into participants' perspectives and experiences (Andipatin et al., 2020; Dalkin et al., 2021), is well-suited for a deeper comprehension of motivations, attitudes, and behaviors (Asenahabi, 2019). Its strength lies in exploring non-numeric data, allowing for an in-depth investigation of themes and patterns (Boumezrag, 2023). On the other hand, quantitative research, commonly used for hypothesis testing and investigating causal relationships (Ahmadin, 2022), was deemed inappropriate for this study, as it did not aim to assess relationships between variables. The mixed-method research approach, which integrates quantitative and qualitative techniques, providing a more comprehensive perspective (Dawadi et al., 2021), was also unsuitable due to misalignment with the research's core purpose of exploring strategies rather than testing theories.

The chosen research methodology for this study is the qualitative method, grounded in its distinctive capacity to probe interpretive phenomena within natural

contexts, enabling researchers to glean insights (Denny & Weckesser, 2022; Diallo et al., 2023). The qualitative method aligns with the study's need to examine the phenomenon comprehensively within its authentic, real-world context. A pragmatic inquiry approach was employed due to its inductive nature, aiming to discern the effectiveness and underlying social media implementation strategies. This approach is reliant on interviews, observations, and field notes, capturing rich information from participants in their natural work environment (Denny & Weckesser, 2022; Lemon & Hayes, 2020) and engaging participants' thoughts about their actions. Given the focus on strategies successful IT managers employ for social media implementation, the pragmatic inquiry design emerged as the most fitting choice.

The phenomenological design, which emphasized delving into lived experiences often presented in a narrative format (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; S. D. Williams, 2023), did not apply to this study, as it does not align with the study's purpose. The narrative design, which reinterprets life stories (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), and the ethnographic design, valuable for observing group patterns and behaviors in natural settings (Zilber, 2020) but impractical due to its time-intensive nature, were also deemed unsuitable for this research. The chosen qualitative approach with a pragmatic inquiry design ensures alignment with the research's objectives, focusing on strategies employed by IT managers for social media implementation in Liberian enterprises.

Research Question

What strategies do IT managers in Liberia employ for implementing social media in their organizations?

Interview Questions

1. Can you describe the specific social media innovations that have been implemented in your organization, and what led to the decision to adopt them?

2. How do IT managers in your organization typically communicate information about social media innovations to stakeholders and other users?

3. In your experience, what communication channels have proven most effective in conveying the benefits and features of social media to employees within the organization?

4. How do IT managers identify and address any resistance or concerns from employees during the initial stages of social media implementation?

5. Can you provide insights into the timeframe it took for your organization to fully integrate social media into its daily operations and processes?

6. What challenges or obstacles were encountered during the implementation of social media, and how were they overcome?

7. From your perspective, how do IT managers measure the success or effectiveness of social media implementation within the organization?

8. In what ways have IT managers adapted or customized social media strategies to suit the specific needs and culture of the organization?

9. How does the organization encourage and facilitate continuous learning and training for employees regarding the use of social media tools and platforms?

10. Could you share examples of positive experiences or success stories related to social media implementation within your organization?

11. How has the diffusion of social media innovations influenced the overall organizational culture and communication patterns within your enterprise?

12. Have there been any instances where the adoption of social media in your organization faced resistance or skepticism from key stakeholders or the broader community?

13. What strategies or initiatives have been implemented to address and overcome challenges related to social system or community acceptance of social media innovations?

14. How has the organization fostered a culture of innovation and openness to change in the context of implementing social media technologies?

15. Can you elaborate on any specific policies or guidelines that have been developed to govern the responsible and secure use of social media within the organization?

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

The conceptual framework that underpins this research for effective integration of social media amongst IT managers in Liberian enterprises is the diffusion of innovation (DOI) theory. This theoretical framework, developed by sociologist and theorist Everett Rogers in 1962, explores the process, product, or service diffusion and its rate of spread within a population (Kim & Park, 2021; Menzli et al., 2022). The DOI framework explains organizational improvement and delineates innovation emergence, persuasion, decision-making, implementation, and reinforcement (Xia et al., 2022; Yan et al., 2023).

The key elements of DOI theory include innovation, information communication within a group, the role of time in the innovation-decision process, and the importance of social structures in solving shared problems (Amini & Javid, 2023; Lampo, 2022). This conceptual model applies to this research, providing insights into an organization's adoption spectrum, the factors influencing decisions, and barriers to adopting technology.

DOI theory serves as a framework for investigating how IT managers in Liberian enterprises formulate strategies for integrating social media within their organizations. This theory mandates the presence of innovative concepts, effective communication channels, a temporal element, and a social structure encompassing formal and informal hierarchical positions and interpersonal relationships (Kim & Park, 2021). Aligning with an organizational environment, DOI theory considers adaptability to innovation, communication dynamics, temporal considerations, and social system structures. By applying DOI theory, this study examines social structures, identifies communication practices, explores innovative ideas, assesses time constraints while integrating social media, and provides a deeper understanding of the strategies employed by IT leaders in Liberian enterprises.

Everett Rogers's DOI theory has found extensive application globally, including in Africa, facilitating the adoption and assimilation of novel technologies. In diverse African contexts, the DOI theory has played a pivotal role in incorporating new technologies within organizations and enterprises, such as mobile money adoption in Kenya (David-West et al., 2022), smart agricultural practices in Ethiopia (Teklu et al., 2023), and the deployment of technologies like solar power in rural communities (Eder et

al., 2015). These applications have allowed organizations to benefit substantially from innovative technologies, utilizing integrated social media to engage with audiences and access previously inaccessible data and information. The application of DOI theory can assist IT leaders in enhancing organizational effectiveness and overall performance by integrating social media technology within their organizations.

Definition of Terms

Coding process: The systematic categorization and labeling of data segments to facilitate analysis and interpretation in qualitative research.

Data interpretation: The process of making sense of collected data by analyzing, synthesizing, and drawing conclusions based on the findings.

Data synthesis: The integration of diverse data sources, perspectives, and findings to generate comprehensive insights and conclusions in research studies.

Diffusion of innovation (DOI): A conceptual framework developed by Everett Rogers in 1962 explains the process by which an innovation or new idea is adopted and spread within a society or organization.

Geographical delimitation: Establishing specific boundaries or limitations related to the geographic location of the study.

IT managers: Individuals responsible for overseeing the planning, implementation, and maintenance of IT systems within an organization.

Member checking: A validation technique where participants review and confirm the accuracy of transcribed data or interpretations to ensure data credibility and trustworthiness.

NVivo: A qualitative data analysis software used to organize, code, and analyze large volumes of unstructured data for research purposes.

Organizational performance: The measure of how well an organization achieves its objectives and goals.

Qualitative data analysis: A methodical process of examining and interpreting non-numerical data, such as text, images, or videos, to identify patterns, themes, and insights.

Resistance: Refers to opposition or reluctance from individuals within an organization towards adopting new technologies or changes, such as social media implementation.

ROI (return on investment): A measure of the profitability or efficiency of an investment, typically expressed as a percentage of the initial investment.

Social change: The process by which society undergoes significant alterations in its culture, structure, institutions, and norms.

Social media innovations: Refers to new technologies, platforms, or strategies implemented in organizations to enhance communication, collaboration, and engagement through social media channels.

Thematic elements: Core ideas or recurring patterns identified in qualitative data that contribute to understanding the research topic or question.

Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations

Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations are crucial for developing professional literature and peer-reviewed academic research. These elements provide

essential guidelines that researchers must consider when conducting studies. This study identifies four critical assumptions aligned with its purpose and research question. Additionally, there were three clear limitations that warrant attention throughout the research process. Furthermore, there are four deliberate delimitations that uphold the credibility and reliability of this study.

Assumptions

Assumptions within qualitative research imply unexamined beliefs or notions that a researcher accepts as accurate without conscious realization (Ali Rahman & Omar Shiddike, 2020). An assumption is a belief or notion regarded as accurate or unquestioned until the evidence suggests otherwise (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Sebele-Mpofu, 2020). In this study, interviews were conducted with participants, emphasizing their comfort as a top priority throughout the interview procedure. Three specific assumptions were established in the context of the IT problem:

1. It is assumed that IT managers in this study occupy key positions in medium-to-large organizations, with the presumption that these organizations enable users to access departmental resources using the organization's devices.

2. Participants were expected to respond honestly and precisely to the best of their abilities.

3. Participants were presumed to comprehend and accurately interpret the semi-structured questions during the face-to-face interviews.

4. It is presupposed that a thorough exploration of existing literature precede the analytical phase, thereby addressing the IT challenge of developing effective strategies for integrating social media.

Limitations

Limitations include uncontrollable restrictions or deficiencies that may influence the outcome of the research effort (Sharma et al., 2023). These limitations may manifest as potential flaws or challenges in various dimensions, including the scope of the study and the accuracy of participants' recollections (Akanle et al., 2020).

1. The first limitation of this study was the geographical location of the interviews. While the researcher is based in the United States, the study's participants are in Monrovia, Liberia. Consequently, thoughtful arrangements must be made to facilitate in-person meetings with the participants. Alternatively, seeking approval from Walden University and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to use the Zoom application for remote participant interviews was considered.

2. The second significant limitation revolves around the constraints imposed by IT leaders' experiences and knowledge regarding implementing social media strategies within their respective organizations.

3. Third, the need for more comprehensive supporting documentation of established processes of social media usage within these organizations presents an additional challenge. This limitation signifies a potential gap in the depth of insights obtained from this study.

4. It is essential to acknowledge that some participants may hesitate to disclose specific details about their organizations, possibly because of confidentiality concerns or other reasons. This hesitancy poses a potential obstacle to understanding social media practices within these organizations, particularly in the absence of readily accessible documentation.

5. The research has the limitation of a relatively small sample size, introducing constraints that deserve careful consideration. It is crucial to recognize that this limited sample size might only partially represent part of Liberia's small business or organizational population, potentially impacting the generalizability of the study's findings concerning the IT problem.

Delimitations

Delimitations serve as defined boundaries strategically imposed by researchers to ensure the focus and scope of the study. These delimitations constitute elements within the research subject of the researcher's control and direction (Akanle et al., 2020; J. L. Johnson et al., 2020). Specific delimitations to delineate the parameters and contours of this research indicate that it adopts a pragmatic approach meticulously delimited to a singular geographical locale, namely, Monrovia, Liberia. The study exclusively targets organizations in Monrovia, Liberia, with established social media infrastructure, aligning with the research's core objectives and geographical constraints.

Secondly, the selection criteria for interview participants required eight IT leaders to meet a specific threshold, ensuring the study's robustness and comprehensiveness.

Additionally, all recruited participants had at least five years of relevant experience, ensuring a depth of insight and expertise aligned with the study's objectives.

Finally, in alignment with the research's focal point on the strategic aspects of social media implementation, the targeted participant group comprises individuals with substantial experience who hold responsibilities for executing social media projects following approval from the organizational board. These delineations provide clarity and structure for the research and contribute to the precision and relevance of the findings within the specified context.

Significance of the Study

The widespread use of social media is expected to grow globally, prompting extensive research on the factors influencing its adoption (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2023). However, these investigations have primarily focused on the individual perspective, potentially overlooking the crucial organizational dimension (Beyens et al., 2020; Coyne et al., 2020). Anticipated technological advancements empower contemporary organizations to surpass the limitations of physical boundaries and extend the digital landscape beyond traditional territorial limits. Integrating social media within organizational frameworks is anticipated to enhance efficacy, raise awareness, foster community engagement, and facilitate fundraising efforts (Albanna et al., 2022).

Unfortunately, the persistent need for well-defined social media implementation strategies among IT managers in Liberia exposes their organizations to vulnerability, hindering their competitiveness in critical domains. Consequently, this study aims to fill this noticeable gap in the literature by comprehensively exploring IT managers' current

strategies for implementing social media in Liberian enterprises. This research can potentially guide IT managers, organizations, and enterprises by providing robust and effective IT practices and practical strategies for implementing social media in Liberian organizations. Furthermore, the outcomes of this study contributes to positive social change by empowering Liberian enterprises to enhance their competitiveness, engage more effectively with their communities, foster economic growth through improved IT strategies and practices, and foster economic growth through improved IT strategies and practices.

Contribution to Information Technology Practice

This study explores successful social media implementation strategies, augments organizational efficacy, enhances awareness, fosters community engagement, and improves financial outcomes. The significance of social media lies in its ability to provide valuable data useful in making business decisions. The findings of this research contribute to the field of IT by pinpointing strategies that could prove instrumental in aiding IT managers in seamlessly integrating social media within their organizations. One noteworthy benefit of this study is its capacity to scrutinize the impact of effective social media implementation on organizational performance, encompassing enhanced efficacy, heightened awareness, improved community engagement, and improved financial outcomes. From the perspective of organizational leadership, the significance of social media resides in its ability to provide pertinent information and valuable insights for the organizational adaptation of social media strategies.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for social change in this research lie in the study's potential to catalyze a transformative shift in how Liberian enterprises harness the power of social media for organizational growth and community engagement. By identifying effective IT strategies, organizations and businesses can leverage social media platforms to reach a wider audience, enhance customer interactions, and foster a more interconnected business ecosystem. This can stimulate economic development, empower local entrepreneurs, and contribute to Liberia's overall prosperity.

Moreover, the outcomes of this study can pave the way for social change by promoting digital literacy and technological empowerment among IT managers in Liberian enterprises. As organizations adopt advanced IT strategies for social media implementation, there is a natural demand for skilled professionals well-versed in these technologies. This creates an opportunity for education and training programs to equip the local workforce with the necessary skills, thereby reducing the digital divide and fostering a more inclusive society. Ultimately, this research would catalyze not only technological advancements in organizational practices but also as a driver for social progress, where access to digital tools becomes a means of empowerment and economic inclusion for the broader population in Liberia.

Transition and Summary

Section 1 introduced the IT problem within Liberian enterprises. IT issues comprise the challenges or strategies IT leaders in Liberian enterprises face when implementing social media in their organizations. This section included the background

of the problem, the problem statement, the purpose statement, the nature of the study, the research question, the interview questions, the conceptual framework, the operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study, the significance of the study, an introduction of the chosen framework with the research questions that guide the research, and a literature review.

Section 2 introduces the literature review, which offers a stark revelation of Liberian IT leaders' limitations when harnessing IT strategies for implementing social media within their organizations. A comprehensive analysis of the DOI framework in the Liberian context underscores a sobering reality and outlines organizational improvement (Menzli et al., 2022). This explains how innovation emerges, the process of persuading others to view technology as favorable or unfavorable, the decision-making stage in adopting or rejecting an innovation, the practical application of a phenomenon during the implementation phase, and the confirmation or validation of these events (Xia et al., 2022; Yan et al., 2023).

Although the DOI framework has been invaluable for understanding the adoption and diffusion of social media technologies in Liberia, the findings highlight a series of formidable hurdles that impede its full realization. Key findings from this review unmask the intricate interplay of technological innovation, organizational dynamics, and environmental influences that mold the adoption process. Crucially, it also unveils the formidable challenges that IT managers in Liberia grapple with when embarking on social media strategies, chief among them being the profound resource limitations and stifling infrastructure constraints that hamper their endeavors.

Section 2: A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The Application of the IT Problem

Social media remains integral to contemporary global communication and business operations, and Liberia is no exception. Liberia, a West African country, has experienced a rapid transformation in various sectors owing to the proliferation of social media platforms and technologies (Anderson, 2023). This transformation is particularly evident in Liberian enterprises, where businesses increasingly turn to social media to drive innovation and enhance their strategic endeavors. The adoption and implementation of social media in Liberian enterprises have become increasingly important, and IT leaders within Liberian organizations have successfully implemented social media technologies (Baytak, 2023; Bhatt, 2018). This challenge often concerns limited internet infrastructure, data security, lack of digital latency, limited resources, political and regulatory challenges, and infrastructure challenges. There is a rising concern regarding data security in managing data in Liberian organizations, posing a significant threat to data and information (Mensah et al., 2021).

Additionally, Liberian news media has faced regulatory changes restricting the type of content they can share on social media (Akua & Twum, 2021). Adapting to these changes while maintaining a robust online presence can be complex for IT managers. Thus, IT leaders venturing into integrating social media technologies may encounter heightened security risks and challenges.

Understanding the dynamics of social media implementation in Liberia is multifaceted. First, it provides insights into local businesses' unique challenges and

opportunities when integrating social media into their strategies. In an era marked by digital disruption, such insights can help Liberian enterprises remain competitive, expand their reach, and adapt to an evolving business landscape (Doe, 2021). Second, the study of social media adoption in Liberia contributes to the broader discourse on information and communication technologies in African countries, offering a case that enriches the existing literature on the subject (Adae et al., 2023). Finally, considering the potential social and economic impact, this study has implications for IT managers, policymakers, business leaders, and academics. Understanding the diffusion and consequences of social media in Liberia enables stakeholders to make informed decisions regarding regulatory frameworks, resource allocation, and strategic planning (Abbas et al., 2019).

Navigating this intricate landscape of social media implementation in Liberian enterprises, this study employs the DOI theory as the guiding framework. DOI offers a comprehensive perspective on how new ideas, practices, and technologies are adopted within a social system (Rogers, 2003). With its foundations in communication and sociology, this theory has been successfully applied in various contexts, from technology adoption (Hossain, 2020; Shang et al., 2021) to digital marketing strategies (Chen et al., 2020; Li et al., 2021).

The choice of DOI as the guiding framework is well-justified, given its relevance to adopting innovative technologies and practices in emerging markets (Cheung et al., 2023). As Liberia represents a dynamic business environment that is continuously evolving, the DOI framework is adept at explaining how and why enterprises in Liberia decide to adopt or resist social media technologies (Lee, 2022). By focusing on the

factors influencing the diffusion process and categorizing adopters into various categories, we can understand the interplay between innovation and the socio-economic context (Garcia-Avilés, 2020).

This literature review aims to synthesize and analyze the existing professional literature and data sources to identify the potential challenges IT leaders face in Liberian organizations when striving to successfully implement social media technologies. Social media has become pervasive in modern communication and business, affecting operations. In specific Liberian organizations, IT leaders recognize the potential of social media technologies to enhance information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and online presence.

While integrating social media offers opportunities for improved communication and information sharing, it also introduces vulnerabilities, including concerns regarding data security, privacy, governance, and policies. Many IT administrators in Liberian organizations need more comprehensive strategies to effectively address these challenges. The security risks associated with the growing use of social media platforms have implications for organizations and stakeholders. Therefore, it is crucial to explore these challenges within the Liberian context to ensure the successful implementation of social media technologies.

In this qualitative pragmatic inquiry, I aimed to investigate the specific strategies employed by IT leaders in Liberian organizations to mitigate data security and privacy risks, navigate political and regulatory challenges and cultural and language barriers, and consider digital literacy when implementing social media technologies successfully. The

central research question guiding this study is: "What strategies do IT managers use to ensure the data security, privacy, and digital literacy of social media technology implementation in Liberian organizations?" This study delves into various IT issues associated with integrating social media within the Liberian business landscape and explores potential strategies to address data security, privacy, and literacy concerns. This research draws on the foundational principles of technology diffusion, notably Everett Rogers's (2003) DOI theory , to assess the impact of security, privacy, and literacy considerations on technology adoption within Liberian enterprises.

The literature review includes a selection of references from various articles and journals. These references were derived from reputable sources, including academic databases such as Google Scholar, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, Dissertations and Thesis at Walden University, Academic Search Complete, and other relevant sources. To conduct these searches, I used keywords such as "social media integration," "technology adoption," "IT leadership in Liberian organizations," and "Diffusion of Innovation" to identify pertinent research and insights.

By analyzing this body of work, the literature review aims to contribute to the scholarly discourse on social media implementation, specifically within the Liberian enterprise context, while also providing valuable insights and recommendations for IT, IT managers, businesses, and policymakers striving to harness the potential of social media in Liberia (Schwabe et al., 2020; Syaifullah et al., 2021). This review was designed to enhance understanding of the complexities and opportunities surrounding the diffusion of

innovation and how it shapes the business landscape in Liberia and similar emerging markets (Ansari et al., 2019; Goh & Sigala, 2020).

Conceptual Framework Foundation

The DOI theory, proposed by Rogers in 1962, is a well-established framework for understanding how innovations spread through a social system (Amini & Javid, 2023; Rogers, 2003). This theory is based on several core concepts integral to understanding the adoption of innovations, including social media, in different contexts. The theory is highly relevant in exploring strategies IT managers in Liberia use to adopt social media in their organization, facilitating the factors influencing its implementation. The core concepts of the DOI theory encompass several elements. First, innovations, in this case, social media, are characterized by attributes such as relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Amini & Javid, 2023). These attributes are crucial in determining how likely an innovation is adopted. In Liberia, the perception that social media has a relative advantage over traditional communication channels could drive its adoption in various sectors.

Additionally, compatibility, the extent to which an innovation aligns with existing values and needs, is vital in a country such as Liberia, where the cultural and infrastructural context may influence receptivity to social media (Adae et al., 2023). Second, the theory categorizes individuals within a social system into adopter groups based on their willingness to embrace innovations (Pandey et al., 2020). These adopter categories include innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Rogers, 2003). The distribution of these groups can significantly impact the pace and

extent of social media adoption in Liberia. Identifying the population segments that fall into each category is essential for tailoring adoption strategies.

DOI theory also introduces the concept of the innovation-decision process, which outlines the stages that individuals go through when adopting an innovation. This process comprises five stages: knowledge, persuasion, decision-making, implementation, and confirmation (Rogers, 2003). Understanding these stages and the associated factors that influence them is critical in the context of social media adoption in Liberia. For instance, the knowledge stage involves exposure to innovation, and social media platforms must educate the Liberian population about the benefits and functionality of their platforms (Rogers, 2003).

The DOI theory provides valuable insights into social media adoption in Liberia. Several studies have explored the adoption of digital technologies and innovations in various contexts. For example, Adae et al. (2023) discussed the implementation of social media in Africa's public sector, offering perspectives that can be applied to the Liberian context. They highlighted the relevance of DOI in understanding how social media can be effectively integrated into governmental operations. Furthermore, Anderson (2023) examined the factors influencing the choice of social media platforms in Liberian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), shedding light on the decision stage of the innovation-decision process within DOI. The stages of DOI theory align with implementing social media in Liberia. The knowledge stage involves introducing social media platforms to the public and making them aware of their advantages, whereas the persuasion stage focuses on convincing users of the benefits (Adae et al., 2023). The

decision stage is crucial because it involves implementing social media in various sectors, such as businesses and governments. The implementation stage deals with the practical application and integration of social media, which is a process that requires proper planning and execution. Finally, the confirmation stage entails assessing the outcomes and determining the success and sustainability of social media adoption in Liberia (Rogers, 2003).

Essentially, the DOI theory offers a robust framework for comprehending the dynamics of social media adoption in Liberia. Its core concepts, adopter categories, and innovation-decision process stages provide a structured approach to understanding and facilitating the implementation of social media within the country's unique social, cultural, and economic context.

Analysis of Social Media Implementation in Liberian Organizations

Social media has become an indispensable communication tool within organizations, offering various advantages for connecting internal and external stakeholders (Mason et al., 2021). The ubiquity of platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, has reshaped the way Liberian enterprises interact with employees, customers, and partners. This section discusses the role of social media in Liberian organizations, its impact on news media, cost considerations, and the infrastructure required for effective implementation.

Social Media as a Communication Tool

Social media is a powerful communication tool within Liberian organizations, enabling efficient internal and external interactions. This fosters employee collaboration

and facilitates knowledge sharing and information dissemination (Mason et al., 2021).

Using enterprise social media platforms such as Slack and Microsoft Teams has gained

prominence in facilitating real-time communication and improving team dynamics.

Organizations can harness these platforms to create a sense of community, especially in

remote work arrangements or geographically dispersed teams (Chen et al., 2020). This

improved communication also contributes to employee engagement, essential for

organizational success (Harris, 2022).

Social media serves as an essential channel for external communication.

Companies in Liberia can use social media to engage with customers, respond to

inquiries, and build brand loyalty (Ansari et al., 2019). Regular updates and interactions

on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter help businesses stay connected to their

customer bases. Liberian enterprises can leverage the virality of social media to reach a

wider audience and promote their products and services (Melović et al., 2020). By

fostering a strong online presence, organizations can improve their market visibility and

enhance their reputation among potential customers (Li et al., 2021).

Role of Social Media in News Media and Reporting

The influence of social media on news and reporting is undeniable. In Liberia, the

adoption of social media has significantly transformed journalism and news

dissemination (Reisach, 2021). Liberian media houses and journalists are now actively

using platforms such as Twitter and YouTube to report breaking news and share updates

with the public. Social media allows real-time reporting, making news more accessible

and democratic (Ananda et al., 2019). Although social media has democratized news

reporting, it has also brought challenges related to information accuracy and trustworthiness. The prevalence of fake news and disinformation is a significant concern (Reisach, 2021). Liberian organizations in the news media sector must establish mechanisms to verify the credibility of sources and information shared through social media. Moreover, embracing social media analytics tools can provide valuable insights into audience preferences and feedback, helping news outlets tailor their content effectively (Quesenberry, 2019).

Affordability and Cost Considerations

The affordability of social media implementation is critical for Liberian organizations, particularly for SMEs. Unlike traditional marketing methods, social media offers cost-effective avenues for brand promotion and customer engagement (Chatterjee & Kumar Kar, 2020). Companies can create profiles on platforms like Instagram and YouTube without significant expenses. This affordability is particularly advantageous for SMEs in Liberia, as they can compete with more established businesses on a level playing field (Bagale et al., 2021). However, it is important to note that while the initial setup costs for social media accounts are low, maintaining an effective online presence requires consistent effort and resources. Liberian organizations must allocate budgets for content creation, advertising, and social media management tools (Qalati et al., 2021). These costs can vary depending on the organization's objectives, audience size, and platforms used. Therefore, budget planning and cost management are essential considerations for organizations seeking to maximize the benefits of social media.

Devices, Internet Services, and Image Capturing Tools

The successful implementation of social media in Liberian organizations requires appropriate devices, reliable Internet services, and image-capturing tools. Employees and social media managers should have access to computers and smartphones to create and manage content (Gupta et al., 2020). Ensuring these devices are current and compatible with the latest social media applications is crucial. In regions with inconsistent Internet connectivity, organizations might need to invest in backup solutions such as mobile data hotspots to maintain online presence during network disruptions (Cartwright et al., 2021). Image and video content are highly engaged in social media platforms, and Liberian organizations should equip themselves with the necessary tools for creating high-quality visual content (Taylor, 2021). These include cameras, smartphones with good cameras, and image-editing software. Ensuring that employees are proficient in creating visually appealing content is essential, as visuals can significantly enhance the impact of social media posts (Hermanda et al., 2019).

Indeed, social media has become an integral part of communication and marketing strategies for Liberian organizations. It is a powerful tool for internal and external communication, transforms the news media landscape, and offers cost-effective marketing opportunities. However, organizations must carefully consider the costs and infrastructure required for effective social media implementation, ensuring that they have the necessary devices, reliable Internet services, and image-capturing tools in place. By leveraging these elements, Liberian enterprises can exploit the full potential of social media to achieve their goals.

Role of Social Media in Political Communication

Effective communication is at the heart of any political campaign, and social media platforms offer powerful tools to facilitate this process. In Liberia, political organizations have recognized the significance of social media in disseminating information, engaging with the public, and providing rallying support. Anderson (2023) investigated the factors influencing the choice of social media platforms in Liberian SMEs, revealing the need for political organizations to select platforms that align with their target audience carefully. Quesenberry (2019) and Gupta et al. (2020) highlight the importance of social media marketing capabilities in fostering customer relationships and sustainability in various industries. This concept can be transposed to political organizations in Liberia, emphasizing the need to harness the full potential of social media not only for campaigning but also for ongoing communication with constituents. In essence, integrating social media into political campaigning in Liberia has redefined how political organizations engage with the electorate. The studies and references cited in this section provide valuable insights into the strategies, implications, and significance of social media in Liberian politics. To remain competitive and effective, political organizations must adapt to the ever-evolving social media landscape, considering the ethical and cybersecurity challenges associated with its use.

Social Media for Community Engagement in Liberia

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for community engagement and raising awareness in various domains, including public health crises such as Ebola and COVID-19. This section explores the use of social media for

community engagement and awareness in Liberia, drawing insights from the literature and highlighting specific examples from these health crises.

Community Engagement and Awareness

Social media platforms have revolutionized the way people communicate and access information. In the Liberian context, the adoption of social media has witnessed significant growth in recent years. According to Cheung et al. (2023), adopting digital technologies, including social media, is a pivotal aspect of enterprise strategy in Liberia. The evolution of social media adoption is tied to the technology-organization-environment (TOE) framework and DOI theories. The TOE and DOI frameworks provide a comprehensive lens to understand how Liberian organizations adopt social media platforms to engage with their communities and raise awareness about various issues. Adae et al. (2023) emphasized that understanding these theoretical frameworks can help Liberian enterprises strategize and align their technology adoption to their specific organizational and environmental needs.

This alignment is crucial for utilizing social media effectively as a community engagement tool. Social media has evolved into a multidimensional tool for community engagement, and its adoption is not limited to the private sector. Social media plays a critical role in the public sector, especially in African countries like Liberia (Vargo et al., 2020) emphasize that the diffusion of innovations is not solely confined to the private sector, as government agencies and non-governmental organizations also adopt social media platforms to communicate and engage with the community. This broad-based adoption reflects the comprehensive role that social media plays in society.

In Ebola and COVID-19 Outbreaks

The Ebola outbreak in West Africa, including Liberia, posed an immense challenge for public health officials and the community at large. Social media emerged as a crucial tool for disseminating information, raising awareness, and coordinating efforts to combat the disease. The widespread penetration of mobile phones and increasing access to the internet in Liberia facilitated the use of social media in real-time communication. Hossain (2020) highlighted the critical role played by social media during the Ebola crisis in providing timely and accurate information to the public. Similarly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, social media became a primary channel for sharing information about the virus, preventive measures, and vaccination campaigns. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp serve to connect healthcare providers, government agencies, and community leaders to communicate vital information promptly. Shang et al. (2021) emphasized that adopting and diffusing digital technologies like social media are key components of efficient response strategies during public health crises.

Social Media for Community Awareness

The role of social media in raising community awareness cannot be overstated. It is a dynamic platform that allows users to access and share information, fostering a sense of community, especially in Liberia, where geographical distances can be significant. Pantano and Vannucci (2019) pointed out that the retail industry has also experienced the impact of digital technology diffusion through social media adoption. This can translate into increased awareness of local businesses and products in the Liberian context.

Through its features and capabilities, social media empowers Liberian enterprises and organizations to interact with their target audiences effectively. Lee (2022) explored how DOI theories is applicable in promoting fairness standards in technology adoption, emphasizing the role of social media as an equalizing tool. In Liberia, the adoption and diffusion of social media platforms are essential for community awareness in times of crisis and day-to-day business operations. It is important to note that while the adoption of social media is on the rise, challenges such as cybersecurity risks (Cooper, 2023) also need to be addressed for sustainable adoption and effective community engagement.

In inference, the role of social media in community engagement and awareness in Liberia is paramount. It is a tool for raising awareness during public health crises like Ebola and COVID-19. By understanding the theories of technology adoption and DOI, Liberian enterprises and organizations can harness the power of social media to enhance their community engagement efforts. The extensive use of social media during crises and its ability to foster community connections underlines its significance as a tool for communication, awareness, and social cohesion in Liberia.

Political Organizations and Social Media in Liberia

Social media has witnessed exponential growth worldwide in the past decade, and its influence on various sectors, including politics, cannot be underestimated. This section reviews the use of social media for political campaigning in Liberia, analyzes the implications of negative and positive propaganda in political discourse, and examines the role of social media in political communication. To provide a comprehensive understanding of these aspects, this literature review draws from a wide range of

references that shed light on the dynamics of social media adoption, especially in a developing country like Liberia.

Social Media Used for Political Campaigning in Liberia

Like many other countries, Liberia has witnessed a significant transformation in political campaigning due to the advent of social media. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have enabled political candidates and parties to engage with the electorate innovatively. Social media facilitates real-time communication, enabling politicians to respond to critical issues, connect with voters personally, and mobilize support more effectively. Studies by Anderson (2023), Harris (2029), and R. B. Johnson (2020) have emphasized the importance of social media strategy in the context of Liberian political campaigns. They discuss the adoption of social media for targeted outreach and messaging. In a country with a diverse population and political landscape, social media can help political candidates reach specific demographics and tailor their campaign messages accordingly.

Furthermore, Doe (2021) examined the impact of social media adoption on corporate performance in Liberia, emphasizing the role of digital channels in building public trust. This trust can be particularly relevant to political actors who aim to connect with constituents, ensure transparency, and demonstrate their commitment to the nation's well-being. The study indicates that a strong social media presence can boost the credibility of political candidates and parties.

Implications of Negative and Positive Propaganda

Using social media in political campaigns creates a complex web of negative and positive propaganda. Political candidates in Liberia have increasingly resorted to these tactics to sway public opinion and discredit their opponents. Amin (2023) and Abbas et al. (2019) explored the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices and environmental factors on sustainable performance in business firms. Their findings underscore the potential for positive propaganda strategies to enhance public perception and influence voters.

On the other hand, challenges emerge when negative propaganda is employed, which can include false information, character attacks, and divisive narratives. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) discussed the cybersecurity challenges in social media adoption by Liberian enterprises. This is especially relevant in political campaigns, as securing digital platforms against misinformation and cyberattacks becomes paramount. (Rukuni et al., 2020) examine social media strategies for brand awareness at small business consultancy firms in South Africa, offering insights into how positive propaganda through social media can bolster the image and reputation of political candidates. It is crucial for political organizations in Liberia to carefully craft their social media campaigns, ensuring that they adhere to ethical standards and resonate with the population.

Social Media Research Methodology

In the context of studying social media implementation in Liberia, qualitative research methodology plays a pivotal role in gaining a deep understanding of the intricate

dynamics of technology adoption, innovation diffusion, and their impact on the public and private sectors. This section delves into the significance of qualitative research methods and the rationale behind their choice. It elucidates the research instruments and data collection techniques employed in the studies conducted in this domain.

Understanding Social Media Implementation

Qualitative research is essential when exploring the intricate landscape of social media implementation, particularly within the Liberian context. This research methodology enables researchers to delve deeply into the details and complexities of technology adoption and diffusion within different organizational settings and societal contexts (Adae et al., 2023). When exploring the adoption of social media implementation in Liberia enterprises, the DOI theories hold significance (Cheung et al., 2023). Currently, a qualitative research model facilitates exploring how these theories manifest in the Liberian context, providing rich insights into the challenges and opportunities organizations face.

Rationale for Choosing Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research methods were chosen as they offer a holistic understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Cheung et al., 2023). In the case of studying social media implementation in Liberian enterprises, qualitative research allows researchers to engage with key stakeholders, gain access to their perspectives, and uncover the underlying social, cultural, and economic factors influencing their decisions. Liberia, a country with unique socio-economic characteristics, requires an approach

beyond quantitative data and metrics to comprehend the intricacies of technology adoption and diffusion (Adae et al., 2023).

Research Instruments and Data Collection Techniques

Interviews and Focus Groups

Qualitative research on social media implementation in Liberia heavily relies on in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. These methods enable researchers to interact directly with stakeholders, such as business leaders, IT professionals, and government officials. Through interviews and focus groups, researchers can gain insights into the challenges faced during implementation, the role of culture, and Liberian enterprises' specific needs and preferences (Vargo et al., 2020).

Observations

Observational research is another valuable qualitative technique for studying social media implementation. Researchers can immerse themselves in the context of the organizations and communities under study, gaining firsthand experience and understanding of how technology is used in practice. This approach can reveal unanticipated insights into the real-world challenges and opportunities related to technology adoption (Hossain, 2020).

Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis is a technique that helps researchers extract meaning and patterns from textual, visual, or audio data. Content analysis can be used to analyze social media interactions, customer feedback, and organizational responses in studying social media's impact on customer relationship management in Liberian businesses. This

method provides a structured approach to examining large volumes of social media content, helping to identify trends and sentiments (H. Williams, 2021).

Pragmatic Inquiry

Qualitative inquiry comprehensively explores specific Liberian enterprises and their experiences with social media implementation. Researchers can delve deeply into these unique challenges, strategies, and outcomes. This approach is particularly valuable for understanding the dynamics of social media adoption in different organizational settings, such as SMEs (Amini & Javid, 2023).

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Integration of Qualitative Research Findings

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The findings generated from qualitative research contribute significantly to the body of knowledge regarding social media implementation in Liberia. They provide an in-depth understanding of the challenges and opportunities Liberian enterprises face, the adaptation of technology to social and cultural factors, and the specific needs of different sectors, such as public administration, education, and business. These insights can inform policy recommendations, business strategies, and educational programs to foster effective social media adoption and diffusion in Liberia.

Qualitative research methods are indispensable for comprehensively understanding social media implementation in Liberia. They allow researchers to explore the unique socio-economic landscape of Liberia and the intricate dynamics of technology adoption, providing valuable insights for organizations, policymakers, and researchers in this evolving field. The combination of interviews, focus groups, observations, and content analysis, empowers researchers to unearth aspects of social media adoption,

contributing to developing strategies that cater to the specific needs of Liberian enterprises.

Relationship to Previous Research

Social media has become an integral part of the global business landscape, transforming how organizations operate, interact with their stakeholders, and engage with their audiences. In Liberia, qualitative research studies have explored various facets of social media adoption and implementation, shedding light on the intricacies, challenges, and opportunities faced by businesses and the public sector. This section of the literature review presents an in-depth analysis of these qualitative studies, providing a comprehensive view of the dynamics of social media adoption in Liberia.

Adae et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive qualitative study titled "Social Media and Africa's Public Sector: Perspectives on Contemporary Issues." This study is of particular significance as it explores the adoption and utilization of social media in the public sector of African countries, including Liberia. The researchers interviewed public sector employees, gaining valuable insights into the Liberian government's challenges and opportunities in implementing social media initiatives. One of the key findings from Adae et al.'s research is the pivotal role of social media in enhancing public service delivery. Government agencies in Liberia increasingly use social media platforms to communicate with the public, disseminate important information, and receive feedback. They can quickly respond to public concerns and build trust with the citizenry through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. This aligns with the global trend of governments embracing digital communication to foster transparency and accountability.

Additionally, the study highlights the importance of addressing the unique challenges faced by the public sector in Liberia, such as limited resources and technical capacity. Policymakers and government officials can draw valuable lessons from this research to tailor social media strategies to the public sector's needs, fostering more effective engagement with citizens.

Anderson (2023) conducted a qualitative investigation into the factors influencing the choice of social media platforms in Liberian SMEs. The choice of social media platforms is a crucial strategic decision for businesses seeking to reach their target audience effectively. In Anderson's study, SME owners and managers were interviewed to understand their decision-making processes regarding platform selection. The research revealed several key factors that influence their choices. Cost-effectiveness emerged as a primary concern for many SMEs in Liberia. Given limited budgets, they often prefer platforms with low advertising costs or free promotional options. This finding emphasizes the financial constraints many organizations in Liberia face and highlights the need for cost-effective social media marketing strategies. User engagement and reach were also significant determinants. Liberian SMEs were likelier to invest in platforms that demonstrated high user engagement and provided access to their target customer base (Anderson, 2023). Businesses recognize the importance of being present on platforms where their potential customers spend their time.

Qualitative research on the role of IT leadership in successfully implementing social media in Liberian organizations has been conducted before (L. K. Johnson, 2022). This study explored the strategic aspects of social media adoption, emphasizing the

pivotal role of IT leaders in guiding the process. The findings highlighted the importance of strong IT leadership in developing effective social media strategies. IT leaders are vital in aligning social media initiatives with an organization's broader goals and ensuring that data security and privacy are maintained. The research highlights how IT leaders can bridge the gap between technical aspects and the overall business strategy, maximizing the benefits of social media for Liberian organizations. Furthermore, IT leaders are instrumental in navigating the complexities of data privacy regulations, especially considering the evolving global data protection landscape. Their ability to adapt to these regulations and ensure that social media activities comply with legal requirements is crucial for organizations in Liberia and worldwide.

Doe (2021) examined the impact of social media adoption on corporate performance in Liberia. This qualitative study investigated the relationship between social media strategies and business outcomes, including brand awareness, customer engagement, and financial performance. This study found that effective social media adoption can positively influence corporate performance and enhance competitiveness in the Liberian market. By engaging with their audiences on social media, businesses in Liberia can increase brand awareness, allowing them to stand out in a crowded marketplace. Effective social media strategies also foster customer engagement, leading to increased customer loyalty and repeat business. Doe's research underlines the importance of monitoring and measuring the impact of social media strategies. Using data analytics and performance metrics, Liberian businesses can refine their approaches

and adapt to changing consumer behaviors and preferences, ultimately leading to improved financial performance.

Cartwright et al. (2021) provided insights into the strategies employed by Liberian businesses to achieve success through social media marketing. This qualitative study examined contemporary strategies that have proven effective for businesses in Liberia. These findings underscore the importance of tailoring social media strategies to the local market, emphasizing the significance of culturally relevant content and engagement. One of the key takeaways of Cartwright's research is the importance of cultural sensitivity in social media marketing. Liberian businesses that incorporated culturally relevant content and engaged with local customs and traditions in their campaigns were more successful in connecting with their target audiences. This highlights the need for a nuanced and localized approach to social media marketing rather than relying on generic or international strategies. Cartwright et al. also emphasized the value of storytelling in social media marketing. Liberian businesses that effectively shared their stories and experiences on social media established a more profound connection with their audience. Storytelling creates a sense of authenticity and allows businesses to convey their values and missions, which resonates with consumers in Liberia.

Adetunji et al. (2024) delved into the impact of social media on customer relationship management in Liberian businesses. Qualitative research has explored how social media platforms are utilized to enhance customer relationships, gain customer feedback, and build brand loyalty. The findings indicate that the effective use of social media can significantly improve customer relationship management, contributing to long-

term business success. Liberian businesses that engage with customers through social media can gather feedback, address concerns, and build stronger relationships. Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter provide convenient channels for customers to voice their opinions and for businesses to respond promptly. Moreover, businesses that actively address customer feedback and concerns on social media can enhance their reputations and build brand loyalty. Positive interactions with customers in the public domain of social media can influence how a brand is perceived, fostering trust and loyalty among customers.

The qualitative studies discussed in this section provide valuable insights into adopting and implementing social media in Liberia. They offer crucial guidance for policymakers, business leaders, and organizations in Liberia by highlighting the importance of tailoring strategies to the local context, the pivotal role of IT leadership, and the significant impact of social media on various aspects of business and public sector operations. As businesses and organizations in Liberia continue to engage with social media, these qualitative research studies offer guidance and lessons that can shape future endeavors in the dynamic landscape of social media adoption and implementation (Doe, 2021). These insights not only contribute to the academic understanding of the topic but also serve as practical tools for enhancing social media practices in Liberia, fostering transparency, accountability, and economic growth. It is essential for both public- and private-sector stakeholders in Liberia to leverage these findings to create more effective and locally tailored social media strategies, ultimately contributing to the country's socioeconomic development and digital transformation.

Research Gaps and Future Directions

This section identifies gaps in the existing literature and proposes potential future research directions that align with the DOI framework. This review has illuminated several critical research gaps and opportunities for future investigations of social media implementation in Liberian enterprises.

- **Digital Transformation Maturity Models**: An emerging area of interest is the development of maturity models specific to digital transformation and the DOI in the context of developing economies such as Liberia. Researchers can explore the applicability of existing models and develop context-specific models that incorporate DOI principles.

- **Social Media and Rural Businesses**: Most studies have focused on urban and larger enterprises. Research can delve into the challenges and opportunities for adopting social media by rural or small-scale businesses in Liberia by examining the unique constraints they face.

- **Cybersecurity Challenges**: With the increasing adoption of social media, cybersecurity has become a critical concern. Future research should address specific challenges and strategies for mitigating cybersecurity risks in the context of Liberian enterprises.

- **Social Media Integration in Supply Chain**: More research is needed on integrating social media into supply chain management in Liberia. Future studies could explore how social media technologies can enhance supply chain operations, coordination, and transparency.

- **Public Sector Adoption**: Research on the adoption of social media in the public sector in Liberia is limited. Future studies could investigate how government agencies can use social media for effective service delivery, citizen engagement, and policy implementation.

- **Social Media Adoption in Education**: With the increasing role of social media in education, there is an opportunity to explore its impact on learning outcomes and pedagogical practices in Liberian schools and universities.

- **Cross-Industry Comparative Studies**: Comparative studies across different industries in Liberia can provide insights into how the DOI principles vary across sectors. For example, comparing social media adoption in agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing can yield valuable insights.

- **Economic Impact Assessment**: Research can focus on assessing the economic impact of social media adoption in Liberian enterprises, including job creation, revenue generation, and export potential.

- **Role of Ethics**: Future studies can explore ethical considerations in social media marketing in Liberia, including privacy, data protection, and responsible advertising.

- **Generative AI in Education**: Investigating the diffusion and impact of generative artificial intelligence in Liberian educational institutions, focusing on personalized learning and content generation.

- **Institutional Barriers**: Research can delve deeper into the institutional and regulatory barriers that hinder the adoption of digital technologies and social media in Liberia.

- **Role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Education**: This could involve exploring how ICT and social media platforms can be integrated into classroom instruction in Liberian educational institutions. By addressing these research gaps and directions, scholars can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the role and impact of social media implementation in Liberian enterprises, which can inform policy and practice in the region.

Transition and Summary

Section 2 introduced the literature review, which offers a stark revelation of the limitations confronting IT leaders when attempting to harness strategies for implementing social media within their organizations. A comprehensive analysis of the DOI framework in the Liberian context underscores a sobering reality and outlines organizational improvement (Menzli et al., 2022). It explained the emergence or exposure of an innovation, persuasion wherein a technology is considered favorable or unfavorable, the decision-making phase by which an innovation is adopted or rejected, the implementation phase given the application of a phenomenon, and reinforcement or confirmation of such phenomena (Yan et al., 2023).

Section 3: The Project

Section 3 provides the project's details and the researcher's involvement in the data collection process. Additionally, this section delves into the researcher's obligations, the prospective participant pool, the criteria guiding participant selection, population sampling methodologies, and the selected research approach. Ethical considerations pertinent to the study and a comprehensive outline of the measures taken to address these concerns were included. Detailed insights are provided into the instruments used for data collection, the techniques employed, the organizational framework for collected data, and the analytical procedures applied. This discussion extends to the challenges of the study's reliability and validity. Furthermore, this section encompasses the transition and summarization relevant to the conclusive phase of this doctoral research.

Purpose Statement

This pragmatic qualitative study aims to explore IT strategies for the seamless integration of social media in Liberian enterprises, with the ultimate goal of achieving competitive parity with organizations worldwide (Borah et al., 2022). This research explores the practical leadership skills and essential considerations for implementing social media as a transformative IT strategy.

The sample size for this study included eight IT managers from diverse Liberian organizations based in Monrovia, Liberia, who have undertaken social media integration within the past four years. Further implications for positive social change from this study are identifying strategies that IT managers in Liberia can employ to implement social

media in their organizations for enhanced communication and overall organizational performance (Ahmadin, 2022; Borah et al., 2022).

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher serves a multitude of crucial responsibilities, including participant selection, data collection, and the intricate task of data analysis to unearth and develop various themes (Vindrola-Padros et al., 2020). A researcher must establish relationships with study participants (Archibald et al., 2019). Qualitative data, a treasure trove from various channels like observation notes, interview transcripts, memos, and journal entries, forms the bedrock of insights into such study (Fornaro et al., 2021; Namey et al., 2020).

I assumed the role of the interviewer and remained uninvolved in the day-to-day activities of the organizations under scrutiny. Throughout the interview process, I recorded observations and maintained a journal. Interview notes, including a diary, encapsulate thoughts, emotions, and observations before, during, and after each interview were recorded. Subsequent transcription of these notes emerged as a crucial step, facilitating the analysis process and offering additional insights by capturing verbal cues, pauses, and background noises (Archibald et al., 2019; DeVilliers et al., 2022).

To ensure objectivity and minimize bias, I adhered to professionalism, maintaining a dispassionate stance devoid of personal relationships with the organizations and study participants. Given my background in IT and experiences in information security, data analysis, and system programming, I entered this study equipped with the necessary expertise. Additionally, I have attended webinars and conferences on the use of social

media and the security thereof; such knowledge has further augmented the preparedness to navigate the intricacies inherent in the research.

In conscientious efforts to reduce bias, I embraced a commitment to impartially interpret participants' perspectives, refraining from imposing personal beliefs or experiences on the interviewees. Acknowledging the inherent challenge of eliminating bias, reflexivity, and bracketing were considered to mitigate its influence (Shufutinsky, 2020). I maintained a research journal as a pivotal strategy for transparency, inviting peer review and laying the groundwork for study replication (Carcary, 2020).

During interviews, I adhered to a structured interview protocol (Appendix A), ensuring alignment of questions with research inquiries and consistency in data collection (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021; Varpio et al., 2020). Open-ended, non-leading, semi-structured questions served as the vehicle for comprehensively exploring participants' thoughts, emotions, and decision-making processes (Roberts, 2020). Participants were given ample time to respond, fostering in-depth insights. The judicious use of follow-up questions further enriched responses, extracting a tapestry of rich and comprehensive information (Crowley et al., 2021).

The ethical framework guiding this study is the principles enshrined in the Belmont Report (HHS, 2024; Lantos, 2020; Pritchard, 2021). These principles underscored the importance of respecting participants and safeguarding them from harm. Participants were furnished with all requisite information to make an informed and voluntary decision to participate, aligning with the (HHS, 2024; Kandi & Vadakedath, 2022). The right to withdraw from the research at any point was communicated to participants, and in cases

necessitating additional permissions to mitigate risks, supplementary measures were instituted during participant selection (HHS, 2024).

Adhering to the tenets of ethical research, the researcher has completed the Doctoral Student Researchers Basic Course provided by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). A testament to this commitment is encapsulated in the CITI certificate, which is included in Appendix D for reference.

Research Method and Design

When addressing the problem and purpose of a study, researchers are confronted with the choice of three research methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Wisdom et al., 2012). In this study, I opted for the qualitative research method. Specifically, this qualitative method utilizes a pragmatic approach in exploring trategies employed by IT managers in Liberian organizations for the successful implementation of social media. This section examines the qualitative research method, expanding on the rationale behind my selection. Additionally, it outlines the reasons for the pragmatic approach that is appropriate for my research study.

Research Method

A deliberative process was employed to discern a research methodology, encapsulating three primary research styles: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Following an exhaustive examination of these three methodological frameworks, the qualitative research method was chosen for this study. The qualitative research approach is celebrated for its capacity to explore interpretative phenomena within their natural context, facilitating the acquisition of profound insights

into the intricacies of such phenomena. The qualitative approach, integrated with a pragmatic design, served as the instrumental vehicle for an in-depth investigation into strategies employed by IT managers in implementing social media within their organizations in Liberia. The qualitative framework, as outlined by Van der Weele & Bredewold (2021), emerges as a conduit empowering participant to articulate their ideas, while the pragmatic design, per Yin (2018), Pragmatic inquiry entails strategically integrating and adapting proven qualitative techniques to satisfy the requirements of a particular study.

The rationale for selecting a qualitative research method for this study is grounded in its congruence with the exploration of successful implementation of analytical strategies. Departing from the conventional reliance on statistical analysis, this study opts for a methodological richness of in-depth interviews. Yin (2018) outlined that qualitative research presupposes a thorough investigation of individuals, groups, or organizations within real-world contexts regarding understanding human motivations and intentions (Tenny et al., 2022). The employment of open-ended questioning during interviews assumed significance as an instrument facilitating the extraction of new insights and engendering a profound comprehension of participants' experiences. The qualitative method is deemed particularly suitable for addressing fundamental inquiries of "why," "what," and "how," constituting the essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Van der Weele & Bredewold, 2021). Thus, the qualitative research method is deemed best suited for exploring the strategies for successfully implementing social media and fostering effective communication with participants.

In contrast, the quantitative research method is characterized by the systematic collection and analysis of data through statistical patterns, emphasizing establishing relationships between variables and testing theories or hypotheses (Yin, 2018). Quantitative researchers, as articulated by Creswell and Creswell (2018), engage in statistical techniques to address questions related to "how much" or "how many," conducting measurements and scrutinizing relationships between variables to make predictions and generalizations based on the derived outcomes. Given the absence of a hypothesis-testing agenda within the scope of this study, the quantitative method was not suitable for this research.

Conversely, the mixed-method approach enjoys the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods within a unified research study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). This holistic approach proves particularly valuable in the exploration of organizational problems, allowing for a comprehensive examination through the incorporation of surveys, in-depth interviews, data observations, and statistical analyses, thereby facilitating a detailed assessment of participant responses (Dawadi et al., 2021). While the effectiveness of mixed methods research is commended, especially in overcoming the limitations intrinsic to both qualitative and quantitative methods, its application within the present study was deemed unuseful. The specific research focus, which did not necessitate collecting numerical data or quantitative statistical analysis, rendered the mixed method approach unsuitable. Consequently, the qualitative research approach is considered the most appropriate choice within the context of this research.

Research Design

The qualitative method encompasses various research designs, including case studies, narrative, phenomenology, and ethnography (Yin, 2018). As Yin (2018) described, a pragmatic research design facilitates exploring and explaining a phenomenon within a specific context. It proves particularly suitable for examining the experiences of a homogenous group to understand a phenomenon based on their perceptions. In exploring the successful implementation of social media strategies by IT leaders in Liberian enterprises, the researcher adopted a pragmatic research inquiry to provide a contextual and comprehensive understanding of social media implementation.

A pragmatic research inquiry, characterized by its non-manipulative examination of a phenomenon using diverse sources such as interviews and company documents, is deemed most appropriate for this study (Yin, 2018). It allows for an in-depth analysis of phenomena, utilizing multiple data sources like participant interviews, observations, and company documents (Yin, 2018). This flexible approach enables gathering multiple perspectives to understand the phenomena portrayed comprehensively.

On the other hand, the narrative design, centered around participants' storytelling experiences, was considered unsuitable. This research is focused on exploring strategies rather than providing a sense of being or recounting real-world experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Faizin, 2020). Similarly, the phenomenological research design, which aims to understand individuals' life experiences, did not align with the study's objective of exploring strategies rather than determining participants' actual life experiences.

An ethnographic research design, typically employed to explore patterns among people and study the culture of groups over an extended period through observation, did not apply to this study's scope, as it did not involve the examination of a specific culture or set of lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data saturation is crucial for ensuring the integrity of the research study. As described by Yin (2018) and Aguboshim and Aguboshim (2021), data saturation occurs when new data collected yields no novel insights, signifying that the gathered data is sufficient to support the research findings. I continued the data collection and analysis process until data saturation was achieved, a common practice in qualitative research, where the exact sample size required to reach data saturation is not predetermined (Aguboshim & Aguboshim, 2021; Sebele-Mpofu, 2020).

Population, Sampling, and Participants

Participant

A critical aspect in selecting participants for a pragmatic inquiry is establishing specific criteria, such as participant eligibility and selection sources (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) outlined that participants chosen for a qualitative study must have direct experience with the studied phenomenon and a familiarity with the research topic. The study's eligibility criteria comprised IT managers with 5 years of experience who have implemented social media or social media strategies within their organization in the last five years and have the authority to provide information and participate in this study. At least eight IT managers meeting these criteria were initially selected from the participant pool for this study.

To recruit participants, I employed both snowball and purposeful sampling techniques. Purposeful sampling allows participants with extensive knowledge and experience (Campbell et al., 2020), while snowball sampling relies on recommendations from existing participants (Leighton et al., 2021). I used social media platforms, specifically LinkedIn and Facebook, to identify potential participants fitting the study criteria. After initial contact through Facebook messages, a screening process, detailed in Appendix C, was conducted during the first call with each participant to ensure qualification.

I established a working relationship with the participants by introducing myself via phone calls, video conferencing, and emails. Telephone communication can be a standard method to gain acceptance and rapport (Dominey et al., 2021; Galleguillos et al., 2023). After potential participants express interest and meet screening criteria, a consent form was emailed, outlining the study's scope and ensuring voluntary participation. All signed consent forms were returned, signifying participants' approval to join the research study. Email correspondence facilitated interview scheduling, and participants' permission to record and document sessions was obtained.

Developing trust with participants is paramount to any research, as aligned with Yin's (2018) emphasis on the importance of trust in qualitative research. Regular communication, including phone calls and emails, were instrumental in introducing the interview protocol and building trust (Dominey et al., 2021). Trust is fundamental for obtaining quality data (Yin, 2018), especially for first-time qualitative researchers facing challenges accessing reliable participants (Pietilä et al., 2020).

The interviews focused on collecting information seamlessly, emphasizing a healthy rapport to mitigate bias and establish a professional yet friendly relationship (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Shrestha et al., 2022). Participants' identities were masked during coding, analysis, and reporting, using letters and numbers for confidentiality concerns. Again, participants were assured of their freedom to withdraw without consequences. Conscious efforts were be made to eliminate possible bias, ensuring a high-quality research study (Jabarov, 2023).

Besides emphasizing confidentiality and participant rights, the consent form outlined the researcher's commitment to secure data storage and eventual destruction after five years following the research study's completion. This approach aligns with best practices to safeguard participants' information (Gray et al., 2020). Compliance with Walden University IRB's ethical and legal requirements were maintained throughout the research process, prioritizing the well-being and rights of study participants.

Population and Sampling

In research, it is often impractical to scrutinize every participant within the entire population (Sukmawati et al., 2023). Therefore, a manageable sample from the population of interest must be selected (Sebele-Mpofu, 2020). Population sampling involves narrowing down a specific subgroup into a smaller subset representing the entire population (Aguboshim & Aguboshim, 2021). For this study, the population comprised a purposeful sample of eight IT managers from different organizations in Monrovia, Liberia, who have successfully implemented social media in their respective

organizations. The sample size aimed is to achieve theoretical saturation, wherein newly gathered data yield no additional insights (Sebele-Mpofu, 2020).

In qualitative research, data saturation is directly linked to the size of the research sample (Sebele-Mpofu, 2020). The data saturation point served as the foundation for assessing the adequacy of the sample size. Data saturation in this study was reached after the seventh participant lacked additional value in the data from the eighth participant. The smaller sample size in this study is necessary because when the sample size of the collected data is considerably large, the data can become repetitive and ultimately unnecessary (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

I employed purposeful and snowball sampling techniques in selecting suitable participants for this research. Snowball sampling is a method of selecting participants recommended by those already selected for the study (Leighton et al., 2021). The snowball sampling allows researchers to expand the population size (Yin, 2018). Snowball sampling assists in increasing the population size, ensuring sufficient data for analysis and informed decision-making (Leighton et al., 2021). Purposeful sampling involves identifying reliable and willing participants with in-depth knowledge and experience relevant to the research (Yin, 2018). Purposeful sampling is a nonprobability method where researchers use personal judgment to select the situations that constitute the sample (S. Campbell et al., 2020). Researchers should recognize that the primary purpose is to explore all individuals to ensure reliability, validity, and accurate results (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). In purposeful sampling, the researcher identifies specific characteristics that participants must possess to participate in the study (Campbell et al.,

2020; Palinkas et al., 2015). The participants' knowledge determines the data quality for the research study. Willing and qualified participants capable of effective communication were eligible to participate in the research study due to their knowledge and experience.

Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize the pragmatic applicability of convenience sampling, as acknowledged in this study (Stratton, 2021). Convenience sampling involves selecting participants based on their accessibility and ease of inclusion in the study. This method becomes relevant when circumstances make it challenging or impractical to employ purposeful sampling (Andrade, 2020). While convenience sampling may sacrifice some degree of precision in participant selection, it can be a pragmatic and resource-efficient alternative, especially when targeted sampling is logistically challenging or time sensitive.

Throughout this study, a steadfast commitment to ethical principles, transparency, and establishment of trust among participants remain paramount. These considerations were woven into every phase of the research process, ensuring the integrity and reliability of the findings while upholding the well-being and rights of the study participants.

Research Ethics

Researchers must carefully address all ethical, legal, social, and political considerations associated with research participants (Purvis et al., 2020). Ethical protocols require obtaining informed consent from all participants before collecting data (Brittain et al., 2020). Adherence to ethical standards requires researchers to avoid placing participants in uncomfortable situations that could lead to physical or psychological harm (Brittain et al., 2020). Establishing an ethical framework safeguards

participants as volunteers, ensuring confidentiality and upholding the integrity of the research study. Researchers should communicate to potential participants their right to withdraw at any time, the confidentiality of their involvement, and the commitment to destroy data after five years (Pietrzykowski & Smilowska, 2021). Researchers must adhere to ethical principles outlined in the Belmont protocol (HHS, 2024; White, 2020) and research involving human participants (Brittain et al., 2020).

According to Yin (2018), researchers must obtain approval before conducting research involving human participants. As the researcher, compliance with policies and procedures established by the IRB is expected. Approval from the Walden University IRB was secured before contacting participants for this doctoral study. The IRB serves as the final administrative authority for approving or denying deviations from the original research agreement or changes in the IRB process. After IRB approval number 03-25-24-1125398 was obtained, eligible participants were identified based on specified criteria. Qualified participants were then invited to a one-on-one video conference meeting to discuss the research process. Subsequently, an email containing an introductory piece of the research and a consent form was sent exclusively to qualified participants, allowing them to decide on their involvement in the study voluntarily.

In the initial meeting, participants were assured of the utmost priority placed on protecting and safeguarding their information and identity during and after the research. Confidentiality is ensured through strategies such as encoding participant names, password-protecting all data, and committing to destroying all research materials after the designated five-year retention period (Lobe et al., 2020). Participants' information and

provided data are securely handled to maintain ethical standards. Alphanumeric variables, such as P0 through P3, replaced real participant names, and electronic files were password-protected for the five-year retention period (Wang et al., 2024). Upon the expiration of this period, all information collected were promptly deleted, and any company-related documents about the research were shredded.

Data Collection Activities

Data collection instruments encompass various tools, such as interviews, organizational documents, archival records, physical artifacts, questionnaires, and observations (Yin, 2018). Two sources served as data collection instruments during participant engagement for this research. Firstly, semi-structured interviewing techniques were applied, incorporating open-ended questions as outlined in Appendix E. Secondly, organizational documents provided by participants were reviewed to assess strategies employed in implementing social media solutions. According to Yin (2018), interviewing participants is a primary technique in a qualitative study, wherein researchers utilize emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills alongside data collection tools for accuracy. Yin recommended incorporating at least two sources as data collection instruments for comprehensive studies.

A semi-structured interview approach via video conference can serve as the primary data collection technique. Gray et al. (2020) and Taherdoost (2021) suggested that a semi-structured interview allows researchers to extract participant experiences effectively. I employed predetermined questions as the primary data collection instrument while remaining flexible to pose additional queries. An interview protocol process, as

outlined in Appendix A, was followed to control question flow and sequence, ensuring accuracy and consistency in data collection. Applying an interview protocol aids in organizing and sequencing questions throughout the interview process (Taherdoost, 2021).

The Zoom application's recording feature was implemented during interview sessions to capture video and audio components. Audio recordings is kept on an external hard drive (USB) after being processed and saved. Verbatim responses from participants during interviews was also documented. An ECHO Livescribe pen was used during the interview to facilitate notetaking during video conference interviews. Data transcribed from the smart pen and interview responses was downloaded to NVivo software for thematic and pattern analysis. Audio recordings was then transcribed into Word documents for participant review before ingestion into NVivo software. Participants were asked to verify and validate transcripts for accuracy, providing additional comments to ensure data reliability and credibility. Subsequently, the latest NVivo software was used to analyze all collected data.

In addition to participant interviews, all relevant participant documentation were collected as physical evidence and a recording artifact of the organization. According to (Campbell et al., 2020), utilizing organizational documents as a secondary source supports the authenticity of research results. Multiple data sources, including organizational documents, contribute to the integrity of qualitative research findings (Yin, 2018).

Member checking and triangulation were employed to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection process. Member checking allows participants to validate findings, make changes, or provide additional information (Aguboshim & Aguboshim, 2021). Participants were asked to review transcripts and initial interpretations during scheduled phone calls, ensuring accuracy and viability. Triangulation is crucial for this study, using multiple sources to examine variations in describing the same phenomenon. Data triangulation involved cross-referencing conducted interviews with reviewed company documents provided by participants, strengthening the overall quality of the study (Yin, 2018).

Data Organization and Analysis Techniques

Data Collection Technique

Zoom, a video conferencing application, semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions, and an exhaustive review of provided company documents served as the data collection mechanism for this research. Various mechanisms were employed to gather evidence for the research study, including observation, notes, and both video and audio recordings from conferences. Researchers often deploy multiple data sources to ensure data integrity and methodological rigor (Archibald et al., 2019). Utilizing an interview technique can enhance the validity and reliability of results obtained from diverse data sources (Archibald et al., 2019). Data collection for this study was initiated after the IRB's approval and subsequent participant confirmation. When conducting semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions, a pilot study, though optional according

to Yin (2018), is deemed unnecessary due to the use of semi-structured interviews and member checking in this research.

Before interviews, participants were emailed detailing the study's purpose and an information packet. Each packet included a study overview, expected outcomes, participant expectations, interview questions, and a consent form. Participants were encouraged to review their transcripts and informed of their right to withdraw from the study.

In keeping with participant availability, interview schedules were confirmed based on participant availability via email, allowing flexibility in choosing interview dates and settings (Campbell et al., 2020; Gray et al., 2020). Semi-structured interviews were conducted through the Zoom video conference application to observe nonverbal and social cues (Yin, 2018). This method facilitated the extraction of participants' experiences, offering a chance for in-depth responses through open-ended questioning (Archibald et al., 2019). The member-checking process was employed to reduce errors in the study.

As part of the interview process, participants were asked to provide organizational documents related to project implementations, including project charters, plans, meeting minutes, agendas, training documents, project emails, and organizational communications. These documents are crucial for validating the study and enhancing data triangulation, combining results from different sources (Lemon & Hayes, 2020). Data triangulation aided in validating data from multiple sources, contributing to accurate conclusions.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Data Collection Techniques

Every data collection technique comes with its set of advantages and disadvantages (Lobe et al., 2020). A pragmatic inquiry selection is beneficial for depicting participants' experiences comprehensively, yet it comes with challenges in terms of time consumption and preparation. While helpful in obtaining insightful information, semi-structured interviews posed potential bias risks. Conducting online interviews over a video conference application minimizes time and financial costs, encourages participant transparency, and removes geographical constraints but lacks the intimacy of face-to-face interviews.

Analyzing company documents offered strengths in providing background information; however, potential disadvantages included data obsolescence, irrelevance, disorganization, or incompletion. Observations provide direct insight into participant actions but are susceptible to observer bias and interviewer presentation of questions. The interview protocol was crucial in mitigating risks associated with inherent biases during semi-structured interviews.

Following IRB approval, videoconference interviews using open-ended questions were conducted, eliminating the need for a pilot study. The interview protocol guided each interview, ensuring consistency and managing discussions. Transcripts were created by converting the recorded interviews into audio files and text documents using Elevate AI software. Smartpen notes were also used to highlight essential points and mitigate personal bias. Data collected from the smartpen served as an additional data source for the study. Member checking enhanced the credibility and reliability of the research,

allowing participants to review and validate findings before data analysis. An audit trial of transcribed responses ensured credibility and reliability, aligned with research ethics in qualitative studies (Carcary, 2020).

Data Organization

Efficient data organization is crucial for researchers to enhance the retrieval and management of collected data, thereby improving the overall quality of the research study (Janssen et al., 2020; Tomaszewski et al., 2020). In a pragmatic study, various sources were employed to conduct a comprehensive analysis (Janssen et al., 2020; Yin, 2018). Establishing a systematic database is valuable for systematically recording all data (Yin, 2018). This study's data collection techniques included video conference semi-structured interviews and a thorough review of pertinent documentation. After completing the participant interviews, the digital recordings were securely stored on an external USB device. This device is safeguarded in a password-protected electronic vault and remains secure until the initiation of the data analysis phase. As highlighted by Campbell et al. (2020), ensuring confidentiality, meticulous preparation, and securing diverse data sources are essential for protecting the research participants.

I used the NVivo for MAC application to organize, analyze, and manage data collected from video conference interviews. Transcribed audio data from the interviews were formatted and saved as Microsoft Word documents stored on an encrypted Samsung T7 Touch external hard drive, which required fingerprint authentication. Following Yin's (2018) recommendation, transcripts were prepared promptly after the interview data-collection process was completed. Additionally, each document was labeled, categorized,

and stored in a tagged file format, using identifiers for easy retrieval. Each research participant was assigned an individual data file and folder, identified by a unique alphanumeric code (e.g., P1 through P5) in chronological numeric sequence. This organization method ensured participant confidentiality while facilitating efficient referencing.

In line with the responsibility to protect research data representing participants' experiences and knowledge, measures must be taken to secure audio and electronic data files (Gray et al., 2020). All hardcopy documents were electronically scanned and saved in an electronic format. The secured electronic and hardcopy data were stored in a locked storage in my home office. Adhering to Walden University IRB regulations, the collected data are retained for five years. Following this period, a comprehensive data destruction process will be implemented, involving the deletion of electronic files and the shredding or burning of hardcopy documents in my possession.

Data Analysis

A qualitative pragmatic research inquiry involves systematically collecting and interpreting data through semi-structured interviews and the analysis of relevant documents. Data analysis, an integral component of qualitative research studies (Aman Mezmir, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2018), follows a structured sequence to ensure a rigorous and meaningful exploration (Yin, 2018). These sequences include gathering information, organizing data for analysis, conducting detailed analysis using a coding scheme, grouping data into themes, translating these themes, and drawing conclusions

from the data. In a pragmatic study, data triangulation, involving multiple data-gathering methods, emerges as a particularly effective strategy (Yin, 2018).

As Yin (2018) defines, data triangulation incorporates various data sources within a research study. This approach enhances the validity of the research study, a crucial aspect acknowledged by researchers (Findley et al., 2021; Little & Pepinsky, 2021). Utilizing data triangulation strategies to involve diverse data sources, the researcher incorporated participants' responses, notes transcribed from the ECHO Livescribe pen, and organizational documents in this study. Following the data compilation, the process of disassembling and later reassembling the data ensued.

During disassembly, interview questions (what, when, why, and how were thoroughly analyzed and compared, following Yin's (2018) guidance. The transcribed data and reviewed documents were then combined into text segments to identify and categorize thematic elements. Reassembly were done by correlating codes with specific themes, connecting back to the research question (Campbell et al., 2020). The coding process, a vital step in qualitative data analysis, included tracking segmented data using unique identifiers or descriptive words for natural grouping and categorization (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data derived from participant interviews were reviewed, labeled, and coded. Employing NVivo for Mac application, the researcher achieved an in-depth analysis, recognizing patterns and themes.

Data interpretation and conclusion are pivotal to the analysis process. Recorded conversations were transcribed, and member checking were conducted to elevate the quality and validity of the transcribed data (Aguboshim & Aguboshim, 2021). The

member-checking process ensured that participants had the opportunity to review and validate the content of the interpreted transcripts, facilitating accurate analysis and interpretation. This iterative process continued until all participants were satisfied with the outcome, providing additional information and insights. The synthesis of participants' experiences, guided by academic procedures and guidelines, led to data conclusions that are presented via direct quotes, charts, and tables, contributing academically to the study's findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Interview/Survey Questions

1. Can you describe the specific social media innovations that have been implemented in your organization, and what led to the decision to adopt them?

2. How do IT managers in your organization typically communicate information about social media innovations to stakeholders and other users?

3. In your experience, what communication channels have proven most effective in conveying the benefits and features of social media to employees within the organization?

4. How do IT managers identify and address any resistance or concerns from employees during the initial stages of social media implementation?

5. Can you provide insights into the timeframe it took for your organization to fully integrate social media into its daily operations and processes?

6. What challenges or obstacles were encountered during the implementation of social media, and how were they overcome?

7. From your perspective, how do IT managers measure the success or effectiveness of social media implementation within the organization?

8. In what ways have IT managers adapted or customized social media strategies to suit the specific needs and culture of the organization?

9. How does the organization encourage and facilitate continuous learning and training for employees regarding the use of social media tools and platforms?

10. Could you share examples of positive experiences or success stories related to social media implementation within your organization?

11. How has the diffusion of social media innovations influenced the overall organizational culture and communication patterns within your enterprise?

12. Have there been any instances where the adoption of social media in your organization faced resistance or skepticism from key stakeholders or the broader community?

13. What strategies or initiatives have been implemented to address and overcome challenges related to social system or community acceptance of social media innovations?

14. How has the organization fostered a culture of innovation and openness to change in the context of implementing social media technologies?

15. Can you elaborate on any specific policies or guidelines that have been developed to govern the responsible and secure use of social media within the organization?

Study Validity

In qualitative research, quality assessment revolves around the fundamental

principles of reliability and validity (Yin, 2018). Researchers in the qualitative domain

are tasked with upholding rigor in their findings and assuring quality by establishing the

reliability and validity of their research methods (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). The

foundational elements essential for ensuring the reliability and validity of a qualitative

research study encompass confirmability, credibility, dependability, and transferability. A

qualitative research study's credibility and integrity hinge on its findings' reliability and

validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, pp. 201-202). Achieving transparency in the

research methods becomes paramount for guaranteeing the overall reliability and validity

of the study.

Reliability

Reliability, like dependability, is a critical facet that must be initiated from the

inception of a research study (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). The visibility and validation of

reliability in a qualitative study are closely tied to enhancing the dependability aspect.

Two dependable methods considered for this research are the data collection instruments

and member checking. Together, they are pivotal in elevating the research study's

reliability. Achieving reliability implies that the presented research findings must be

dependable and free from bias or errors (Collingridge & Gantt, 2019). Thus, ensuring the

reliability of qualitative research entails the utilization of data integrity and consistency as

significant contributors to the study (Collingridge & Gantt, 2019; Sürücü & Maslakçi,

2020). It is imperative for a research study to establish reliability before the researcher

evaluates the validity of its results. Conscientious consideration of reliability and validity were paramount throughout the research study (Collingridge & Gantt, 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Reliability, grounded in consistency, becomes evident during the analysis and drawing of conclusions (Collingridge & Gantt, 2019). Techniques such as interview protocols, triangulation, and member checking, when applied appropriately, augment qualitative research's reliability (McKim, 2023). Implementing member checking and interview protocols in this study were done to prevent inaccuracies. Member checking impacts the credibility of the research study (Carcary, 2020), serving as a valuable tool for validating, verifying, or evaluating the trustworthiness of qualitative outcomes (Collingridge & Gantt, 2019).

Validity

Validity in qualitative research encompasses the study's credibility (Adler, 2022). Derived from the elements of credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation, the validity of a qualitative research study contributes to the integrity and quality of its findings (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). It measures the soundness applied to the methodology and design, ensuring that the research accurately represents the participants' experiences and validates the integrity of the results.

The credibility of a research study is upheld when scientifically qualified research methods are employed for qualitative research (Kyngäs et al., 2020). Techniques such as member checking and triangulation enhance the results' validity and credibility (Collingridge & Gantt, 2019). Triangulation strengthens research accuracy and validity

by using multiple data sources as evidence (Yin, 2018). Employing data triangulation, interviewed IT managers who have successfully implemented social media in their organization, review relevant documentation, and analyze findings from diverse sources to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the triangulation process.

Transferability concerns whether research conclusions can be applied to other situations while maintaining the purpose and results of the original study (Chowdhury, 2015). It is synonymous with generalization, implying that results from the study can be extended to other scenarios (Stalmeijer et al., 2024). To ensure transferability, the researcher provided a detailed description of data, applicability, data collection steps, accurate recording, analysis, and findings, facilitating the assessment of the study's transferability by future IT leaders and supporting the adoption of similar approaches in future social media implementations in Liberia.

Confirmability refers to the ability of research findings to be replicable and consistent (Ahmed, 2024). Qualitative research's inherent biases, inductive nature, subjectivity, and lack of structure can bring doubt to the research findings. Researchers enhance confirmability by reducing subjectivity and addressing bias (Yin, 2018). Neutrality and accuracy are crucial to maintaining confirmability, and the researcher adhered to these principles throughout the research process. Using NVivo for Mac software for data analysis, the researcher generated themes and established an audit process to assist in investigating and examining study information.

Data saturation occurs when no new findings emerge from newly collected data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). It is recognized when data redundancy leads to repetitive

information without new insights (Aguboshim & Aguboshim, 2021). Failure to achieve

data saturation can introduce biases and inaccuracies in qualitative research findings

(Jabarov, 2023). In my research, data saturation was achieved when no new themes or

insights emerged after interviewing the seventh participant, with the eighth participant

confirming this lack of new information (Alam, 2021). To ensure the accuracy and

reliability of the study's findings, rigorous interviews, member checking, and continuous

data review and examination were conducted until no new results surfaced.

Transition and Summary

Section 3 outlined the research's purpose, role, participant involvement, design,

and methodology. This section discusses the data collection process, including the

instruments, data gathering techniques, population and sampling considerations,

adherence to ethical research practices, and the chosen data analysis methods. A thorough

analysis of strategies was conducted to ensure the reliability and validity of this

qualitative research study. This commitment to trustworthiness is crucial for affirming the

credibility of the research results.

Section 4 presents the study's findings in the context of professional practice

considering its aim to identify strategies employed by IT managers in Liberian

organizations to implement social media successfully. The implications for social change

are also discussed, offering insights into how the research outcomes could influence and

contribute to broader societal change. Finally, various elements are articulated to

encourage and support further inquiry in the relevant domain.

Section 4: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Overview of Study

The purpose of this pragmatic qualitative study is to explore the strategies employed by IT managers in Liberia for implementing social media in their organizations (Ahmadin, 2022; Borah et al., 2022), with the goal of achieving competitive parity with organizations worldwide (Borah et al., 2022). This research explored the practical leadership skills and essential considerations for implementing social media as a transformative IT strategy in Liberian organizations. The current landscape of organizations and business enterprises has undergone a significant transformation due to the pervasive influence of social media, offering unprecedented business opportunities, virtual storefronts, expanded client bases, and global market access (Puriwat & Tripopsakul, 2021). However, in Liberia, IT managers need help with a deficiency in IT knowledge and the strategies needed to navigate the evolving landscape of social media technology effectively (Denton, 2020; Diallo et al., 2023).

Three major themes emerged from the thematic analysis of data capture through a semi-structured interview as outlined in Table 1. The first theme, social media literacy and adoption, emphasizes how IT managers prioritize educating and encouraging the use of social media within their organizations. This involves systematic, technical, and strategic actions to integrate social media tools effectively. The second theme, fostering active and informed social media engagement, highlights the significance of creating engaging and well-informed interactions on social media platforms. This involves developing structured approaches to foster meaningful engagement, including

establishing governance, policies, and resource allocation for managing social media activities. The third theme, streamlining organization operations with strategic social media adoption, illustrates how IT managers leverage social media to enhance organizational operations. This theme focuses on the human element, recognizing that individuals' actions, behaviors, and decisions are crucial in protecting and leveraging social media for organizational benefit.

Table 1

Research Question and Themes

Research question	Themes
RQ - What strategies do IT managers in Liberia organizations employ for implementing social media?	Theme 1: Social Media Literacy and Adoption
	Theme 2: Active and Informed Social Media Engagement
	Theme 3: Streamlining Operations with Strategic Social Media Integration

Note. Table showing the research question and the resulting themes.

Presentation of the Findings

The main research question for this study was: What strategies do IT managers in Liberian organizations employ for implementing social media? In addressing this question, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight IT managers with practical experience in implementing social media strategies in Liberia. Both a purposive and snowball sampling method was applied to identify the participants through Facebook and WhatsApp applications. Surmiak (2020) suggested assigning unique identification

numbers or codes to each interview participant to track their progress while maintaining

privacy. This method is essential for monitoring each participant's progress effectively

and ensuring their privacy throughout the interview. To ensure anonymity and

confidentiality, each participant was assigned a unique alphanumeric code (e.g., P01 for

P01, P02 for P02), as reflected in Table 4.2 below.

Before the interviews', informed consent was obtained from all study participants

through WhatsApp, confirming their willingness to participate. All the participants were

involved in semi-structured interviews conducted via WhatsApp conference call.

WhatsApp's effectiveness in qualitative data collection, especially in settings where face-

to-face interaction is not feasible (Neo et al., 2022; Singer et al., 2023). Each interview

session lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. Data were recorded and transcribed, then

thematic analysis was performed to develop codes, categories, and themes to help answer

the research question. Table 2 below summarizes the length of each interview and the

number of transcribed pages for each transcript.

Table 2

Length of Interview and Pages of Transcripts

Participant	Length of interview	Pages of transcripts
P01	42:43	14
P02	31:46	11
P03	42:27	13
P04	37:19	14
P05	42:54	13
P06	25:44	8
P07	39:51	13
P08	28:59	8

Note. The table shows the summary of the length of each interview and the number of transcribed pages for each transcript.

To further verify the accuracy of the interview transcript, follow-up reviews were scheduled with the participants as part of the member-checking process. In addition, 10 industry documents were gathered (e.g., SD01, SD02, SD03) for literal triangulation, which involves comparing the information obtained from one source, such as an interview, with that from another source, such as industry documents, to ensure consistency and validate the research findings. This approach enhances the validity and credibility of the research outcomes (Sridharan, 2021).

The member-checked interview transcripts and the industry documents were thematically analyzed using the NVivo 1.71 application using the six-step thematic analysis process as defined by (Kennedy & Sariguna, 2022) for qualitative data analysis. Table 2 outlines the initial codes and the categories identified during the coding process. Through thematic analysis, three major themes emerged as strategies IT managers in Liberian enterprises employ for implementing social media: (a) Social Media Literacy and Adoption; (b) Active and Informed Social Media Engagement; and (c) Streamlining Operations with Strategic Social Media Integration. Table 3 outlines each theme, subthemes, and frequency of participants below.

Table 1

Themes and Codes

Themes	Frequency of participants	Codes
Theme 1: Social Media Literacy and Adoption Subtheme: Conducting Regular Training	18	• *Providing education on effective social media utilization* • *Promoting Social Media Engagement Among Peers* • *Demonstrating the Advantages of Social Media* • *Raising Awareness of Various Social Media Platforms* • *Clarifying Misconceptions Surrounding Social Media*
Theme 2: Active and Informed Social Media Engagement	12	• *Disseminating Information* • *Maintaining Consistent Content Posting* • *Offering Educational Resources on Social Media Platforms* • *Senior Management's Adoption of Social Media*
Theme 3: Streamlining Operations with Strategic Social Media Integration	9	• *Implementing a Corporate Policy for Social Media Utilization* • *Utilizing Email to Inform Stakeholders of New Social Media Platforms* • *Leveraging Social Media as a Marketing Tool for Business* • *Enhancing Convenience and Efficiency through Social Media* • *Selecting User-Friendly Social Media Platforms*

Note. Table showing themes and codes

Finding From Participants Interview

All study participants indicated that they had used social media in their

organization and implemented social media literacy and adaptation strategies for

educating staff and users. These education strategies include demonstrating the benefits that the use of social media in their enterprises would bring.

Theme 1: Social Media Literacy and Adoption

Social media literacy and adoption in Liberian enterprises emerged as the first theme during the interview data analysis. IT managers in Liberian enterprises implement comprehensive efforts as part of their social media literacy and adoption strategies. These strategies include conducting routine training for users on social media usage, addressing resistance to the adaptation of new social media technology, encouraging partners and clients to engage with social media, outlining the benefits of social media use, raising awareness of social media platforms, demystifying misconceptions surrounding social media, and facilitating information sharing through these platforms (Chen et al., 2020; Doe, 2021). Study participants mentioned that they had to teach employees, encourage them to use social media, and demonstrate the benefits the enterprise would accrue if social media were embraced. This is consistent with the current literature. In Liberia, IT managers need help with a deficiency in IT knowledge and the strategies needed to navigate the evolving landscape of social media technology effectively (Denton, 2020; Diallo et al., 2023).

Given social media technology's dynamic nature, Liberian enterprises' IT leaders must proactively align their organizations with global social media standards. The increasing use of social media in Liberia underscores the necessity of employing and maintaining an appropriate combination of social media tools and management practices

to protect organizational reputation and integrity while preventing potential security breaches by hackers.

The strategic implementation of social media practices and robust IT knowledge can protect Liberian enterprises from various threats. Table 4 presents the subthemes, the number of participants, the frequency of references to each theme by participants, the number of documents reviewed, and the references to each theme. This table emphasizes the importance of social media literacy and adoption within the broader context of the current technological landscape.

Table 4

References to Social Media Literacy and Adoption Subthemes

Major themes (subthemes)	n	Participants No. of references	Document N	No. of reference
Subtheme 1	8	23	10	54
Subtheme 2	8	25	10	53
Subtheme 3	8	35	10	5

Subtheme 1: Training Employees in Social Media Usage

Conducting routine training on social media within an organization is crucial for maintaining security, ensuring effective use, and promoting responsible social media practices. This training addresses various literacy strategies, ensuring employees are well-versed in the latest technological updates and platforms. P01 noted that his department conducts routine training sessions whenever the organization adopts updates or new social media platforms. He stated, "If it is a new software, maybe from time to time, you

can bring a brush off someone to teach them how to maybe do it or if it has been updated with the new updates."

Similarly, P02 emphasized the importance of training whenever new technology is introduced. He remarked, "Anytime the company has new technology that is coming in, IT managers would make sure that they have training so that employees can make use of that technology."

P03 added that his organization holds quarterly training meetings to ensure that all employees are knowledgeable about the technology in use, reinforcing the regularity and importance of these training sessions.

> Okay. We also have a training IT. In IT, we have more than training. Most of the technology that we bring, that one day, if I was in the field, in the middle of the week, so they give me just one iPad of it. So, a lot of other things are to be used within our area. So, we have this quarterly training mode… We think they have another concern. We think that they have limited knowledge of how to use it. So, I think we can see what you're seeing.

P04 further elaborated on this concept by explaining that his organization uses various social media platforms and technology features to serve different teams. Consequently, they conduct routine training sessions every other week to accommodate new changes in social media use. P04 highlighted the need for frequent training due to the large number of users in Liberia who are not computer-savvy or familiar with social media, stating,

We have a lot of users here in Liberia who are not computer-savvy, better yet,

using social media, so you can see why, as IT managers, we have to provide more

and more training for the user.

P05 discussed the implementation of social media within his organization,

emphasizing the importance of subsequent training meetings. He noted that his

department organizes initial online meetings to introduce the platform, followed by

dividing members into clusters specific to their team needs. P05 elaborated, "We first

hold online meetings to introduce the platform and then later divide members into

clusters specific to their individual team needs."

P06 echoed similar sentiments, highlighting that their organization builds training

sessions within the platform due to its global nature. He emphasized the need for group

training using Microsoft Teams or Zoom, tailored to each organization's unique needs.

P06 stated,

We first had training for IT in general, then the IT Africa team also had training. I

train each member of the IT team to be able to train others. We first had training

for all staff online. Then, we divided them into teams based on geographical

location. We had training for those in Monrovia, Inpikano, and Inprevisence.

IT managers in these Liberian organizations understood that they have different

generations of people. Some people were too rigid to accept introducing new

technologies in the organization. Owing to these differences in perspectives, study

participants strategically encouraged some members to embrace new technologies. For

example, P01 said that he had to encourage the older generation to embrace the new

technologies that the company is introducing since that is where the world is headed. P01 said,

> So, we need to encourage the other generations to understand that this is where we are right now in the world. It's not like before. Moreover, a few years from now, it's not going to be like this. So, to stay on top of things, you need to stay in the making of things, and you have to be able to get along.

P07 and P08 underscored the importance of addressing the need for more basic IT knowledge and social media exposure among users within their organization. Their literacy and training methods involve bringing users together in general meeting settings to provide basic IT skill training, responsible social media use, and communication of the organization's policies and expectations. P07 stated, "We bring them in a training conference to train them on using the internet and what they can post on our company's social media website."

P08 added, "We send an email to their department manager to schedule a meeting with their members for us to train them on using the internet and what they can post on our social media page or what they cannot post."

IT managers in Liberia recognize the critical importance of regular training sessions as an integral component of their social media implementation strategy. Such measures are essential for organizational security and the effective utilization of social media platforms. These training sessions equip users with the necessary skills and knowledge to use social media responsibly, stay current with new technological advancements, and comply with the organization's policies and expectations.

Subtheme 2: Addressing Resistance to Adaptation of New Technology

In examining the resistance to adopting new technologies within Liberian enterprises, it is evident that IT managers understand the diverse knowledge and experience levels among users. This underscores the necessity of tailored training to address this resistance effectively. Unfamiliarity with new technologies significantly contributes to this resistance. Interview analyses reveal that IT managers know some users' reluctance toward new technologies.

Due to employees' varying perspectives, study participants felt compelled to encourage certain members to embrace new technologies actively. P01 highlighted the necessity of motivating older employees to accept new technologies, noting the global trend toward technological integration. P01 emphasized this point by stating, "We do our best to encourage them to understand that this is where we are right now in the world. It's not like before. And a few years from now, it's not going to be like this." This underscores the importance of staying current with technological advancements to maintain competitiveness.

Similarly, P07 discussed the need to address resistance from employees unfamiliar with social media. P07 explained that overcoming resistance to new social media platforms involves clarifying that these platforms (e.g., WhatsApp or Facebook) would be used for organizational communication. Consequently, staff were encouraged to adopt these platforms to stay informed about important information. P07 elaborated,

> So, we encourage you. So based on that, some people are not social media
> friendly, but we encourage them for the sake of the job. We want you to get on

WhatsApp, and we get on Messenger, even if you do not post anything, but want to use your Messenger and WhatsApp information so we can fully communicate and carry out our work.

Moreover, P03 discussed the resistance to integrating a new social media feature into their organization. Specifically, during the introduction of the Yammar feature, "There was considerable resistance from users due to their lack of knowledge." P03 outlined the strategy employed, which involved providing encouragement and demonstrating the benefits of the application to upper management. Eventually, this approach changed user mindsets and fostered acceptance of the new technology. P03 described the process: "So, we thought it was to implement that Yamma feature and then encourage people. It was a little challenging getting people to integrate into it, but then we encouraged most of the staff to be able to get their homes and then get on board."

The resistance to new technology adoption in Liberian enterprises stems from users' unfamiliarity and varied experiences with the technology. IT managers are crucial in mitigating this resistance through targeted training, motivation, and strategic encouragement. Their efforts ensure that organizations remain competitive and integrate new technological advancements effectively.

Subtheme 3: Highlighting Social Media Benefits

Another subtheme identified under social media literacy and adoption is the emphasis on highlighting the benefits of social media. This process involves demonstrating the advantages of social media use and dispelling myths surrounding its implementation. The initial knowledge stage introduces social media platforms to users

and raises awareness of their benefits, while the subsequent persuasion stage focuses on convincing users of these benefits (Adae et al., 2023). This approach is consistent with the study findings. For example, P05 described how, within their church, it was necessary to demonstrate the practical benefits of social media in a religious setting. P05 went further to implement new technologies in the church to illustrate their advantages to others. He stated,

> Personally, I decided to just take on it because our folks did not understand the concept behind IT being introduced in the church. I just started doing some stuff on my own. We had a projector, and sometimes, I just mounted the projector on the bench and did simple PowerPoint. And later, we migrated to Facebook Live. Apart from Facebook Live, we also introduced the church YouTube page, where we started uploading YouTube videos and what have you. We've basically been involved deeply with Facebook Live.

Similarly, P01 and P04 discussed the necessity of convincing users who feared being replaced by new technologies. P01 highlighted the need to demystify such myths, stating,

> Some people are afraid of the unknown, and they feel like these things come to take their jobs or maybe the young person who knew it too much would come and take that job from them... But yeah, it's just about organizations understanding that they have different crowds within the organization and trying to break it down to the level of each of these groups of people.

P04 emphasized the importance of convincing stakeholders in his organization by outlining the benefits of implementing social media. He noted,

I had to convince them that having Facebook and WhatsApp will make it easy for us to share what we are doing, and people can see it from anywhere in the world. Also, WhatsApp will make it easy for us to call people around the world without using phone cards.

P06 and P07 both suggested that highlighting the benefits of social media was crucial for its adoption in their organizations. P06 remarked,

They were comfortable with just having a school webpage. I had to convince them that most students check their Facebook page many times a day, and having our organization's Facebook page will allow us to disseminate information quickly and effectively.

P07, on the other hand, had to convince his organization's management that Facebook and WhatsApp are not just for young people stating: "We can use it to reach young people around the world."

Highlighting the benefits of social media and demystifying its myths are essential strategies for its adoption in Liberian enterprises. These efforts help overcome resistance, enhance communication, and leverage social media's potential to reach a broader audience.

Theme 1 highlights the strategies employed by IT managers in Liberian enterprises in implementing social media in their organizations. Participants P05, P01, and P04 emphasized the need to demonstrate the practical benefits of social media in

their respective organizations. For instance, P05 illustrated how implementing social media in a church setting, such as Facebook Live and YouTube, helped the congregation understand its advantages. Similarly, P04 highlighted the ease of sharing information globally and making international calls without phone cards through platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp. Both P01 and P04 addressed fears among employees about being replaced by younger, tech-savvy workers, underscoring the importance of demystifying these misconceptions and adapting to the workforce's diverse needs.

However, P06 and P07 focused on convincing management and stakeholders about the benefits of social media to ensure its adoption. P06 highlighted that having a Facebook page for their school could facilitate quick and effective information dissemination to students, demonstrating the platform's utility beyond a traditional webpage. P07 tackled the misconception that social media platforms, such as Facebook and WhatsApp, were only for young people, emphasizing their potential to connect with a broader audience, including young people globally. While all participants aimed to showcase the advantages of social media, their strategies varied in terms of the specific IT benefits emphasized and the stakeholders targeted for convincing them, reflecting a tailored approach to overcoming resistance and promoting adoption within their organizations.

Integrating Theme 1 Findings With the Conceptual Framework

The findings in Theme 1 align closely with the DOI theory, which underpins the conceptual framework of this study. DOI theory, proposed by Everett Rogers, provides a comprehensive understanding of how innovations such as social media technologies are

adopted within a social system. In the context of Liberian organizations, adopting social media aligns with key DOI attributes: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Rogers, 2003). For instance, the perceived relative advantage of social media over traditional communication methods drives its adoption as it offers enhanced connectivity and efficiency in information dissemination (Amini & Javid, 2023). Additionally, the compatibility of social media with existing organizational practices and the broader sociocultural environment in Liberia facilitates its acceptance and integration (Adae et al., 2023).

Linking Findings to Existing Literature

The findings in Theme 1 also resonate with existing literature on effective IT practices, particularly in the adoption and implementation of social media in emerging markets. Studies have highlighted the transformative impact of social media on business operations, including enhanced stakeholder engagement and improved strategic initiatives (Anderson, 2023; Baytak, 2023). In Liberia, IT leaders face unique challenges, such as limited Internet infrastructure, data security concerns, and regulatory hurdles, which is consistent with the broader issues identified in the literature (Akua & Twum, 2021; Mensah et al., 2021). These challenges underscore the need for robust strategies to ensure successful social media integration, a theme echoed in global research on technology adoption in similar contexts (Abbas et al., 2019; Doe, 2021).

Thematic Analysis and Conceptual Connections

The thematic analysis conducted in this study provides critical insights into the factors influencing social media adoption by Liberian enterprises. These insights are

framed within the stages of the DOI innovation-decision process: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation (Rogers, 2003). For example, the knowledge stage involves awareness and education about the benefits of social media, which aligns with findings on the importance of digital literacy and training for IT managers and employees. The persuasion stage, which focuses on convincing stakeholders of the advantages of social media, parallels the identified need to demonstrate its relative advantage over traditional methods (Anderson, 2023). These connections between thematic findings and DOI stages provide a structured approach to understanding the adoption dynamics within Liberian organizations.

Enhancing Research Validity Through Triangulation

To enhance the validity and credibility of the study outcomes, the researcher employed literal triangulation by comparing interview data with industry documents. This approach ensures consistency and validates Sridharan's (2021) findings. By corroborating interview insights with documented evidence from industry reports, this study confirms the identified themes and strategies used by IT leaders in Liberia. This methodological rigor aligns with best practices in qualitative research, emphasizing the importance of multiple data sources to substantiate findings and provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Cheung et al., 2023; Hossain, 2020). This triangulation strengthens the study's conclusions and offers actionable insights for IT managers and policymakers striving to navigate the complexities of social media implementation in the Liberian context.

Theme 2: Active and Informed Social Media Engagement

This theme examines the strategies implemented by study participants to cultivate active and informed social media engagement within Liberian organizations. Participants indicated that they used social media platforms to communicate effectively with employees and customers. Additionally, they provide employees with resources to enhance their understanding and proficiency in social media platforms. Another critical strategy involves IT managers encouraging senior management to adopt and integrate social media into their organizational practices. Table 5 outlines the subthemes, the corresponding participant count, the frequency of each theme's mention by participants, the total number of documents examined, and the references to each theme.

Table 2

References to Social Media Literacy and Adoption Subthemes

Major themes (subthemes)	Participants		Document	
	n	*No. of references*	*N*	No. of reference
Subtheme 1	8	18	10	27
Subtheme 2	8	12	10	38
Subtheme 3	8	16	10	54

Subtheme 1: Using Social Media as a Communication Tool

Recent research by Chen et al. (2020) underscores the increasing prominence of enterprise social media platforms, such as Slack and Microsoft Teams, in enhancing real-time communication and team dynamics. These platforms enable organizations to foster communities, particularly in remote work settings or among geographically dispersed teams.

In practical applications, P02 elaborated on the organization's use of WhatsApp for internal communication. This strategy proved particularly effective during the COVID-19 pandemic when maintaining communication was critical. P02 emphasized the use of WhatsApp, stating that it provided a straightforward and accessible means for employees to stay connected and communicate efficiently. P02 noted.

> Regarding social media implementation, what we use, or what I have used in several areas of our organization, is WhatsApp. WhatsApp has been used for accessible communication and managing stuff as well… Initially, people were not hard to reach, especially during COVID and other reasons why people were not in the office and you needed work to be done. The WhatsApp platform was very efficient for us. So, we implemented it because it helped us with coordination, communication, and implementation.

IT managers have recognized the advantages of using social media to disseminate information, mainly due to its ability to incorporate graphics. This approach aligns with Ansari et al. (2019), who noted that companies in Liberia can effectively use social media to engage with customers, respond to inquiries, and build brand loyalty. These findings resonate with the present study's results.

Participant P03 highlighted the enhanced comprehension and retention of information when delivered graphically, as opposed to text-only formats. P03 explained, "We believed it was important to bring the staff together and enable them to disseminate information graphically. Images tend to stick in people's minds more effectively than text."

Similarly, P06 a Bank IT manager discussed the organization's strategy of using social media platforms to communicate with customers, especially during technical errors. They emphasized the importance of transparency and clear communication in maintaining customer trust and satisfaction. P06 stated,

> So, when we are doing these and having these outages, we use these social media platforms to communicate with users or customers and say precisely what the problem is and how long we will take to treat them… We set up a WhatsApp group to have their technical people and everybody connected so that way we can disseminate information quickly.

Subtheme 2: Providing Resources to Learn

The provision of resources to facilitate the effective use of social media platforms is a crucial strategy highlighted by participants in this study. Four participants noted that their organizations proactively created avenues for employees to enhance their understanding and utilization of social media tools. This aligns with contemporary research emphasizing the importance of continuous learning in digital transformation (Kokolek et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2022).

For instance, during the implementation of the social media platform Opta, P04 reported that they integrated comprehensive learning materials within the platform itself. These materials were designed to support team members in navigating and leveraging the platform's functionalities effectively. P04 elaborated,

> As we rolled out Opta, we ensured team members had access to embedded learning resources. These resources were instrumental in helping employees

understand and maximize the platform's capabilities, facilitating smoother adoption and more effective use.

This approach is consistent with recent findings that underscore the significance of providing accessible and relevant training resources to support digital literacy and platform engagement (Garney et al., 2021; Hall et al., 2023). By embedding educational materials within social media platforms, organizations can foster a more knowledgeable and capable workforce, ultimately enhancing communication, collaboration, and overall organizational performance. P04 outlines,

> So, Opta hosts our ideas of software; within Opta, we have our We have our library. We have our booking site where experts or team members who are going on short MST go to book their tickets. We have the workplace in store there as well. We have talent development and an online learning platform for team members.

Another significant challenge organizations face in implementing social media strategies is the cost of securing reliable internet access. This challenge is consistent with findings by Gupta et al. (2020), who noted that the successful adoption of social media in Liberian organizations necessitates appropriate devices, dependable internet services, and image-capturing tools. Employees and social media managers must have access to computers or smartphones to create and manage content effectively.

Recognizing this barrier, IT managers in the study took proactive measures to mitigate it by providing internet access within the office environment. P08 described how the organization provided Wi-Fi as a resource to ensure employees could engage with

social media platforms during office hours. P08 elaborated, "When they come to the office, they make use of the Wi-Fi, but outside of office hours, internet access is limited due to the high costs."

This approach highlights the importance of organizational support in overcoming infrastructural challenges associated with digital engagement. Recent studies further emphasize that providing employees with the necessary technological infrastructure, including reliable internet access, is critical for maximizing the benefits of social media tools in organizational contexts (Caldera et al., 2021; Southworth et al., 2023). By addressing internet access issues, organizations can enhance their social media engagement efforts, ensuring that employees are equipped to utilize these platforms effectively both within and beyond the office environment. P07 also narrated that they provided staff members with internet services, saying,

> So, in much that we had limited resources, we managed to at least give them data
> to put enough Internet so that the Internet can be on. So, there will be no excuse
> because we said, the media business is a time bomb. And once you want the
> information, and the news in real-time, you need to invest. So, what we used to
> do, usually, we used to put credit on our phones. We should put credit on our
> phone to call.

Subtheme 3: Gaining Approval From Senior Managers

IT managers recognized the critical importance of securing the support of senior management to implement social media strategies within organizations effectively. As a strategic approach, study participants indicated that they initially focused on educating

senior managers about the benefits and importance of social media usage. This approach aligns with the existing literature, underscoring the pivotal role of IT leadership in fostering successful social media adoption in organizational settings.

L. K. Johnson (2022) emphasized the crucial role of IT leadership in implementing social media strategies. Johnson underscores the need for IT leaders to engage senior management by clearly articulating the strategic benefits of social media, thereby securing top-level support and commitment.

For instance, P02 recounted their experience of communicating with senior managers to gain their endorsement for social media initiatives. P02 explained, "I had to speak to the senior managers, and after understanding its importance, they helped enforce the use of social media within the organization." This endorsement from senior management is crucial, as it legitimizes social media efforts and facilitates organizational-wide adoption and integration."

This approach is further supported by recent studies that emphasize the necessity of leadership buy-in to successfully deploy new technologies (Gopakumar et al., 2013; Klempin & Karp, 2018). By securing senior management's understanding and support, IT managers can create a conducive environment for social media initiatives, leading to more robust engagement and organizational benefits. P02 stated,

> So, I think the first thing is to have senior management accepting senior management and embracing it as the first thing. Once they embrace it, they will help to enforce it because after implementation, then at least senior management can be one of those who can help to make sure that it's in use.

Theme 2 delves into the pivotal role of IT managers in fostering active and informed social media engagement within Liberian enterprises. The study participants underscored the significance of equipping staff members with resources to enhance their online customer interactions. Participants strategically leveraged senior managers to support and enforce the implementation of social media platforms across organizations. The insights from Theme 2 provide valuable contributions to address this research question.

By providing resources to staff members, organizations empower their workforce to effectively engage with customers online, strengthen customer relationships, and drive business growth. This aligns with the findings of previous studies that emphasize the importance of resource provision for enhancing social media engagement (Harrigan et al., 2020; Kross et al., 2021).

Furthermore, senior managers' strategic involvement in enforcing the adoption of social media platforms underscores the crucial role of leadership support in driving organizational change. This aligns with research that highlights the significance of leadership buy-in for successful technology adoption initiatives (Doe, 2021; Dwivedi et al., 2023).

Overall, Theme 2 highlights how IT managers are central to orchestrating active and informed social media engagements within Liberian enterprises, ultimately addressing the overarching research question.

The findings from Theme 2, which focus on the application of IT problem-solving within the context of social media implementation in Liberia, are tied closely to the DOI

Theory. This theory, proposed by Rogers (2003), outlines how innovations are adopted within a social system through the knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation stages. The findings align with this framework, particularly in how IT leaders in Liberian enterprises navigate these stages amidst various challenges, including limited internet infrastructure and data security concerns (Mensah et al., 2021). By understanding these stages, IT managers can better strategize their social media adoption processes, ensuring a smoother transition and higher acceptance rates within their organizations.

In the context of DOI theory, the Theme 2 highlights the critical role of relative advantages and compatibility in adopting social media technologies. The perception of social media as a tool that significantly enhances communication and business operations (Mensah et al., 2021) drives its adoption, despite infrastructural and regulatory challenges (Baytak, 2023). This is consistent with DOI attributes that influence adoption, where innovations that offer substantial benefits align well with existing values and practices are more likely to be adopted (Amini & Javid, 2023). Thus, the successful implementation of social media in Liberian organizations hinges on its relative advantage over traditional communication methods and its compatibility with the local business environment.

In linking Theme 2 findings to existing literature, several studies have explored the challenges and strategies related to IT and social media adoption in similar contexts. For instance, Anderson (2023) discusses the proliferation of social media in Liberian enterprises and the strategic endeavors it drives, which aligns with findings on how businesses leverage social media for innovation. Similarly, Adae et al. (2023) provided

insights into adopting digital technologies in African countries, emphasizing the importance of understanding local challenges and opportunities. This literature underscores the broader applicability of DOI theory in diverse contexts, including Liberia. This supports the finding that effective social media implementation requires addressing technical and sociocultural barriers.

Furthermore, the findings underscore t Streamlining Operations with Strategic Social Media Integration he importance of addressing data security and regulatory challenges that are critical for successfully adopting social media technologies in Liberian enterprises. Studies by Bhatt (2018) and Akua and Twum (2021) highlighted similar concerns in other African contexts, noting that data security and regulatory compliance are paramount for IT leaders. These studies support the finding that IT managers must develop comprehensive strategies to mitigate these risks, ensuring the integrity and reliability of social media platforms within their organizations. The emphasis on security aligns with DOI theory's implementation stage, where practical considerations and risk management play a crucial role in the adoption process.

In conclusion, the findings from Theme 2 integrate seamlessly with the conceptual framework provided by the DOI theory and resonate with existing literature on IT practices and social media adoption. By addressing the stages of adoption and emphasizing factors such as relative advantage, compatibility, and security, IT leaders in Liberian organizations can effectively navigate the challenges of implementing social media technologies. This integration validates the findings and provides a robust theoretical foundation for understanding and enhancing social media adoption in

emerging markets. Current references such as those by Anderson (2023), Adae et al. (2023), and Mensah et al. (2021) further reinforce these insights, offering a comprehensive perspective on the complexities and opportunities of IT innovation in Liberia.

Theme 3: Streamlining Operations With Strategic Social Media Integration

Theme 3 addresses using social media for streamlining operations with strategic social media integration within an organization. Participant insights align with the research conducted by Lee (2022), who investigated the application of DOI theories to promote fairness standards in technology adoption. Lee emphasizes the role of social media as an equalizing tool in facilitating business processes. The study participants used various strategies, including leveraging social media for marketing purposes to promote online company products. Additionally, IT managers strategically used company policies to influence social media usage within their organization. Table 6 presents a comprehensive summary of the subthemes, along with the respective participant count, the frequency of mention of each theme by participants, the total number of documents analyzed, and the references to each theme. This information serves as a valuable resource for researchers and practitioners seeking to understand the key themes and issues related to the research topic.

These findings align with contemporary research, indicating that social media is a potent platform for enhancing business operations and fostering innovation (Cartwright et al., 2021; Harrigan et al., 2020). By embracing social media as a marketing tool,

organizations can expand their reach, attract new customers, and increase brand visibility in the digital landscape.

Furthermore, the strategic alignment of company policies with social media usage underscores the importance of governance frameworks in shaping organizational behavior. This approach ensures consistent adherence to social media guidelines and reinforces the culture of compliance. As highlighted by P07, organizations may implement zero-tolerance policies to resist social media usage, emphasizing the significance of organizational norms in driving technology adoption initiatives.

This enforces the role of social media in optimizing business operations, drawing on theoretical frameworks and practical strategies to promote effective technology adoption within organizations. saying, "We have a zero, zero tolerance on resistance because what we did in a moisture, we have limited resources to operate, you know, because it will be formed by the Internet, by an NGO."

Participant P06 also provided insight into organizational policy regarding the use of social media platforms for information dissemination. Within this framework, staff members were mandated to incorporate social media as a means of communication, according to the company's policy. This expectation was grounded in the belief that active engagement across all levels of the organization was essential for effective communication and collaboration.

This organizational approach aligns with contemporary research that emphasizes the strategic integration of social media into corporate communication practices (Cornelissen, 2020; Kross et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2022). By formalizing social media

usage within company policies, organizations can foster a culture of digital engagement and enhance information-sharing among employees.

Furthermore, emphasis on universal participation underscores the importance of inclusivity and collective involvement in social media initiatives. Garney et al. (2021) suggested that encouraging broad-based participation can amplify the impact of social media strategies, leading to greater organizational cohesion and innovation.

P06's narrative highlights the alignment of organizational policy by promoting social media engagement as a foundational element of communication practices. By embedding social media usage expectations in company policies, organizations can cultivate a culture of digital readiness and harness the collective power of employee participation for organizational success. P06 said,

> Sometimes it's mandatory for the fact that you work for the institution and they're trying to maybe use a platform to convey a message. It's mandatory that you participate and make input because it is said that your input may be used as a determination to either go ahead with what the institution is doing or call it a quid. So, your input is always needed.

Table 3

References to Social Media Literacy and Adoption Subthemes

Major themes (subthemes)	*n*	*No. of references*	*N*	No. of reference
	Participants		Document	
Subtheme 1	8	17	10	28

Subtheme 1: Social Media as IT Strategy for Marketing Tool

IT managers' recognition of the pervasive use of social media platforms among customers, facilitated by widespread smartphone and Internet access, underscores the evolving landscape of digital communication. This observation aligns with the findings of Cartwright et al. (2021), which shows the importance of storytelling in social media marketing strategies. Liberian businesses that shared their narratives and experiences on social media platforms forged deeper connections with their audience, fostering positive engagement.

Building upon this understanding, the study participants began leveraging social media platforms as potent marketing tools for promoting their products and services. For instance, P03 articulated the increasing social nature of the contemporary world, with a growing number of individuals constantly engaging with their smartphones. In response to this trend, P03 took proactive steps by collaborating with the marketing department to establish a Facebook account dedicated to showcasing the organization's banking products.

This strategic utilization of social media for marketing purposes reflects industry trends, emphasizing the pivotal role of digital platforms in reaching and engaging target audiences (Cartwright et al., 2021; Garney et al., 2021). By harnessing the storytelling capabilities of social media, organizations can effectively communicate their values, and offerings to resonate with consumers at a deeper level.

Furthermore, the proactive involvement of IT managers in facilitating the adoption of social media marketing initiatives underscores the interdisciplinary nature of

contemporary organizational strategies (Adetunji et al., 2024; Eze et al., 2021; Mason et al., 2021). By collaborating across departments and leveraging digital channels, organizations can optimize their marketing efforts and capitalize on the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior in the digital age. As noted by P03,

> We are marketing now; the world is more social now. So. everybody is on their phone every second. So, one of the other things we thought to do was to see how we could set up a marketing department that would be responsible for marketing the product of the bank. So, in so doing, we have to open up a Facebook page for the bank, and we have to open an Instagram page, and then that is were.

Participant P06 emphasized companies' strategic use of social media platforms as official communication channels with existing customers regarding their products and services. This approach encompasses a strategy that involves social media publicity and targeted advertising campaigns aimed at promoting new products. As P06 articulated,

> Social media publicity and running ads about the new product are integral components of our marketing approach. Additionally, our marketers actively engage with existing customers to communicate official updates about new products and services.

This organizational strategy aligns with contemporary research that emphasizes the pivotal role of social media in customer engagement and brand promotion (DeOliveira Santini et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2022). By leveraging platforms such as Facebook and Instagram's extensive reach and interactive capabilities, companies can

effectively disseminate targeted marketing messages and engage with their customer bases in real time.

Furthermore, Participant P08 talked about the prominence of Facebook and Instagram as preferred advertising channels because of their extensive user bases and robust targeting capabilities. The strategic decision to concentrate advertising efforts on these platforms reflects industry trends that prioritize audience reach and engagement through data-driven marketing strategies (Cartwright et al., 2021; Kross et al., 2021; S. D. Williams, 2023). P08 explained,

> Facebook is the most widely used social media application in Liberia. Next to Facebook is Instagram. I mean, in that in that order of importance. So, most small businesses, medium businesses, and even large corporations usually use Facebook ads, and then secondarily, they use Instagram ads.

In the light of optimizing business operations, study participants advocated for the integration of social media platforms within their organizations, citing their convenience and effectiveness in information dissemination. This strategic shift reflects the broader recognition of the transformative potential of social media in facilitating communication and enhancing operational efficiency. P02 exemplified this perspective by highlighting the prevalent use of WhatsApp within their organization owing to its user-friendly features. P02 elaborated, "We opted for WhatsApp because of its convenience. With WhatsApp, obtaining a person's contact number facilitates easy group creation and communication."

This sentiment was echoed by participant P07, who emphasized the efficacy of chatrooms as communication channels within the organization. P07 remarked, "Chatrooms serve as a highly effective community communication channel. Whether through messenger chat rooms or WhatsApp chat rooms, these platforms offer streamlined and efficient communication avenues."

The widespread adoption of social media platforms within Liberian organizations shows their evolution from mere networking tools to indispensable components of communication and marketing strategies. As noted by Hermanda et al. (2019), social media has assumed a central role in organizational communication, transforming traditional media landscapes and offering cost-effective avenues for marketing initiatives.

This academic perspective is further supported by recent industry documents that highlight the benefits of social media integration in business operations (Cartwright et al., 2021). By harnessing the capabilities of social media platforms for both internal and external communication, organizations can enhance collaboration, engage stakeholders, and capitalize on cost-efficient marketing opportunities, thereby optimizing their overall business performance.

Theme 3 delves into IT managers' strategic initiatives to optimize business operations within their organizations. IT managers have recognized the significance of embracing social media in the digital age and spearheaded efforts to integrate these platforms into organizational practices. This strategic shift was driven by an understanding of the evolving landscape of online engagement, wherein social media has emerged as a pivotal tool for reaching and engaging target audiences.

Central to this theme is the proactive influence exerted by the study participants in promoting the adoption of social media within their organizations, particularly as a potent marketing tool. This strategic alignment with industry trends reflects a broader recognition of the transformative potential of social media in driving organizational visibility and societal engagement in today's interconnected digital ecosystem (Kieh, 2023; Kross et al., 2021).

Moreover, participants emphasized the convenience afforded by social media in facilitating information dissemination, both internally among staff members and externally to customers. This highlights the operational efficiencies gained by integrating social media platforms into communication workflows, enabling organizations to streamline processes and enhance real-time collaboration consistent with contemporary research that recognizes social media as a critical component of modern marketing strategies (Garney et al., 2021).

Additionally, the strategic alignment of company policies with social media usage underscores the importance of governance frameworks in shaping organizational behavior. By formalizing social media guidelines and expectations, organizations can ensure consistent adherence and reinforce a culture of compliance. This approach is supported by recent literature that highlights the significance of policy-driven frameworks in facilitating effective technology adoption. Studies by Brodin and Rose (2020) and Jiao et al. (2024) suggest that clear policies and guidelines are essential for fostering a culture of digital engagement and enhancing information-sharing among employees.

Overall, the findings from Theme 3 contribute valuable insights into strategic imperatives that guide IT managers in optimizing business operations through social media integration. By aligning their efforts with the broader conceptual framework and the existing literature, IT managers can leverage the pervasive reach and interactive capabilities of social media platforms to cultivate a more substantial brand presence, foster customer relationships, and drive sustainable growth in today's dynamic digital landscape. This integration enhances operational efficiency and positions organizations to capitalize on emerging opportunities in the digital age.

Application to Professional Practice

IT managers in Liberia can apply the findings of this study to enhance the implementation of social media within their organizations, address current IT challenges, and leverage social media as a transformative tool for enterprise operations. This study highlights the importance of promoting social media literacy and adoption among employees, which can be achieved through regular training and workshops. By conducting these literacy training, IT managers can ensure that employees are well versed in using social media platforms, thus enhancing overall engagement and productivity. Regular training also helps demystify the myths surrounding social media, reducing resistance from employees, who may fear job displacement due to new technologies. This approach aligns with the findings of Adae et al. (2023), who emphasized the importance of educating employees on the benefits and uses of social media in professional settings.

Building an active and informed social media engagement is also a crucial strategy identified in this study. IT managers should use social media platforms as communication

tools to facilitate real-time information-sharing and team collaboration. Using platforms such as WhatsApp for internal communication, as highlighted by P02, proved effective during the COVID-19 pandemic and could continue to enhance remote work capabilities. Additionally, providing resources such as reliable internet access and access to learning materials can empower employees to utilize social media more effectively. Recent research by Chen et al. (2020) supports the use of enterprise social media platforms to improve team dynamics and create a sense of community within organizations, especially in remote or dispersed work environments. This strategy improves internal communication fosters a culture of continuous learning and fosters the adaptation to new technology.

IT managers should integrate social media into their marketing strategies and company policies to optimize business operations through strategic social media adoption. Social media platforms can be powerful marketing tools that allow organizations to reach a broader audience and engage with customers more effectively. Implementing company policies that mandate the use of social media for specific business functions can standardize its usage and ensure consistency across organizations. As noted by P06, making social media engagement a mandatory part of employees' roles ensures their active participation and contribution to the organization's goals. This strategy is reinforced by Cartwright et al.'s (2021) findings, which highlight the importance of storytelling in social media marketing for establishing a deeper connection with the audience. By embedding social media into an organization's operations, IT managers can drive efficiency, enhance customer engagement, and achieve competitive parity with global enterprises.

Implications for Social Change

Integrating social media into Liberian enterprises offers profound implications for social change, specifically, IT strategies and organizational transformation. For IT and organizational leaders, the strategic use of social media can significantly enhance operational efficiency and customer engagement. Organizations can streamline communication and collaboration, and drive innovation and cross-functional teamwork by fostering a digital culture that prioritizes social media literacy and structured adoption. This approach aligns with the research by Adae et al. (2023), who emphasized the importance of educating employees on the benefits and uses of social media in professional settings, thereby reducing resistance and enhancing productivity.

Furthermore, the strategic use of social media within organizations can catalyze social change by amplifying the voices of marginalized communities and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Encouraging employee participation in social media dialogue can foster a sense of belonging and facilitate an exchange of diverse perspectives and experiences. This inclusive approach can challenge entrenched power dynamics and biases, ultimately creating more equitable environments within the workplace and in broader communities (Hermanda et al., 2019).

For the research community in a Liberian context, these findings highlight the need for ongoing exploration of the impact of social media on organizational practices and societal change. Researchers should focus on the long-term effects of social media integration on employee well-being, productivity, and organizational culture. Additionally, examining the role of social media in driving CSR initiatives can provide

valuable insights into how organizations can use these platforms to enhance transparency and stakeholder engagement (Lee, 2022).

Using social media within Liberian enterprises allows organizations to enhance their operational effectiveness and contribute to positive societal change. By aligning social media strategies with overarching social goals, companies can position themselves as responsible corporate citizens and agents of social progress. This approach not only improves internal organizational dynamics but also supports collective efforts to address pressing global challenges, thereby fostering a spirit of collective action toward social and environmental stewardship (Gupta et al., 2020)

Recommendations for Action

To effectively implement social media within Liberian organizations, IT managers should focus on enhancing social media literacy and adoption. This can be achieved through structured training programs and workshops that educate the staff on the strategic use of social media tools. Emphasizing the importance of social media in achieving organizational goals encourages active participation and reduces resistance to adoption. Developing clear governance policies and allocating resources for social media management will ensure consistent and informed engagement across organizations. This structured approach fosters meaningful interaction on social media platforms, ultimately enhancing customer engagement and operational efficiency.

Furthermore, IT managers should leverage social media to streamline organizational operations by integrating these platforms into their daily workflow. This involves creating a digital culture that views social media as a strategic enabler rather

than just an auxiliary tool. Encouraging employees to use social media for collaboration and communication can enhance innovation and cross-functional teamwork. Establishing mechanisms to continually monitor and evaluate social media initiatives to refine strategies based on performance data is crucial. By embedding social media deeply into organizational practices, IT managers can significantly improve both their operational effectiveness and their competitive positioning in the global market.

Recommendations for Further Research

The insights from exploring social media integration within Liberian organizations indicate that several fruitful avenues for further research are left open. Integration approaches are required to understand the business implications and applications of social media in a corporate context that is evergreen and open-ended, indefinitely serving the purpose of further research. This study proposes that such mandates require follow-up studies to ascertain their long-term impacts on employee well-being and productivity. Although the current findings suggest mandating social media involvement to inculcate a culture of digital fluency, it is essential to know the kinds of risks and unintended consequences that this might lead to. Researchers should further examine the consequences of increased expenditure on social media on employees on the stress level, work-life balance, and overall job satisfaction to ensure that organizations strike a healthy balance between productivity and employee welfare.

Further, studying emerging social media channels and their relevance to various organizational purposes deserves long-term interest. With the explosion in new technologies and social media trends, there is a need to ensure that they are strategically

relevant in addition to potential security risks and customer shifts. Longitudinal research, over time, studying the change in social media and its impact on business operations would provide organizations with such agility and responsiveness to the dynamic world in the digital mode.

Social media interaction with CSR initiatives is a wide-open channel for further research. Hence, investigations need to be undertaken on how an organization can best use social media to make its sustainability louder and more transparent and engage stakeholders in meaningful appeals related to social and environmental values. Therefore, understanding the synergies between social media and CSR will result in informed corporate strategies that are more impactful and purposeful.

Finally, the role of social media in driving organizational innovation and cross-functional collaboration deserves further investigation. It may include social media-based innovations—surfacing key success factors and best practices that enable organizations to tap into the collective intelligence and creativity of their workforce. Ascertaining such innovations will create more effective frameworks for integrating social media into the organizational culture and decision-making processes.

Conclusions

The successful integration of social media in an organization's operations and culture requires a combination of factors beyond policies and platforms. There needs to be a change in mindset; social media should be viewed as a strategic enabler, not just something for the company to have on its list of alternatives. These assertive communication and collaboration tools can only be leveraged if the culture built around

digital fluency does so by investing in long-term resources and expert skills anchored in connecting social media initiatives to overall business goals. The payoff from effective social media integration goes far beyond essential operational effectiveness since this might act as the lever of social change to magnify the voices of the underrepresented, ensure accountability, and foster a spirit of collective action toward solving global problems.

As the digital landscape keeps changing, organizations that remain flexible, responsive, and dedicated to pushing the envelope in terms of the transformative power of social media will flourish within the current business climate. The guidance and suggestions offered in this study are provided to set the stage for organizations aiming to carve a way forward in sensitivity and responsibility-wielding through a maze of social media incorporation.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol Guide

Thank you for your time in this interview. Your involvement is entirely voluntary and you can choose to withdraw at any stage of the process. As a token of appreciation, a final report will be made available to you, potentially aiding the evaluation of your retention strategies and processes. To ensure accuracy, this interview will be recorded.

TURN ON RECORDING SESSION !

Here is the proposed structure for our session:

1. **Introduction**: I'll introduce myself to you.
2. **Consent Form**: We'll discuss each section of the consent form, addressing any queries you may have.
3. **Participant Introduction**: I'll introduce you with an assigned pseudonym, noting the interview details.
4. **Questionnaire**: We'll proceed with the approved questions #1-8.
5. **Follow-up Questions**: I may pose additional questions for clarification or expansion.
6. **Conclusion**: We'll conclude the interview, concluding the recording.
7. **Member Checking**: I'll inform you about the member checking process to ensure the accuracy of the transcript.
8. **Acknowledgment**: Thank you for sharing your insights on retaining qualified IT employees. I'll provide contact information for any further questions or concerns.

If you have no reservations or questions, we can commence with the recording session.

Appendix B: Participant Invitation Letter

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Romeo Namba Yleah, and I am a doctoral candidate pursuing a PhD in Information Technology at Walden University.

I am conducting a comprehensive doctoral study to explore the IT strategies employed by Information Technology Managers in implementing social media within their organizations. Your extensive skills, knowledge, and experience in this field make you an ideal candidate for participation in this research.

Attached to this letter is a consent form that provides detailed information about the study's objectives, procedures, and your rights as a participant. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me via email at xxxx.xxxxx@waldenu.edu or on my mobile phone at 678-XXX-XXXX.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and your contribution is crucial in uncovering strategies that can significantly enhance successful social media implementation. As a token of appreciation for your time and insights, participants will receive a gift card upon completion of the study. You are free to accept the invitation or withdraw at any time without any penalty.

Your positive response and valuable input would be greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for considering participation in this study.

Best regards,

Romeo Namba Yleah

Appendix C: Screening Questions
Screening Questions

1. How many years of experience do you have as an IT manager, specifically in the context of Liberian enterprises?

2. Can you provide details about your involvement in implementing social media strategies within your organization over the past five years?

3. As an IT manager, do you have direct reports within your organization, and what level of authority do you possess in decision-making regarding social media implementation strategies?

4. Are you willing and authorized to provide comprehensive information and actively participate in research focusing on effective social media implementation strategies within Liberian enterprises?

Appendix D: Doctoral Student Researchers Basic Course (CITI)

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 26-May-2022
Expiration Date N/A
Record ID 49140353

This is to certify that:

Romeo Yleah

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of
certification through CME.

Student's
(Curriculum Group)
Doctoral Student Researchers
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Walden University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

101 NE 3rd Avenue, Suite 320
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US
www.citiprogram.org

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wa0c05f84-5c9e-41b8-8a68-1387647f5cc7-49140353

Appendix E: Interview Questions

1. Can you describe the specific social media innovations that have been implemented in your organization, and what led to the decision to adopt them?

2. How do IT managers in your organization typically communicate information about social media innovations to stakeholders and other users?

3. In your experience, what communication channels have proven most effective in conveying the benefits and features of social media to employees within the organization?

4. How do IT managers identify and address any resistance or concerns from employees during the initial stages of social media implementation?

5. Can you provide insights into the timeframe it took for your organization to fully integrate social media into its daily operations and processes?

6. What challenges or obstacles were encountered during the implementation of social media, and how were they overcome?

7. From your perspective, how do IT managers measure the success or effectiveness of social media implementation within the organization?

8. In what ways have IT managers adapted or customized social media strategies to suit the specific needs and culture of the organization?

9. How does the organization encourage and facilitate continuous learning and training for employees regarding the use of social media tools and platforms?

10. Could you share examples of positive experiences or success stories related to social media implementation within your organization?

11. How has the diffusion of social media innovations influenced the overall organizational culture and communication patterns within your enterprise?

12. Have there been any instances where the adoption of social media in your organization faced resistance or skepticism from key stakeholders or the broader community?

13. What strategies or initiatives have been implemented to address and overcome challenges related to social system or community acceptance of social media innovations?

14. How has the organization fostered a culture of innovation and openness to change in the context of implementing social media technologies?

15. Can you elaborate on any specific policies or guidelines that have been developed to govern the responsible and secure use of social media within the organization?