



# Adoption, Motivation and Patterns of Social Media Use among Women in Nigeria

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## Abstract

The advent of digitisation which has ushered in the new and social media is providing opportunities for all to redefine and form their identities. Hence, across countries and cultures, new digital cultures are evolving, shading off repressive tendencies and giving voice to the voiceless. It is against this backdrop that this study “adoption, motivation and patterns of social media use among women in Nigeria” set out to assess the level at which women in Nigeria are digital compliant particularly in the use of social media, what motivates their presence in social media and the patterns of social media usage among them. Anchored on the Uses and Gratification as well as the Diffusion of Innovation Theories, the paper surveyed 384 females drawn from the six geo political zones of Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. Data collected and analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics revealed an adoption and use of social media by females of all categories but especially the younger females. The study also showed that, in terms of motivation and patterns of use, younger females’ preference for social media lies in their need for popularity and self-identity, while the older females basically use social media for business and self-improvement. The paper in general concludes that, Nigerian women use of social media is not beneficial in terms of self and economic development

and information sharing. The impact of social media on the 2011 Egyptian Revolution perhaps led to Gawhry [5] labelling the phenomenon as the “Facebook and Twitter revolution”. With attributing features of smart phones that allows for easy instant messaging, photo processing and a host of others, the social media revolution became imminent in almost every part of the world including Nigeria. They ‘inform the populace, set agenda for social discourse and hold public opinion’ [6]. In addition, cultures are defined, redefined and formed through the use of social media popularly identified as ‘digital culture’.

Implicitly, individuals and groups are no longer passive consumers of media fares as once attainable with traditional media. They are active producers and consumers of information as their needs and desires demand. However, the presence, patterns of use and motivating factors towards and among users of social media is not similar. For instance, in a survey of over 39 countries across the globe, young adults were reported to use social media more than adults [7]. Gender-wise, more women in advanced countries such as Spain, US, Sweden, Israel etc. use social media more than men, while the reverse is the case when it comes to developing countries such as Nigeria [7,8]. In African countries, the situation is tilted towards more males using social media than women. But on the whole, a consistent increase in social media use is reported across the globe and Africa but with lesser females than males. In addition, the Poushter, et al. [7] reveal other factors such as education and economic status as determining social media use, as those with higher income adapts and use social media more. In terms of motivation for usage, Chen [9] aver that, younger generation females employ social media usage mainly for entertainment and connection as well updating information and pictures.

While social media has been used by varying groups with shared ideologies to mobilise and enhance social interaction and relationships [10,11], same has been employed to advance economic and individual self-growth such as introducing and

**Keywords:** Adoption; Motivation; Patterns; Social Media; Women

## Introduction

Since its emergence, digitization has continued to profoundly affect the society and its components. Its very prominent element – the ‘social media’ has created platforms for increased visibility [1], activism [2-4]. The Internet, especially the World Wide Web in the 1990s, coupled with personal computers and smart phones opened whole new avenues for communication

advertising businesses online, searching for job opportunities as well as connecting with groups and individuals with shared business ideologies etc. [12,13]. All for the sake of advancing an economy.

Consequently, it is not wholly certain the situation as obtainable in Nigeria especially with regards to presence of women in the social media, how or the purposes for which they employ the social media as well as the motivational factors that attracts them to the social media. Against this foundation, this paper therefore attempts to examine the level of adoption, of social media, what motivates towards the use of social media and the pattern of social media use amongst women in Nigeria.

The paper was guided by the following questions: what is the level of social media adoption amongst women in Nigeria? What are the motivational factors for the adoption of social media by Nigerian women? What is the pattern of social media use among Nigeria women? Concerted effort was made to answer these questions taking into the cognizance the differences that exist between younger and older females regarding the studied variables.

## Methodology

### Conceptual clarification

Social media may mean a lot of things. But basically, it relies on internet and web based tools and services to enable anyone to publish, retrieve or exchange information be it data, audio or video on the web. The study is concerned about how Women - adult females from 18 years and above adopts and use the social media. Adoption is the act or process of beginning to use something that is new or different.

Motivation as used in this paper, refers to the need or reason for doing something in a particular way. It applies to the reason why women use social media the way they do. Smock, et al. [14] outline relaxing and entertainment, expressive information sharing, companionship, professional advancement; social interaction and habitual pass time with relationship as highest motivators for using social media especially Facebook.

Pattern means a particular way in which something is done. In Terms of usage, how do women use social media? Do the patterns or ways of using social media differs between female adults and younger females? These, the researchers hope to establish in this study.

### Literature review

The digital technology especially its components such as the social media has been in the burner as formidable topic for discuss among scholars across the globe. This section thus x-rays the trend of discourse in social media presence, and patterns of use among accessors in general but women in particular.

The African continent – in its multiple socio-cultural and political complexities between the mid-1990s and early 2000 was seen as sitting on the cusp of the digital revolution, or perceived as

dumbstruck in the ‘techno-euphoric moment of wonderment and awe’ [15]. The internet, has been the most significant manifestation of the new media’ [16] across the globe. With it came the unparalleled diffusion and prevalence of the mobile phone across social classes in Africa shaping everyday life through phone-based text messages (SMS), thus standing out as a compelling tool for alternative communication in the developing world [17] as well as Mobile banking [18,19]. In the same way, the new media has impacted the lives of women variously.

Most prominent in the general outcry of women marginalisation in societies has been the lack of women representation in traditional mass media of television, radio and newspaper/magazine. The status quo is however expected to have changed with the arrival of digital media with its functional elements like the internet and its social media tools. According to PewResearch [20], more women presences is recorded on social media in some western and some Arab countries around the globe including Africa. This is an indication of more women realising the potentials and taken advantage of digital technologies to keep track of the changing world. It also means women too can have a voice of their own with the opportunity to create and form identity for themselves without partrichal restrictions. Inarguably therefore, women in particular but people generally have needs or motivations that propels them towards adoption of social media.

Social media features have made possible interactive ways of benefitting users. Sheedy [21] avers that, users engage in the use of social media platforms mainly to:

Virtually join a group, get updates and message about a group, read, post, or comment on news and information, receive/send private messages with group leaders and members, read and engage in transparent conversations that can be seen by others and “lurk” in a group – read information without making oneself known as a follower or member of the group.

Smock et al., [14] outlines relaxing and entertainment, expressive information sharing, companionship, professional advancement; social interaction and habitual pass time. Furthermore, Social media helps to reach a wider audience leveraging the “long tail” concept, which means conversation can be conveyed to different forums, Edosomuran et al. [13], speed up conversations in a more interactive way that makes communication more effective and worthwhile, [10], “learn about and explore things, advertise things, advertise one self and form friendships” [11] as well as help mobilize people to achieve a goal or effecting a change in the society for a noble cause.

While myriad of motivational factors abound for social media adoption and use generally, differences between motivational factors determining gender and type of social media use have been espoused among scholars [22]. Both males and females are recorded to have different reasons for social media usage [9,23]. Other studies also find generational differences in the application and use of digital technology. Fietkiewicz, et al. [24], In a study to compare generation X, Y, Z usage of social media, Fietkiewicz, et al. [24] find that social media users who fall into the category

of Generation X (older females) are more likely to use business-oriented networking services such as Twitter and for sharing business and political information, news, or research updates with strangers. While Generation Y (users born between 1980 and 1995), on the other hand, are more likely to use a traditional networking platform, such as Facebook mainly to communicate and share information with friends. Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Myspace etc. are however the most popular platforms among women in general [25]. For Nigerian women, Pew Research [20] identifies Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn as the most popular among them. In terms of amount of time spent on social media, younger females are considered to be greatly exposed to social media and at a much more prolonged period than adult females [20].

Pew Research Center [26] stressing on this assertion that:

They are history's first "always connected" generation. Steeped in digital technology and social media, they treat their multi-tasking hand-held gadgets almost like a body part – for better and worse. More than eight-in-ten say they sleep with a cell phone glowing by the bed, poised to disgorge texts, phone calls, emails, songs, news, videos, games and wake-up jingles (p, 1).

Social media tools are a space for women to advocate for their causes, speak up to the public, have a say in public policies, and empower themselves to be active citizens. Daher [27]. Therefore, whatever the reasons that trigger the social media use among women, a certainty lies in the fact, it represents a platform for self-expression among women. Be it for social networking, professional and self-update, maintaining and establishing new relationships etc., social media as a digital form is timely.

Consequently, while a great number of scholars have delved extensively into the study of digital technologies but especially social media, much emphasis has been laid on comparing various aspects of social media adoption and use between males and females. Furthermore, concentration is laid on generational differences in the use of social media platforms. Only a few studies and even far more less within Nigerian environment have tried to study the application and adoption of social media between females – to explore the ways through which they use the media to serve their needs and enhance societal growth. This study thus hope to fill this lacuna by assessing the use of social media among Nigerian women with the intention of establishing the pattern of use as well critically presenting the assumed consequences of same on individuals and society in general.

### Theoretical backing

The paper forms its theoretical base on the Diffusion of Innovation as well as the Uses and Gratification Theories.

### Diffusion of innovation

Rogers defines diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" [28]. While he sees an innovation "as an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption (p. 12). This is to say that the

period a new innovation was invented is immaterial but rather when such innovation reached the target individuals or society. The innovation decision process comprises of five steps (1.) Knowledge (2.) Persuasion (3.) Decision (3.) Implementation and (5) Confirmation [28].

Rogers [28] clarified further that, at the knowledge stage, an individual becomes aware of a new innovation and expresses interest. Once there is knowledge, there is the likely hood for the desire to know, which may prompt the individual towards adoption. This knowledge stage leads to persuasion. Positive or negative dispositions about an innovation after awareness has been created determines whether an individual is going to adopt or reject the new technology, practice or idea. At this stage, individuals may seek for more information through external expert sources or peers [29]. The decision stage represents the actual move to accept or adopt the innovation. It is the action stage. The implementation stage is when the individual moves further to put into practice, that which has been adopted. Rogers [28] maintains that, if uncertainty still persists in the mind of the adopter, the danger of rejection could still linger. The confirmation stage is where the adopter receive messages about the innovation that are consistent with his or her beliefs. Anything contrary to this may resort to reverse of decision.

Innovation adopters according to Rogers [28] are in five categories. The innovators are those within but with connection outside the common social system. They are usually the first to accept and bring an innovation home. Early adopters are leaders with the power to convince others. They usually adopt the innovation and give advice to their subjects [30]. Early majority have interpersonal networks within the social system that enable quick and easy access to the innovation. These are the ones who are forced into adoption as a result of economic and peer pressure. They are usually sceptical about the new innovation. Laggards are those traditionalists who oppose change but eventually adopts because of lack of alternative. They make sure an innovation works before they adopt [28].

### Uses and gratification theory

Identified as the brain child of Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, Uses and Gratification theory hinges on why people use certain media and the benefit they get from them. The basic supposition of this theory holds that people use mass media for different reasons and seek to derive various gratifications [31]. In other words, the needs an individual has will determine the kind of media he or she may choose to access to solve the needs. Need for entertainment, relaxation, information, news and so becomes motivation for media selection and attendance to it.

### Relevance of theories

The theories anchoring this paper are indispensable based on their tenets and the discourse of this paper. Basically, social media platforms are tools of the digitalisation classified as new media. Although, some countries may not see social media as new innovation, as the scholars have argued - a technology is new

to a people when it comes to them and how they see it as new. In addition, because social media is new in Nigeria and especially amongst women who are culturally and socially restrained, the level of adoption is equally not same. The younger generations who are seen to be born in the age of the new technology tend to embrace the media faster and more easily than older women who must either learn about the new media and adopt it or form the laggard categories who have no option than to do what others are doing.

Similarly, the Uses and Gratification theory finds relevance to this paper in that, women who have adopted social media may have varying needs. These needs, the researcher believes motivates them to social media rather than the traditional mainstream media for solution.

Nigeria is attributed to being the most populous country in Africa. With current projected figure of over 183 million people according to the National Population Commission (2016), almost half of the population (about 90 989 254) are females. It thus requires that, any study with attempt at validity must encompass a representation of the entire country. Thus considering the fact that Nigeria comprises of six geo political zones, the study employed the convenience sampling representing non-probability method to study each state capital of the state representing each zone.

A survey sample of 384 drawn from the six states and Abuja and proportionately distributed among the selected states formed part of the sampling procedure of this study. The Table 1 below shows the study population actually considered from the 2006 NPC population and the proportionate sample size for each.

The convenience selection of one state and concentration on the capital of such states from each geo political zone hinged on the fact that such areas are more guaranteed of fast internet services that allow for free social media use. In addition, the census population figure was adopted for the study rather than projected figure because it represents a more definite and scientifically acquired figure rather than the projected which is based more on assumption.

Primary data collection was done using the questionnaire. The instrument was designed into three parts and closed ended. The part one of it sought demographic information of the respondent such as age, state, occupation, academic qualification. The second part includes social media usage including specific features used, number of years and time spent on social media. While the third comprised specifically of questions pertaining to motivation of usage as well as patterns of usage. Part three employed 4 point Likert type scale ranging from strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1) to measure 6 item scale on the motivational factors for social media adoption. Another 14 scale items scale was constructed to measure the patterns of social media use. Cronbach's alpha of .619 was found to be high value indicating a higher level of internal consistency of the variables used.

Secondary data were also consulted to situate the study in terms

of what other scholars have done in the area. In addition, the motivation for use Likert scales were a composite of past studies [32]. These, were modified where necessary for suitability with the current situation and area of study. Because the study also involved determining social media use among women, some popular social media platforms most popular in Nigeria cyber terrain were used. These include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Instagram and a provision for 'other' to take care of social media platforms used by the respondents but not included among the choices offered.

## Results

Result below shows demographic characteristics of the respondent that constituted the study. Table 2 as represented below shows age category of respondents with those within the age bracket of 33-47 and highest at (42.6%) closely followed by those between the ages of 18-32 (32%). 49 – 62 and 63 years and above are (16.7%) and (8.7%) respectively.

With respect to educational status, more graduates were represented (46. %), followed by Secondary School Certificates holders at (36.8%). Those with Master of sciences or Master of Arts were represented at 13.3%, followed by first school leaving certificates at 2.4% while PhD stood at (.5%). The last demographic data was to establish occupational status of respondent. This shows a higher percentage of (38.6%) representing the students

**Table 1:** Proportionate distribution of sample.

S/No.	Selected state	Population of females	Proportionate sample size
	Akwa-Ibom state	1,918,849	49
	Benue state	2,283,800	58
	Enugu state	1,671,795	43
	Kaduna state	3,023,065	77
	Lagos state	4,394,480	112
	Taraba state	1,122,869	28
	FCT Abuja	673,067	17
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150879,251</b>	<b>384</b>

**Table 2:** Demographic distribution of respondent.

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-32	121	32.0
33-47	161	42.6
48-62	63	16.7
63 years above	33	8.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100.0</b>
FSLC	9	2.4
SSCE	139	36.8
BSc/BA	174	46.0
MSc./MA	54	14.3
PhD	2	.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Student	146	38.6
Business	104	27.5
Farming	4	1.1
Public/civil servant	124	32.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100.0</b>

category, followed by those in the civil/public service category at (32.8%). Respondents who are into business as their occupation are next with (27.5%) while the least represented are those in farming occupation – (1.1%).

Figure 1 shows social media platform preference with Facebook as the most favourite and most used (32.5%), followed by Facebook and WhatsApp at (25.7%) and Instagram (9%).

In Figure 2 data shows respondents frequency of using social

media at high percentage of 46.7% while the nearest in frequency is three times in a week (15.3%) and five times in a week (13%).

In Figure 3 over one-third of women (34.9%) have been using social media for more than 9 years. This is closely followed by those who have spent 5 -6 years on social media, representing over one-fifth (22.2%): and (21.2%) of those who have been accessing the social media for about 7 – 8 years.

Table 3 shows (a 4 scale item, with 4 representing the highest

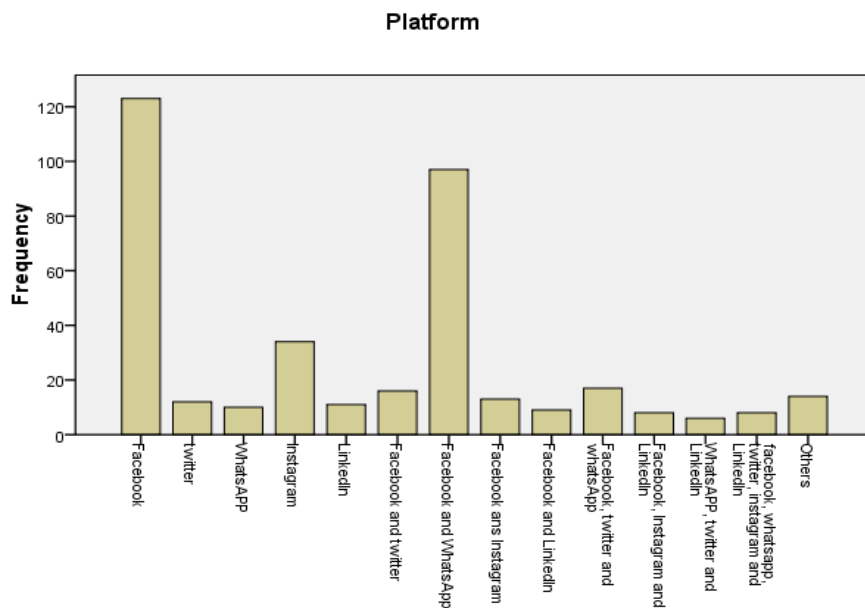


Figure 1: Most preferred social media platform.

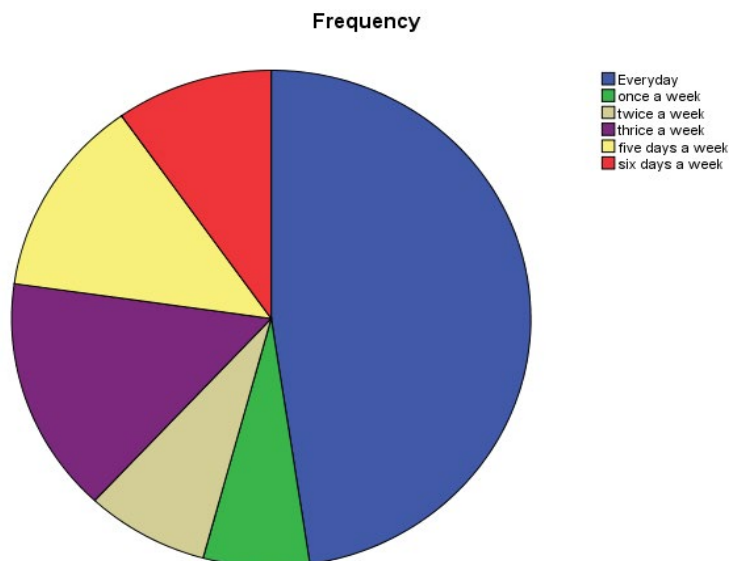


Figure 2: Frequency of social media use.



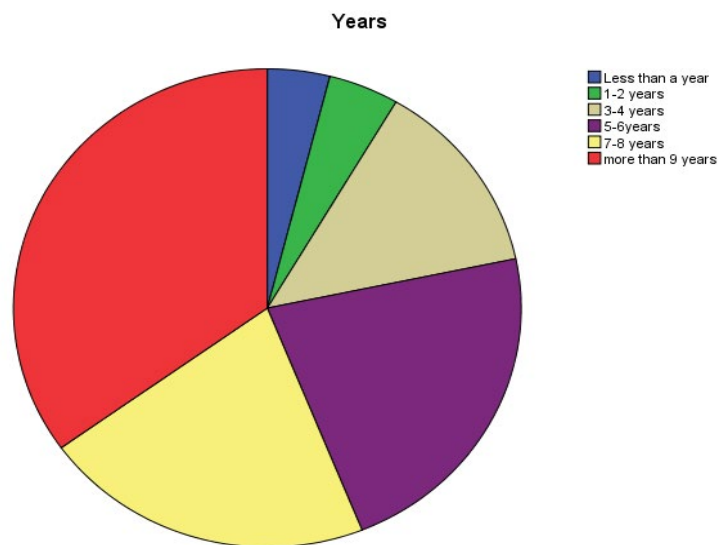


Figure 3: Time spent using social media.

Table 3: Motivational factors for social media use.

Subject	S D	D	A	SA
	1	2	3	4
I want to interact and chat with friends	33 (8.7)	72 (19.)	166 (43.9)	107 (28.3)
I want to just keep myself busy and escape boredom	110 (29.1)	161 (42.6)	79 (20.9)	28 (7.4)
I want to improve my professional life and contact	108 (28.6)	138 (36.5)	78 (20.6)	54 (14.3)
To search for business opportunity and grow contact	103 (27.2)	202 (53.4)	59 (15.6)	14 (3.7)
To maintain contact with relatives, old friends	22 (5.8)	73 (19.3)	159 (42.1)	124 (32.8)
To find lasting relationships	80 (21.2)	147 (38.9)	120 (31.7)	31 (8.2)

Table 4: Patterns of social media use.

Subject	SD	D	A	SA
	1	2	3	4
I update pictures of self and events	65 (17.2)	101(26.7)	131(34.7)	81(21.4)
I use social media platforms to get comments and likes for personal profile and status update	47 (12.4)	66(17.5)	144(38.1)	121(32.0)
I connect and interact with friends and like-minded individuals on issues	71(18.8)	87(23.0)	150 (39.7)	70(18.5)
To find a husband material	149(39.4)	144 (38.1)	47(12.4)	38(10.1)
To find a good boyfriend	120(31.7)	156(41.3)	39(10.3)	63(16.7)
To read news about happenings in the society	142(37.6)	106(28.0)	65(17.2)	65(17.2)
To get information and advice on various issues	126(33.3)	118(31.2)	53(14.0)	81(21.4)
Entertainment	101(26.7)	123(32.5)	91(24.1)	63(16.7)
To contribute to community/activist/ political activities	116(30.7)	135(35.7)	78(20.6)	49(13.0)
To advertise my business	123(32.5)	150(39.7)	56(14.8)	49(13.0)
To establish a business network	116(30)	101(26.7)	82(21.7)	79(20.9)
To find ways of empowering myself	134(35.4)	128(33.9)	59(15.6)	57(15.1)
I use social media because it is just the trending thing	164(43.4)	139(36.8)	54(14.3)	21(5.6)
Just for the fun of it	108(28.6)	111(29.4)	101(26.7)	58(15.3)

-strongly agree and 1 the lowest – strongly disagree) the motivational factors for social media adoption by Nigerian women. About three-quarter (72.2%) agreed to the statement that the need to chat and interact motivates them towards adoption and usage of social media. Similarly, about three-quarter (71.7%) disagreed with the statement that adoption of social media is merely to keep them busy and for tackling

boredom. In the statement on whether respondents' motivation for adoption of the media is for professional reasons, two-thirds of the respondents (65%) disagreed, while fourth statement shows over three-quarter of the respondents (80.6) also disagreeing to engaging the social media for business purposes. However, three-quarter of the respondents (78.8%) agreed that they are motivated by the need to maintain contact with

**Table 5:** Cross tabulation of respondents' age against motivation for social media use.

Statement (n = 378)	18 – 32 (n =121)		33 – 47 (n =161)		48 – 62 (n =63)		63 above (n =33)		Chi square	df
	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4		
Scale: 1 = strongly disagree. 4 strongly agree										
1. I want to interact and chat with friends	61 (19.5)	60 (19.2)	28 (12.3)	132 (56.2)	11 (1.8)	52 (8.6)	5 (0.3)	29 (2.5)	101.132	4
2.I want to just keep myself busy and escape boredom	106 (33.9)	15 (4.8)	116 (49.4)	45 (19.1)	34 (5.6)	29 (4.8)	15 (1.3)	18 (1.6)	98.677	4
3.I want to improve my professional life and contact	104 (33.3)	17 (5.4)	86 (36.6)	15 (6.4)	10 (1.7)	53 (8.8)	9 (0.0786)	24 (2.1)	42.190	4
4.To search for business opportunity and grow contact	110 (35.2)	11 (3.5)	131 (55.8)	30 (12.8)	11 (1.8)	52 (8.7)	11 (0.096)	22 (1.9)	150.1	4
5.To maintain contact with relatives, old friends	47 (15)	74 (23.7)	35 (14.9)	126 (53.7)	3 (0.5)	60 (10)	10 (0.9)	23 (2)	113.374	4
6.To find lasting relationships	83 (26.6)	38 (12.2)	104 (44.3)	57 (24.3)	25 (4.2)	38 (6.3)	15 (1.3)	18 (1.6)	80.942	4
101.132, 98.677, 42.190, 150.1, 113.374, 80.742 < 9.488 at 5%, df = 4										

relations and friends. Lastly, result also shows over half (60%) of the respondents disagreeing to the fact that need to find lasting relations with opposite sex motivates them towards social media.

In Table 4, more than half of the respondents (56%) agreed to using social media to update pictures and events about themselves. Over two thirds (70%) agreed they use social media to update profiles and status and get comments and likes for same. Three-quarter of the respondents (77.5%) disagreed to using the social media to find a husband Material. More than two-thirds of the respondents (73%) similarly disagreed using social media to find a boyfriend material, while two-thirds (68.8%) do not use the social media for news purposes. Again, close to two-thirds of the respondents (64.5%) do not use social media to get advice on issues. Over half (59.2%) of the respondents do not use social media for entertainment purposes.

Looking at the mean values, the responses were uniform only for the use of social media for business and opportunity and grow contact. However, the standard deviation values are also to the mean. That is, in terms of motivation and patterns of use, younger females' preference for social media lies in their need for popularity and self-identity, while the older females basically use social media for business and self-improvement.

From Table 4, all the responses have a mean of above 2.00 except for the use of social media to find a husband and because it is just the trending thing. However the standard deviation shows a little deviation from the mean for most of the responses. That is to show that the responses did not show a particular trend but not much difference. Two-thirds of the respondents (66.4%) said they have no business with using the social media to contribute to community/activist/political activities. About three-quarter (72%) of the respondents do not use social media to advertise business. More than half (56.7%) do not use social media for networking, and more than two-thirds (69.3%) do not use social media for self-empowerment. Over three quarter (80%) do not use social media simply because it is trending. (58.8%) do not use social media just for fun.

No age differences in number one statement as all the age categories agree to use social media for social interaction. To

escape boredom, those between 18 -32 and 33 to 47 strongly disagreed to the statement. Also those between 18 -32 and 33 -47 strongly disagree to using social media for professional uplift while those between 48 to 62 and above agreed to using social media platforms for professional purposes. In statement four, the first to sets categories strongly disagreed to the statement that they use social media for empowerment such as business purposes while those -48 to 62 and above agreed. In terms of maintaining contact with relations and friends, all respondents in their different age status strongly agree with the statement. Same response is noted in terms of using social media to establish or find lasting relationship with the opposite sex as all the generational age categories disagreed to this.

## Discussion

This paper set out with three broad objectives – to establish the level of social media adoption, the motivating factors and the pattern of usage amongst Nigeria women. Out of a total of 384 questionnaires distributed among women in each state capital of the six geo political zones and the Federal Capital Territory, all were returned but only 378 were found usable. SPSS was used to analyse the data using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Simple percentages and charts were used to analyse the items on the scale as well as other variables, while Chi Square was used to test the significance of age with motivation for social media use by women.

On the first research question, the study revealed that even though Nigerian women are still lagging behind in terms of social media adoption, appreciable efforts is recorded as most women have embraced social media. The study however established that, like most studies such as that of Pew Research [7,20,26] who discovered that younger people tend to embrace the social media more than older people, same was found to be applicable in this current study. The result revealed a clear case of more women from the age bracket of 18 -32 and 34 -47 adopting social media more (Table 1). Fietkiewicz, Baran and Stock [24] refers to this categories of age as generation Y and X respectively. Notable from this study is the fact that, more women categorized as generation X representing the middle to older generation (33 –

47) topped the chart in this study as the most active adopters of social media. This result can however be argued or understood. Based on the fact that from the ages- 33 to even 36, women in Nigeria are still termed as young. Therefore, a part of this age category 33 and above could be the reason for the highest percentage representation.

Similarly, the fact that more women in this study have been found to be using social media for about nine years and above (Figure 3), as well as going online daily (Figure 2) shows the level of adoption. Figure 1 also show a preference for social media platform to include Facebook only and a combination of Facebook and WhatsApp followed by Instagram. This finding also agrees with Pew Researcher Centre [20] which identified Facebook, Instagram, twitter and LinkedIn as the common platforms used in Nigeria. This too is evidence of the steady improvement of social media adoption among women.

To answer the second research question, Table 3 reveals findings that indicate factors that motivates women in Nigeria to social media to include interaction and chatting as well as maintaining contact with relations and friends for all age categories and business and professional uplift for those in older age categories. While these variables are among those motivational factors identified by Sheedy [21], a disheartening discovery lies in the fact that Nigerian women with the younger generation in their highest number are not yet employing social media for profitable ventures such as professional connection, community development in terms of activism and political mobilization as well as other measures to facilitate self-improvement and empowerment as is the case among women in other parts of the country. This is especially true considering that majority of respondents for this study are females who are graduates. One should generally expect that these category of women will utilize the social media for such beneficial activities as suggested by Arab social Media Report [33] to include empowering and engaging tool for women in economic, legal, political or civic arenas.

Research question three further aimed to establish the particular ways in which motivated women employ and use the social media. The findings confirmed the fact that only a low percentage of women use the social media for viable activities to empower themselves and improve their voices positively in society. The general pattern as shown in Table 4 of this study indicate that women generally use social media to upload profiles, interact with friends as well as maintain contact with friends and relatives. A further analysis of age differences in social media usage in Table 5 shows that business and professional purposes are reserved for the older age categories.

As pointed in the literature review section, women have been in the fore front crying against the marginalisation of the female gender in traditional media of communication such as the print and broadcast media. It therefore behoves on women to use this new digital media to advantage and project their cause and image in economic, political, social arena in the society. This is however lacking in women usage of social media and a deviant

form Loiseau et al. [34] who aver that “the explosion of social media and unprecedented use by women of new technologies represents important opportunities to bring gender equality and women’s rights issues to the forefront of both policy making and media attention”.

It is thus no wonder that only few Nigerian women still show any interest in elective positions. Even the few elected and appointed into positions have not been active social media users to make a difference and encourage others for effective positioning of women in the society. As the Uses and Gratification theory has already established, individuals’ needs motivates them towards search for means of satisfying their desires. Most Nigerian women obviously are yet to rank their needs. It is obvious from this research that their needs are still at the peripheral level namely, entertainment and connection as well as updating information and pictures, as already established elsewhere by Chen [9]. Hence they turn to social media which offers the right opportunity and at a minimum cost to meet such needs. Notable from the findings is also the fact that, very older women in their 50s remain the Laggards as suggested by Rogers [28] in the adoption and use of social media.

## Conclusion

The study employed Uses and Gratification as well as Diffusion of Innovation theory to understand the motivational factors that advances Nigerian women towards adoption of social media and onward application of the tools. Based on finding from data collected, result shows that, most women are motivated by factors such as interaction and chatting, uploading of photos and life events all to attract appreciative comments and likes as well as keeping in touch with friends and families. This is an indication that most women are yet to recognise the potency of social media to change the negative stereotypical image of women. Unlike other parts of western countries including some countries in Africa where women have used the social media to project themselves positively in every societal arena, Nigerian women are still looking for likes and comments on photos and status updates.

This study thus conclude that, Nigerian women are yet to prioritize their needs as is the case in other advanced countries and some developing countries where they have taken the social media by storm to project themselves in terms of profession, economic and political agenda for the good of themselves and the society. The study therefore recommends a need for extensive reorientation of women in Nigeria on the need to use the social media for more profitable ventures.

In addition, activists’ organisations advocating women cause can sponsor media campaigns to educate and train females to effectively use the social media to advance the female fork. This is of course the tenets of the diffusion of innovation theory as propagated by Rogers –effective channels for dissemination of information for adopters of new innovation.



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