Users Perception of Social Media Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract— The far-reaching acceptance of social media platforms and several other information and communication technology innovations not only springs up new challenges for audience researchers but also provide thrilling opportunities to re-invigorate audience research as an academic topic as well as a practical endeavor. Though there's been an extremely interesting record of growth in social media, however, there are intriguing part as well, when one carefully looks at the large amount of applications unlocked by these tools and their capabilities in influencing the health of population. This study looks at the perception of user of social media in Nigeria in terms of opportunities and challenges. The data that was analysed to draw conclusion for this study was collected from primary source using online questionnaires. SPSS was used to carry out the statistical analysis on seven hundred and forty-five (745) data set gotten from individuals that are mainly Nigerians.

Keywords— Perception, Social Media, Opportunities, Challenges

I. INTRODUCTION

As Online Social Networks have become the integral part of our lives, the pros and cons of using them have been reflected in the society. On one hand, these online networks are the easiest ways to connect with your peers, communities and good for social and professional collaborations; on the other hand, they are the most vulnerable means of spreading rumors, threats and gossips within no time [1].

Social networks are open in nature; i.e., users can post their individual opinions. This leads to the misuse of freedom. To prohibit this, various networking sites have applied different types of checks to insure the validity of posts [1]. Over the past decade, there has been a tremendous growth of Online Social Networks (OSN) and Mobile Social Networks (MSN). In modern society, there has been a fascination of 'connectedness' among the people by these OSNs and MSNs. Many OSNs have been developed over the years where users a significant amount of their time using these OSNs. OSNs have changed the style of interactions with the existing friends and has paved a new way to create new friends. People make new friends by exploring their interests, mutual friends, education history, career and professional interests, etc. Some of the widely used OSNs worldwide are Facebook, WhatsApp, WeChat, Instagram, Tumblr, Twitter, etc [2].

15% of teens reported meeting someone first online before later having sex with them. Among these teens, 57% reported having met more than one sex partner online.

Continued investigation into social media uses is therefore needed as new sites appear, platforms change, and youth usage behaviors evolve, particularly with diverse samples of youth, as these behaviors likely differ based on social and demographic subgroups [3].

With the advances in the internet and the emergence of Web 2.0, the interconnectivity between individuals has expanded on the internet. This development enables customers and businesses to collaborate on the internet [4]. This has emerged through social media, which enable consumers to generate content and have social interactions online via social platforms. There are a number of social platforms that have facilitated information sharing. For instance, Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia, is one of the most popular platforms and has the facility for users to collaborate on information sharing [5].

The advent of social media has spring up exciting opportunities for users and so are its many challenges. But most users still do not know many of the opportunities that reside in the usage of social networks other than merely chatting and exchanging of pictures and the likes.

This study seek is to sample from social media users, their opinion on the opportunities of social media and the challenges it poses. The objectives are to find out if gender and age range influences the opportunities and challenges inherent in the use of social media and using the outcome to make a clear suggestion for digital marketers and policy makers.

II.   REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Online social networks provided a comfortable environment in which shy individuals could interact with others [6]. Findings shows that one can say that the urgent communication benefits of Facebook users were seen for individuals reporting various levels of shyness. Shyness might cause individuals to avoid social, face-to-face interaction altogether, so these persons would have less communication and less social support [6].

The power of social network theory stems from its difference from traditional sociological studies, which assume that it is the attributes of individual actors - whether they are friendly or unfriendly, smart or dumb, etc. - that matter. Social network theory produces an alternate view, where the attributes of individuals are less important than their relationships and ties with other actors within the network. This approach has turned out to be useful for explaining many real-world phenomena, but leaves less room for individual agency, the ability for individuals to influence their success; so much of it rests within the structure of their network [7].

Social media are not simply a new source of data for traditional audience research. They also offer broadcast media organisations new opportunities for interaction with their audience, providing the capability to use social media data tactically in making decisions about programme content and thus transforming how they relate to their audience. Hence, for broadcast media organisations, social media need to be understood as phenomena to be studied in their own right, which requires taking seriously the 'big data' nature of social media [8]

Social media platforms and modern information and communication technologies are therefore relevant for audience researchers not only as a possible source of information about audiences but as a crucial enabling platform for the new, multi-nodal relationships between news media organisations and the rest of the world [8]. There seem to be obvious acceptance of these innovations as platforms for seeking love due to the obvious near real connection it provide.

The challenges social media data poses for existing analytical frameworks and opportunities for methodological innovation it provides highlight the importance of reflecting carefully on research design for studies that seek to exploit the potential of social media for explicating social phenomena. Social media not only offers a window onto the phenomena of interest but also is inextricably implicated, through the agency of individuals and organisations (large and small) alike, in shaping these phenomena [8].

According to [9], in the beginning days, social media was limited to fundamental tools and websites used mainly by professors of technology and computer geeks. Over a period of time, social media changed into a behemoth that is changing the way how people connect and converse with corporations, governments, traditional media, and each other. The monopoly of the message held by the traditional media lost its reins with the advent of social media due to the domineering facts of social media over the traditional media. In case of the traditional media, the communication was merely monologue or, at the most a restricted two-way tête-à-tête. Without using any interactive means, through the traditional media, the individuals used to share information or ideas about an organization. Such a communication was established mainly through one-to-one communication – either in person or on the phone; either through the mail or via e-mail.

The evolution of the newsroom in an increasingly complex media environment deserves careful comparative analysis. The changing dynamics of reporting practice during war and conflict is of particular interest because it is often a period of demanding, yet important journalistic practice; journalists are working in situations where time and resources are restricted, doing physically demanding and at times dangerous work, but with an important news imperative–gaining information not just for their own audiences, but for those most impacted by the situation [10].

Social media for News Reportage
The significance of good journalistic work and the importance of independently verified news and information during war and conflict overall has not changed. But in a globalised, digitised and online world, the way in which both journalists and audiences experience and engage with news about war and conflict has changed. Increasingly globalised economic, migratory and media environments have brought otherwise distant and disparate people closer to war's touch [10].

While issues of media restriction, increased pressure and disengaged audiences continue to challenge war reportage, the changes brought by the emergence of digital, online and social communication networks have affected all realms of journalism, including war reportage. Indeed, journalistic use of social media can be seen within the framework of media innovation studies more broadly, as these new technologies and applications represent process innovations as they are implemented in journalistic practices [11].

Recent studies have emphasized the need for further research about how journalists cover war and conflict in terms of content and source selection; how images and depictions of the different parties engaged in a conflict are represented; as well as economic, political, social and cultural impact of war reportage at a local and global level [12].

Social network sites are not like email where it doesn't matter if one is Hotmail or Yahoo. People who use

MySpace can't communicate with those on Facebook and vice-versa. So if you don't participate, you're written out of the story. This means that divisions are re-in forced. Forget all of the rhetoric about how the Internet is the great equalizer - it's the great reproducer of inequality. When Web 2.0 social media technologies emerged in the market, students quickly bond themselves to those tools such as YouTube, iTunes, Facebook, blogging and twittering, to mention a few. These applications were not developed for learning purposes [13].

Social media in Commerce

Recent advances on the internet and the development of social media have facilitated the interconnectivity of consumers. Consumers have social interactions through social media such as online forums, communities, ratings, reviews and recommendations. These developments have introduced a new stream in e-commerce, called social commerce, which empowers consumers to generate content and influence others. These interactions provide different values for both business and consumers. Both are involved in the co-creation of value. Social media have provided new opportunities to consumers to engage in social interaction on the internet. Consumers use social media, such as online communities, to generate content and to network with other users [14].

Opportunities in Social Media

In the education environment, the opportunities intrinsic to social media are plentiful. Some of the potential opportunities include collaboration and connectivity among users, access to clinical experts, access to information from a number of different sources, and the ability to disseminate information. The development of content within social media, such as learning to concisely communicate through Twitter, can also be a valuable skill [15].

The social networking helps to reduce stress and increase satisfaction among students. It allows each student (slow or quick) to study at their own pace and speed (self-pacing). Furthermore, it is easy to join bulletin board discussion any time, or visiting classmates and instructors remotely in chat room. It can provide stronger understanding and increase retention on the subject, due to using many elements which exist under e-learning, e.g. multimedia, quizzes, interaction, etc. and the ability to retry training and over in order to understand [16].

The key element of social media marketing is involving user of social networks. If users / readers come across a right and relevant content the likelihood of sharing it with other people in their social networks increases. So, if a marketing body succeeds in making social media users share its promotional content with people in their network it that means that it has gained support from a trusted source and possibly will be regarded highly by the recipient. Clearly a promotional content shared by a close friend has much more impact than content directed from

the part a marketing party. The impact of contents shared by social network members is high due to the fact they are originally kind of a "word of mouth" circulating on the online environment [17].

Challenges of Social Media

Facebook has quickly become the social network site of choice by college students and an integral part of the "behind the scenes" college experience. Concerns related to privacy and anxiety in interacting with professors in this environment, but added that this one does not serve an academic purpose and faculty should simply avoid "educationally appropriating" these "backstage" social spaces have been expressed [18], [19].

The social relationships in social network analysis are considered using the terms node and link. The nodes are the individual actors in the networks and the links are the relationships between these actors. Regarding these links and their communications, the problem of link prediction is one of the most important challenges in social network analysis. Link prediction is one of the most popular applications in the online social network services helping users find new friends with similar interests [20].

Adolescents seek out and encounter sexual content online in a number of forms including sexually explicit material, information about sex, sexual health, and sexual norms, and sexual communications via social networking sites. This sexual content may take the form of text, images, or videos, and the content itself ranges from humorous memes and information about birth control to graphic pornography. The author further stated that it is important to examine the influence of the digital neighborhood on sexual risk behavior and resilience among youth of color, particularly as best practices are considered in using technology for intervention [21].

Changes in people's values relating to the media pose both opportunities and challenges for creative industries such as the entertainment media, marketing communication, the advertising industry, and film and television production. Focusing on the advertising context, the media environment has altered the relationship between marketers and consumers [22].

III. METHODOLOGY

For this research, online questionnaire was used to collect the data that was analysed. A qualitative approach was used to gather the required data for analysis. Relevant and available literatures have been reviewed for the purpose of acquiring knowledge on subject matter to verify the significance, opportunities, and challenges posed by the social media. Opinions of respondents from all the geopolitical locations of Nigeria were taken into consideration and that led to arriving at a conclusion for this study. The questioners were distributed in hard copies and online through the use of Google doc, via Facebook,

twitter and Whatsapp platforms and at the end, a total of 745 responds were gotten. SPSS was used for the analysis of data.

Research Hypothesis

1. H_0: gender does not have significant difference on best opportunities in social media

  H_1: there significant difference on best opportunities in social media based on gender

2. H_0: gender does not have significant difference on social media having enormous benefits.

  H_1: there is significant difference on social media having enormous benefits based on gender.

4. H_0: no significant difference between age ranges for social media challenge

  H_1: there is significant difference between age ranges for social media challenge.

Research Questions

1. Does gender has significant difference on best opportunities in social media?
2. Does gender influence enormous benefits in social media?
3. Is the presence of social media challenge influenced by age range of users?

Data Analysis Techniques

Qualitative data analysis was done with the use of One-way ANOVA and Chi Square Test, using SPSS. The data was collected with the aid of questionnaires printed on hard copies and Googles online questionnaire application found in Google drive while social media tool (Facebook, WhtasApp, etc.) and email services, for passing the link to the questionnaire to potential respondents. A response to the questionnaire can be submitted, also, the option of submitting an email is also available.

The choice of adopting statistical packages for social science (SPSS) for the analysis of data for this study was informed by its full-featured data analysis package that was specifically designed to handle large or complex data.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The qualitative data collected will be represented with the help of tables and brief explanations for the sake for clarity. Relevant relationships between variables will also be tested using Chi Square and analysis of variation (ANOVA) toward providing results and answers to research questions.

Demographics

A totalof seven hundred and forty-five (745) responses where gotten from the online questionnaires and those distributed around on hard copies. Not all questions were compulsory therefore not all respondents submitted answers to all questions therefore, a few missing values where noticed. Respondents are mainly Nigerians across all geopolitical zones.

Research Question 1: Which of the options are the best opportunities in social media?
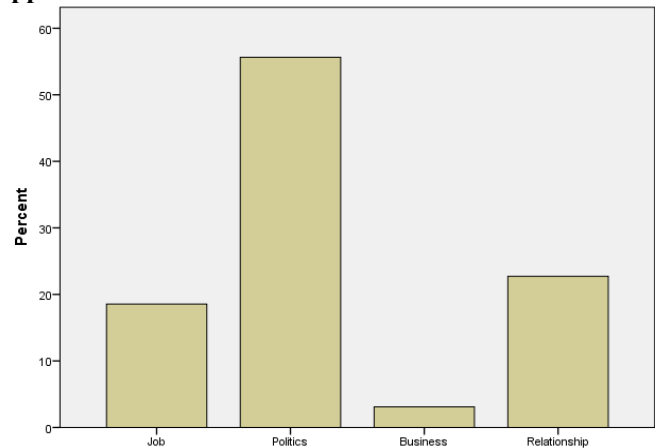

Figure 1: chart for best oppotunites in social media

From figure 1, the best oppotunies in social media as oppined by the respondent indicates politics as top most. This is followed by relationship.

Table 1 represents group statistics of the best opportunities in social media with regards to gender. It also specifies the number of respondents in each category.

Table 1: Gender and Best opportunities in social media Crosstabulation						
Count						
		Best opportunities in social media				Total
		Job	Politics	Business	Relationship	
Gender	Male	111	271	19	138	539
	Female	27	142	4	31	204
Total		138	413	23	169	743

From Table one, a total of seven hundred and forty-three responses (743) was gotten. Five hundred and thirty-nine were males while two hundred and four (204) were female. It indicates that politics is top and followed by relationship as opined by the respondents

Table 2 represents the Chi square Test for the best opportunities in social media

Table 2: Chi square for best opportunities in social media

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.478[a]	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	23.062	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.217	1	.073
N of Valid Cases	743		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.31.

H_0: gender of male and female has no significant difference for the result of best opportunities in social media

$$\alpha=0.05$$
$$p= 0.00$$

Since our P value of 0.00 is below 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis and reject alternate hypothesis which means that gender of male and female has no significant difference for the result of best opportunities in social media

Research Question 2: How will you rate social media on enormous benefits?
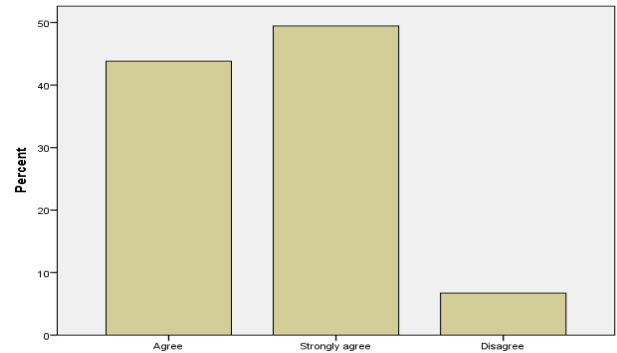

Figure 2: chart for social media has enormous benefit

As seen in figure 2, about 50 percent of respondents strongly agrees that social media has enormous benefits.

Table 3: Gender and social media has enormous benefit Crosstabulation

		social media has enourmous benefit			Total
		Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	
Gender	Male	236	260	43	539
	Female	90	108	7	205
Total		326	368	50	744

Table 3 is for count of respondents in terms of gender for the research question: social media has enormous benefit

Table 4: Chi-Square Test and result for Social Media Enormous Benefit

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.195[a]	2	.074
Likelihood Ratio	5.856	2	.053
Linear-by-Linear Association	.884	1	.347
N of Valid Cases	744		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected below 5. The minimum expected count is 13.78.

H_0: gender of male and female has no significant difference on the result for social media having enormous benefits.

Table 4 is the chi square test table for the research question social media has enormous benefit

a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.61.

Null hypothesis is: there no significant difference between the male and female

In table above our P value is 0.74 which is more than 0.05 and hence we reject null hypothesis meaning gender of male and female has significant difference on the result for social media having enormous benefits.

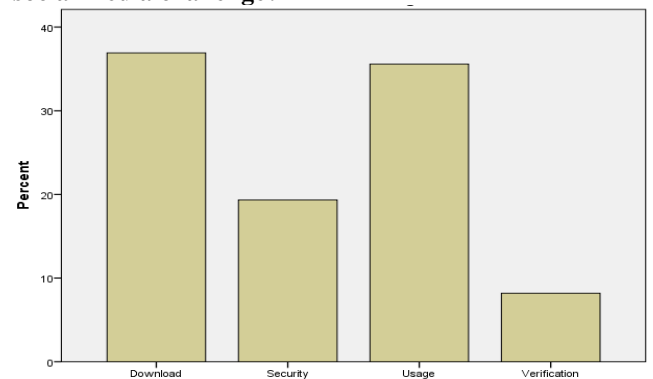**Research Question 3: Which of these you consider as social media challenge?**

Figure 3: chart for social media challenge

As indicated in figure 3, about 36 percent and 38 percent of respondents believe the major challenge of social media is its download and usage respectively. This goes to say that most social media platforms are yet to meet user's

satisfaction in terms of download and usage. Table 5 shows the frequency of responders to research question three according to their age ranges.

Table 5: Frequency table of responders according to their age range

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 – 22	352	47.2	47.2	47.2
	23 – 30	172	23.1	23.1	70.3
	30 – 40	116	15.6	15.6	85.9
	40 -50	105	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	745	100.0	100.0	

From table 5, the frequency of responders within the age range of 18 to 22 is the highest while those within the age range of 23 to 30 came distance second and those of 30 to 40 and 40 to 50 came third and fourth respectively. Table 5 also contain the respective percentage and cumulative frequency.

Table 6 is the mean table of social media challenge according to number of responder's choice of options.

Table 6: Mean table of social media challenge

Social media challenge	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Range
Download	1.93	275	1.112	3
Security	1.99	144	1.243	3
Usage	1.66	265	.660	3
Verification	3.34	61	1.094	3
Total	1.97	745	1.092	3

Table 6 shows the mean and standard deviation of social media challenges can be seen. Download has highest number of respondents and closely followed by usage. Security has third number of responders while verification came distance third.

Table 7 represent the Chi square test for social media challenge is against age range and the analysis was done using in ANOVA.

Table 7: Social media challenge and Age range

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	211.842	3	70.614	94.225	.000
Within Groups	555.320	741	.749		
Total	767.162	744			

From table 7, we have our P value to be 0.00.
H_0: no significant difference between age ranges for social media challenge.
Since our $P < 0.05$, we accept the null haypotheisis that there signigicant difference between age ranges for social media challenge does not exist.

V.   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Various social media platforms are playing significant role in the transformation of communication practices and greatly impacting upon traditional social structures. These effects are particularly relevant for the most frequent users of young people. However, there is no doubt that the new environment of such rapid acceptance poses certain

challenges and like every other setting for social interaction, has some inherent or impending risks.

Politics and relationship are major opportunities that abound in the social media for Nigerians because no gender based significant difference from result of the test carried out in course of this study. Also, download and usability of these social media platforms were discovered to be major challenges for social media users in Nigeria.

It is recommended that digital marketers, opinion boulders and politicians begin to explore the social space towards attaining their aspiration as good number of target audience sees it as a platform for politicking and relating with people. However, social media platform owners must continue to work on their software for easy download and ensuring to meet the desire of users in terms of usability.

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