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An analysis of the major factors of hate speech in the Nigerian digital environment

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Abstract

Relying on the existing literature and empirical works, this study takes explorative perspective to identifying social media platforms that mostly propagate hate speech in Nigeria and some of the factors responsible for its spread. Anchored on the assumptions of the technological determinism theory and based on secondary data in the literature, this study found Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter as the mostly used digital channels for hate speech among Nigerians. It was also found that explosion of hate speech on social media were factored by political interests and freedom of speech as well as ethnic and religious sentiments. It is therefore suggested that the menace of hate speech on social media can be mitigated if the Nigerian government could come up with anti-hate laws and proactive counter-statements policy through the instrumentation of Nigerian Communication Commission and the National Orientation Agency.

Key Words: Social Media, Hate Speech, Technological Determinism, Regulatory Agencies, Nigeria

Background

The narrative of Nigeria's *cyberhate* has become more intensive since 2015 when the presidential power changed hands from the People Democratic Party, the political party that had ruled for sixteen consecutive years to the Action People Congress (Buhari, 2019). The emergence of Muhammadu Buhari, a former military head of state, as a major actor in the political scene on the one hand and as the newly elected president of the country in a landslide victory over the incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan was found too intimidating to endure in the southeastern and south-south geopolitical zones (Nwakanma, 2010; Inyang, 2018) wherein the new winner of the presidential election was perceived as a serious threat to their peaceful sociopolitical existence with the powerful

northern region on the one hand (Udenze, Oshionebo, & Iyorza, 2021).. On the other hand, the Buhari's second coming as Nigeria's president was also conceived as a threat to the corrupt Nigerians across the geopolitical divides. Thus, it was not a surprise, when his electoral victory was trailed by the "political others" with hate speech on social media and in an unprecedented manner. He was projected as a former dictators, incompetent and failure in some newspapers published in the Nigeria southwest (Smith, 2015; Itodo, 2023) and on the digital platforms (Yesufu, (2020;

Ashaka, (2020). His change mantra message did not help matter as it became an anchor point for online hate initially shrouded in political

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criticisms and subsequently became a direct attack on his personality unleashed by the opposition, heating the polity especially at a time when ill-gotten wealth of some members of the previous administration were being confiscated and owners facing trials in the court of law (Ahmad, (2017).

The online attacks became unbearable for Buhari so much so that he had to send a counter-offensive warning to the perpetrators in one of his presidential speech on the occasion of Nigeria's independent day celebration. He averred that: "Our attention is increasingly being focused on cyber-crimes and the abuse of technology through hate speech and other divisive material being propagated on social media. Whilst we uphold the Constitutional rights of our people to freedom of expression and association, where the purported exercise of these rights infringes on the rights of other citizens or threatens to undermine our National Security, we will take firm and decisive action." (Buhari, 2019).

The power of social media to make or mar people is technologically determined by invention and circulation of computers, hand phones and similar telecommunication devices and by spread of web-based social networks for virtual interactivity and socializing among users the world over. Since the invention of social media and there platforms, unsolicited racial, cultural, religious and ethnic narratives have continued to flood timelines and thereby obstructing world peaceful coexistence (Suemo, Omale, & Nyianshima, 2022). While the digital sphere promotes goodwill interconnection and recovery of lost relationship, it also propagates the cause of false information, misinformation and disinformation, all forming a perfect foundation for eruption of cybercrime. The abuse of the digital technology by users seems to have found support in government's inability or failure to regulate and control it in most parts of the world (Tasnim, Hossain & Mazumder, 2020).

With the spate of hate conversational activism in Nigeria, messages are posted and shared across social media platforms regardless of contents. This can be attribute to influx of young Nigerians, without requisite professional journalism training, into the turf of content creators and citizen journalism, which have negatively affected our collective existence as a people (Alakali, Faga and Mbursa, 2016). It is no gainsaying that the Nigerian public have been inundated with online comments suggesting character assassination, invasion of privacy and sedition. This situation Nigeria's situation of the

digital media seems to be a prototype of what obtains globally, which is due to the fact that users the world over habitually explore social media for diverse goals, thus providing the ground for influencers to negatively influence others.

Being a multi-cultural democracy wherein freedom of speech is unhindered, Nigeria allows for differing shades of opinion on political and social issues and events. Hence, hate speeches on social media platforms expand every now and again with less concern for the fragile national unity, frustrating the relative efforts at national integration and peaceful coexistence among Nigerians across cultural and religious divides. In view of the aforesaid, the need to carefully investigate cyber hate on the Nigeria cyber environment became imperative. We therefore ask: what majorly instigate hate speech in the Nigeria digital environment? How can the cyberhate menace be mitigated?

Conceptual clarifications

Social media refers to social networking sites created for easy connection and information sharing for differing purposes. Digital spaces and websites are numerous including Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Gab, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, and others. As the domicile of applications provided on the net for message creation, posting and sharing, social media emanate from a cluster of "internet-based applications" that are founded on the web 2.0 high-tech inventions, allowing for contents creation, exchange, storage, information dissemination (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Kaplan & Haenlein (2014).). With proliferation of mobile telecommunication gadgets, digital interactivity comes by ease among users as individuals and as corporate bodies, complementing the mass media (Britannica, 2024) and providing the ground for independent of message circulation beyond the tradition functions of the mass media including radio and TV, while creating social reality perception in the "public sphere" (Schrape, 2016).

The interactive nature of the social media provides users to connect, expresses views, exchange knowledge, debate issues, and inform one another about job opportunities and career tips (Aleyomi & Ajakaiye, 2014). This indicate inevitability of the digital media use in the modern society in as much as people look out there for hints about events, issues, and things of significance through social networking in a bid to close the knowledge gaps. Emanating from the developed world, social media use gained heavy

strength in the developing societies and across cultural divides, placing opportunities in the hands of youths with timely information which flow in the space every second not only for pleasure derivation, but also for intellectual growth as new knowledge about social factors continues to surface (Aduo et al. 2021).

However, information dissemination on social media is not restricted to information sharing. Such dissemination serves other unplanned goals like exposing individuals to “a diversity of worldviews” on issues, events, persons, cultures religions and similar social variables. , creating some social reality beliefs about the issues and persons within specific frames, while users receive such information their during hangout in some platforms (Narayan et al, 2013). This cannot be distanced from extemporaneous information sharing that take places sometimes or most of the time in the digital environment. Spontaneous release and reception of message cut across diverse issues of public interests one of which is the political inclined contents. For instance, there has been increase in the use of social media for political attack, hostility, cynicism and hate speech (Hasell, Halversen, & Weeks, 2024), which has impacted users’ psyche the world over for better or worse.

Africa is a vast hub of social media use, having Egypt at the forefront of Facebook user covering 27,000,000 users. Nigeria ranks second with 26,000,000 users. While this population of users might suggests addiction, it is yet to be empirically established that citizens of the two countries are obsessed with internet use. (Internet World Stats 2023).

Nigeria is a country of the biggest population in Africa. According the Statista , the estimated population of the country was 222.18 million in 2023 with a projection of 250.83 million people in 2028 with the expectation of some 13 percent (+12.92 %) increase or some 29 million (28.7 million) people. The forecast was made against the backdrop of the consistent increase in percentage year after year over in the past (See Figure 2), suggesting a population of some 90 million for internet use in 2023, one of the largest in the world. Nigeria comes next in rank to Egypt in terms of internet users’ population in Africa (see Figure 1). Statista forecasts some 48 percent growth in the Nigeria’s internet users, amounting to some 117 million users from Nigeria by 2027 (see Figure 3).

Nigerians on social media utilize the digital channels for diverse purposes, including

interconnection with friends, consociates, and others in far and near. The shared platforms are mostly use for comments on political, economic, and cultural on issues and events that take shapes in the country and elsewhere. For whatever reasons, social media usage among Nigerians has accelerated every now and again. While WhatsApp assumes the forefront position, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter still maintain their roles in conveying popular postings of interest. However, Statista projects Facebook as the “the most preferred platform for the majority of individuals accessing the news on social media”, more so as the sum of Nigerians on Facebook “significantly exceeded that of WhatsApp in 2022” when the users were estimated to rise beyond 36 million, “representing a user penetration rate of around 16.7 percent”, far above the population commanded by YouTube, which was estimated “at nearly 6.7 million in 2022” (See Figure 4). Therefore, it cannot be far from the truth that over 3 million Nigerians use Facebook and that their much more use to the channel than to Twitter (Aleyomi & Ajakaiye, 2014).

Hate Speech is defined by UN Strategy and Plan of Action as “any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor” (Understanding Hate Speech, n.d). With this, virtual hate speech cover derogatory portrayal of others with the aim of reducing their estimate in the audiences. Most hate speech in the Nigeria’s digital sphere cover ethnic, cultural, religious discrimination. This most often instigates unhealthy socio-cultural relationships. It has been reported that young social media users have no regards for cultural, religious and social values (Aduo et al., 2021).

The submission of Olga and Roiha (2016) is quite interesting as it explicates hate speech further as every position that threatens the rights of a race, religion and or nation or legitimately registered interest group. Hence, a blatant breach of the values of respect for cultural diversity and equality and human dignity is a typical hate speech. The meaning of hate speech is further expanded to include “cyber hate”, which suggests hate speech on internet or use of new technology to propagate racial discrimination against others (Uzochukwu & Okafor, 2019). Ayo et al. (2020) has explained

how Twitter, now called X, has been used to promote hate speech in the Nigeria's political scene and why such has instigated research.

Hate speech is long lasting as it spread across digital dispersion. Even when it is removed from the initial space, it goes to be found elsewhere in the digital space, represented in a new fashion or bearing a different byline. While it might have been initially disseminated on Facebook, it could still find its way in to Twitter or similar digital channels (Gagliardone et al., 2015), breaking transnational barriers and devoid of legal framework and probity for prosecution (Waldron, 2012).

Shifting away from the global generic submissions on the concept, Joseph (2014) averred that hate speech in the Nigerian local parlance is characterized by violent outbursts not only by young people in the Nigerian society, but also by public office holders. Hate speech get wide circulation in different online forums. By implication, hate comment inflict pains on the targets consciousness as it violates their self-respect, put them in distress, and humiliates them in the eyes of the public, daring the norms of sanity, comfort, respect and dignity (Alakali et al., 2016).

Explaining how to deal with hate speech, the scribe of the UN, António Guterres observes that: "Addressing hate speech does not mean limiting or prohibiting freedom of speech. It means keeping hate speech from escalating into something more dangerous, particularly incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence, which is prohibited under international law" (Understanding Hate Speech, n.d).

Putting the online hate in Nigeria's situation, Uzochukwu and Okafor (2019) mentioned the dreadful state of the phenomenon, instigating conflicts among the people because of spread of false and provocative information, mostly on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn about the political others. The two investigators found Facebook to be the dominant online platform for hate propagation. Corroborating this observation are the findings of Mohammed (2021), projecting Twitter and Facebook as overzealous in conveyance of hate materials compared to other digital channels like Instagram and WhatsApp. The research findings about the leading role of Facebook in spread of the negatives in Nigeria are similar to reports reported from other countries like Waseem and Hovy (2016). It cannot be gainsaid therefore that Nigeria's hate speech trends

is prototypical of hate speech at global level (See Figure 5).

While the social media provides the ground for virtual interaction, which allows users to join different social, cultural and religious groups to interact with one another and discuss divergent topics (Aduo et al., 2021), the unregulated state of social media has some adverse implications on the society, thus shaping a wrong commonality of outlook. The social platforms are found to be responsible for the rampant circulation of hate speech in Nigeria's media environment. Taylor et al. (2018) got it right when they observed that because of the digital media unfettered situation, it is very easy to encounter nasty messages attacking individuals or a group online against the background of their ethnicity, colour, religion, or gender.

Factors online hate Speech in Nigeria

In one of their findings, Alakali et al. (2016) revealed freedom of speech and political interest as a major factor of hate speech on the Nigeria's social media space, with some negative implications on the society. Buttressing this observation is the finding of Uzochukwu and Okafor (2019) that most politician and some of their supporters, boost self-confidence by means of verbal attack on the opponents in a bid to intimidate them (Waldron, 2012). This is common among young supporters of politicians during elections (Aduo et al., 2021), while they remain anonymous and secure against prosecution and fear of physical reprisal (Suemo et al., 2022). Anonymity has always been a shield for the online abusers (Citron & Norton (2011). The situation of hate speech on the Nigeria's digital environment is akin to that of the US. It is reported as far back as 2020 that the major factor of online hate in the US is determination to air political view. Other factors of the vulgar statement are the tendency to protect class, physical appearance, race and ethnicity, gender, religion, occupation, disability and sexual orientation. (See Figure 6).

Theoretical Framework: Technological Determinism Theory

Technological Determinism theory originally conceived by Thorstein Veblen. The thesis of TD is that technology induces social change in human society and that technological progression facilitates new phases of development in human history. This submission applies to every technology that have impacted the social order through emergence of inventions that have caused

cultural development across ages. Even though TD bears some complexity considering its historical scope, including invention of the wheel, the steam engine, and other technological breakthrough in human history especially creation of writing, the printing press, radio, TV, the computer, and the internet (Drew, 2023), it is still conceived as a reductionist theory given the assumption that technology define the nature of every society, ruling out other social, cultural, political and economic variables that exert impact on the social other (Smith & Marx, 1994) like the question of human's free will to use technology (Drew, 2023). The reductionism of the theory is well-captured in the statement of McLuhan that all sort of instigate profound and lifelong changes in man, including his mental disposition, and changes his environs, especially how it is culturally structured (Baran & Davis, p.155).

This may be the reason Bimber (1990, p.333) called TD "a somewhat elusive concept".

This study is contextually situated in the media technological determinism, which proposes that: "Communication technology is fundamental to society. Each technology has a bias to particular communication forms, contents and uses. The sequence of invention and application of communication technology influences the direction and pace of social change. Communication revolutions lead to social revolutions" (McQuail, 2010, p.103).

The germaneness of the Technological Determinism theory to the current study is that social media as a technology has significantly altered human relations patterns today and blurred the lines of distance between people thereby. While this development presents uncommon advantages for social relations, information dissemination, behavior change and awareness creation, it also comes along with significant disadvantages with potentials to turn deepen the cords of divide and influence the proliferation of misinformation and hate speech. This seems to be the situation in the Nigeria's political scene that is occupied by the elite political class, wherein proxies are used to disseminate hate speech in various colours in the digital space. It is common the world over that politicians use proxies within the centre and from the periphery to spread verbal attack on the political others. While discussing Harold Innis's explanation of communication bias power and the centrality of communication technology, Baran and Davis (p.155) succinctly put it that people are "exploited to serve the interests of the elites at the center."

The connection between technological determinism theory and cyber hate is complex and multifaceted. Hate speech propagation in the digital space is an example of unintended consequences of technology. It can be argued that the social media architecture allows for free flow of hatred communication. The platforms are designed to maximize user engagement and time spent on the platform. This is achieved by providing users with personalized news feeds, suggesting similar content, and using targeted advertising. Social media algorithms determine what content is shown to users, therefore, can result in a filter bubble that reinforces existing biases and beliefs. This can contribute to the spread of hate speech and extremism online. Social media platforms have been designed with a set of assumptions about how people want to engage with the world and that design itself stands as an avenue for hate speech propagation (Mering & Hübscher, 2022).

Furthermore, social media use by hate groups and extremists to disseminate their messages is made possible by the anonymity and accessibility of social media, which allows these groups to reach a wider audience than ever before. The use of pseudonyms and fake identities on social media platforms has made it easier for individuals to spread hate speech without fear of retribution or accountability. The concept of "technological affordances" in the discourse of determinism, refer to the inherent properties of a technology that make certain behaviors more likely or feasible (Haneef, 2015). In the case of social media platforms, the affordances of anonymity, reach, and virality make the spread of hate speech easier and more likely.

As a result, the spread of hate speech on social media has become a significant threat to social cohesion and the safety of marginalized groups. In addition, the nature of social media communication can contribute to the proliferation of hate speech. The fast-paced and often superficial nature of social media interactions can lead to a lack of empathy and understanding, which can contribute to the spread of hate speech. Online interactions can also be easily misunderstood, which can escalate conflicts and lead to the spread of hateful messages. The role of social media companies in moderating hate speech is equally a contentious issue. There has been criticism against social media creators for lack of committed will to address hate speech (Lomas, 2015). While many platforms have policies against hate speech, the enforcement of these

policies has been inconsistent and often inadequate. This has led to calls for greater regulation and accountability of social media companies in addressing hate speech.

The relationship between the tenets of technological determinism and the emergence of hate speech on social media can be summarized as thus:

- I. the design of social media platforms can exacerbate the proliferation of hate speech by encouraging the formation of echo chambers (Vicario et al., 2015). The platforms use algorithms to personalize the content shown to users, which can result in users being exposed only to views that reinforce their existing beliefs. This can create a feedback loop where users become more entrenched in their views, and hate speech can spread more easily.
- II. Social media platforms have created new opportunities for hate groups to organize and communicate with one another. Online hate groups can use social media platforms to recruit new members, coordinate offline events, and share propaganda (Awan, 2017). The ability to organize and communicate online has made it easier for hate groups to operate globally and coordinate attacks.
- III. Technological determinism theory suggests that the use of digital communication technologies can lead to the displacement of traditional forms of communication. This displacement can have unintended consequences for hate speech spread. For example, the rise of citizen journalism has led to a proliferation of harmful misinformation online (Duru and Duru, 2009), which plays a part in the perpetuation of hateful rhetoric and extremist views online.
- IV. The anonymity provided by digital communication technologies can make it easier for individuals to engage in hate speech without fear of retribution. Anonymity can reduce the social pressures that might otherwise deter individuals from engaging in hate speech. This can make it more difficult for individuals and organizations to hold perpetrators of hate speech accountable.
- V. The global nature of digital communication technologies means that hate speech can spread across borders more easily than ever before. This can make it more difficult for governments and organizations to regulate hate speech online. The proliferation of hate speech in one country can also have unintended consequences for other countries, leading to tensions and conflict.
- VI. Technological determinism theory suggests that technology can have unintended consequences that are difficult to predict. For example, the rise of social media platforms has provided fresh opportunities for counter-speech and the spread of positive messages. However, it is difficult to predict the extent to which these positive effects will outweigh the negative effects.
- VII. The speed and reach of digital communication technologies can amplify the impact of hate speech. The ability to share instantaneous messages and with a wide audience can increase the visibility of hate speech and contribute to its normalization (Keller, 2021). This can create a cycle where the increase in hate speech leads to more hate speech.
- VIII. Technological determinism theory suggests that technology can shape social norms and values. The design of digital media technologies can shape how users interact with each other and what behaviors are seen as acceptable. For example, the use of likes, shares, and comments on social media platforms can reinforce the popularity of certain types of content, including hate speech. This can contribute to the normalization of hate speech in the digital space.
- IX. Technological determinism theory suggests that technology can shape power relations. Social media can give certain users more power and influence than others. For example, social media influencers with large followings can have a disproportionate impact on the spread of hate speech. The power dynamics created by digital communication technologies can contribute to the proliferation of hate speech in the digital space.
- X. Social media creates a sense of distance between individuals, making it easier for individuals to dehumanize others and engage in hate speech without feeling the same level

of social and emotional consequences as they might in person.

Navigating Key Issues in social media abuse in Nigeria

The issue of hate speech and discriminatory behavior on social has become increasingly prevalent in the Nigerian society, leading to adverse socio-cultural implications such as low national values, sexism, racism, xenophobia, tribalism, chauvinism and unhealthy relationships.

National values in Nigeria have historically been undermined by corruption, inequality, and political instability. However, the proliferation of discriminatory behavior on social media in Nigeria has functioned to further divide the country along ethnic and religious lines. This division has resulted in the use of hate speech and discriminatory behavior on social media, with individuals using the platforms to express their prejudices and biases towards other groups. As echoed by (Udeobasi, 2014), the Nigerian government must take steps to promote national values that emphasize unity, equality, and respect for diversity to address this problem. Sexism, which refers to the discrimination and prejudice that individuals face based on their gender, has equally been made more prominent in today's digital world, with women, in particular, being targeted for their gender. Sexism on social media in Nigeria has been characterized by the use of derogatory language, sexual harassment, and threats of violence (Nwammuo, 2013). Appropriate measure must be taken protect women from these forms of discrimination and, women in Nigeria must be empowered to speak out against sexism on social media to create a culture that promotes gender equality and respect for women's rights.

In the same vein, social media has equally contributed to the issues of racism and tribalism in Nigeria. Discussions across social media groups and local internet forum like Nairaland, have been reported to be characterized by the use of ethnic slurs, hate speech, and incitement to violence. These practices have given rise to chauvinistic tendencies among a good many Nigerians, and have created a culture of individuals leveraging on mediated technologies to express their belief in the superiority of their own social group over others in Nigeria. The digital sphere has equally provided individuals with the chance to perpetuate abusive behavior towards their partners. It is not uncommon to come across posts of people using derogatory language, sharing intimate pictures or

videos without consent, and making threats of violence. The Nigerian government must take steps to protect individuals from abusive behavior on social media by implementing policies that prohibit hate speech and abusive behavior towards individuals to create a culture that promotes respect, trust, and mutual consent in personal relationships.

Conclusion

This paper explores the existing data on cyberhate with some focus on the Nigeria digital spheres known for political conversations that are riddled with foul language and disavowal not only within the political circles, but also along cultural and religious divides. What used to be circulated in the mass media at the lower ebb were now taken to the digital space with intensity and vigor to put opposing camps at disrepute. Even though it has the merits in fostering dialogues for development among people of shared meanings and understanding cannot be denied, social media has been found to be responsible for the rampant state of hate speech not only in Nigeria, but also the world over. Statistical data have proven the latter a serious problem of universal concern. Like obtained in advanced nations, specific social media channels have been established as embracers of volatile communication at high percentage in the Nigeria's social media landscape. Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter are underscored as the mostly used for vocal attacks for political and similar contending reasons.

If at all, the technology determinism assumption must be accorded some recognition for explanatory power and parsimonious strength, the fact that internet users have taken too far the advantage rendered by availability of the social media for viral conversation can be said to be a major evidence, more so as that message system advances as far communication dynamism is concerned and as far as the scope of freedom of speech expands for good or for bad.

While exploring the literature, we found that hate speech on social media will operate for long so far it continues to break the barrier of national and international legal frameworks because of its cross-global streaming and its innate aptitude to conceal hate speech perpetrator's identity. Hate speech offenders often feel more at ease to express their sentiments when they have the option of posting anonymously on social media networks. Perhaps this seemingly incapacitation of the digital message system to spread online hate may not live long as regulatory schemes are likely to be

working upon. For now, banning at national level as been the only curbing measure. A typical example is the official ban on Twitter, now X, by the Nigerian government on the 5th of June 2021 to 13th of January 2022(Paquette, 2021). The ban was instigated by the deletion of the Nigerian President’s tweets against the Igbo insurgency and

their insinuation for another civil war. The Igbo are Southeastern people of Nigeria who went into three-year civil war with the Nigeria state. Twitter was also accused of propagating misinformation, fake news and division among Nigeria (Akwagyiram, 2021, June,)

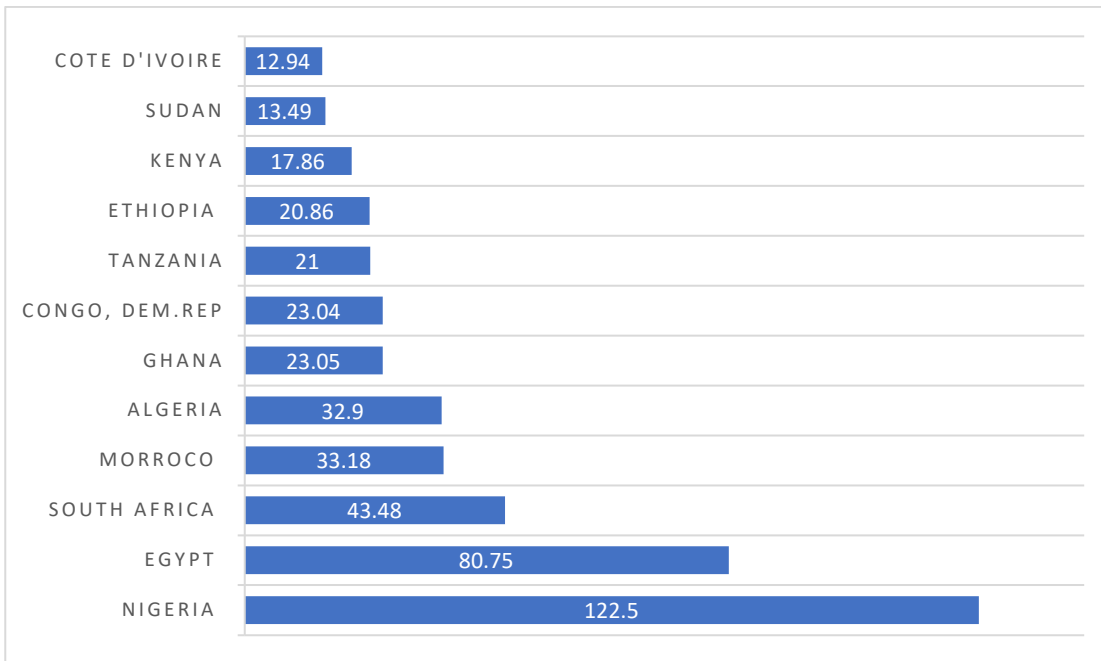


Figure 1 Number of internet users in selected countries in Africa as of January 2023, by country (in millions) [Reconstructed with exact data] <https://www.statista.com/statistics/505883/number-of-internet-users-in-african-countries/>

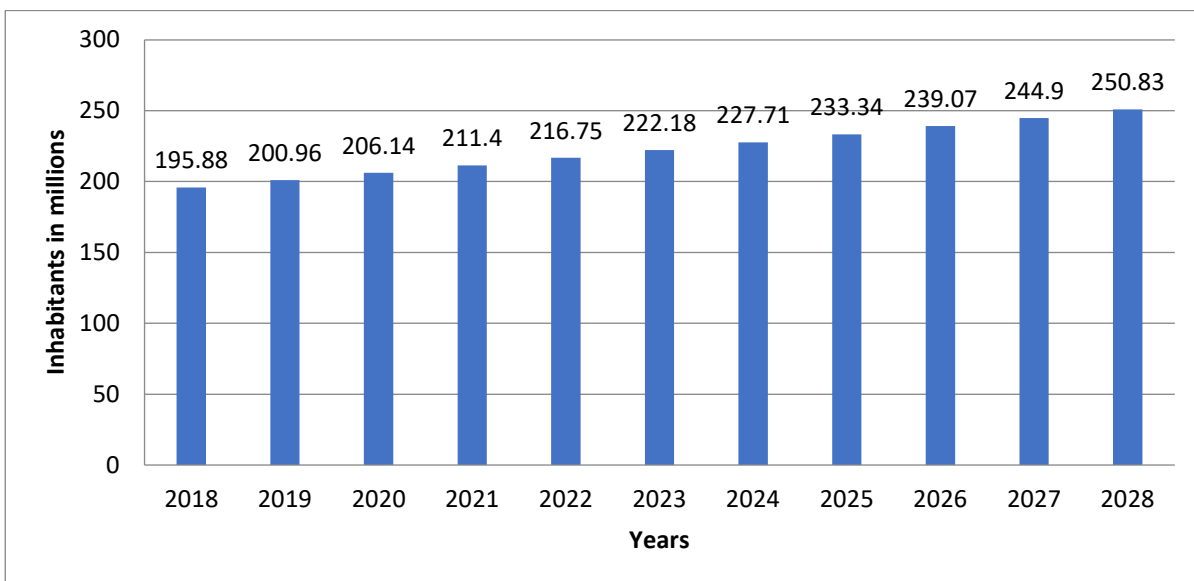


Figure 2 Nigeria: Total population from 2018 to 2028 (in million inhabitants)
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/382264/total-population-of-nigeria/>

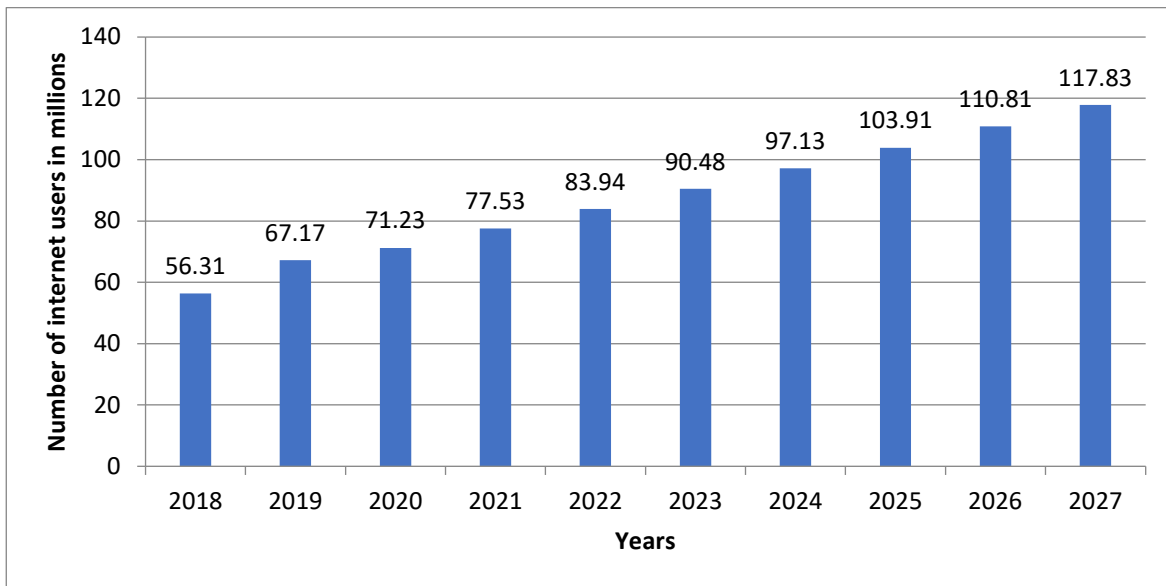


Figure 3 Number of internet users in Nigeria 2018 to 2028, with forecast from 2023 to 2027 (in millions)
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/183849/internet-users-nigeria/>
<https://www.statista.com/topics/10117/social-media-in-nigeria/#topicOverview>

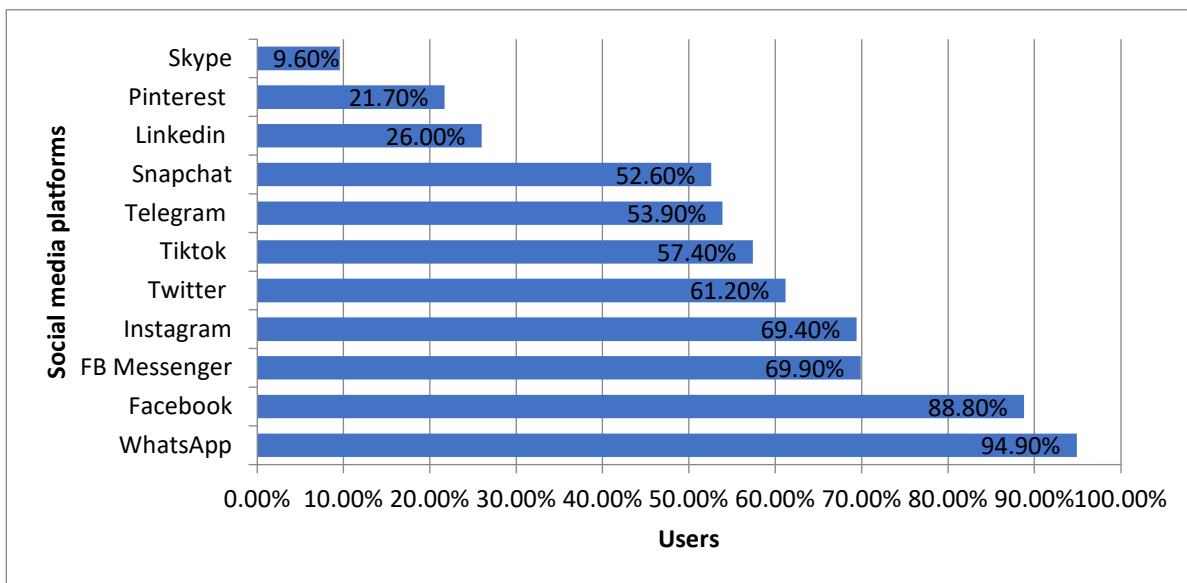


Figure 4 most used social media platforms in Nigeria as of the 3rd quarter of 2022.
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1176101/leading-social-media-platforms-nigeria/>

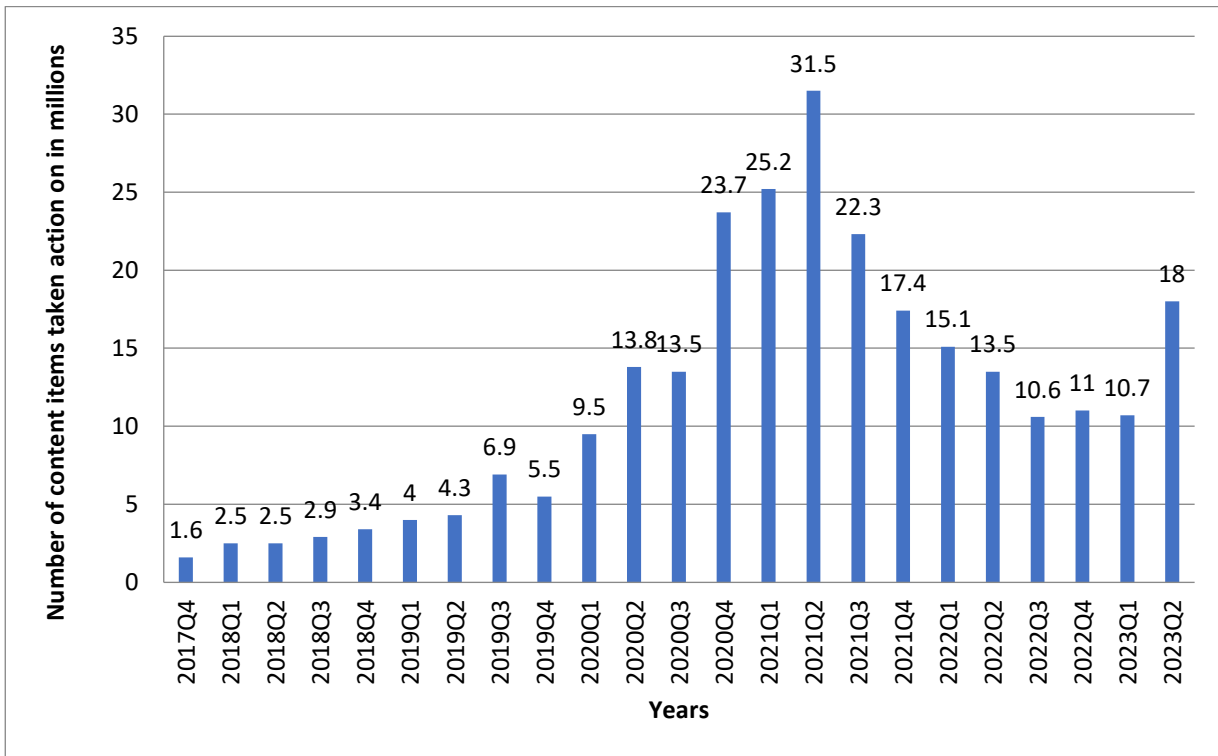


Figure 5 Actioned Hate Speech Content Items On Facebook Worldwide From 4th Quarters 2017 to 2nd Quarter 2023 (In Millions)

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1013804/facebook-hate-speech-content-deletion-quarter/>

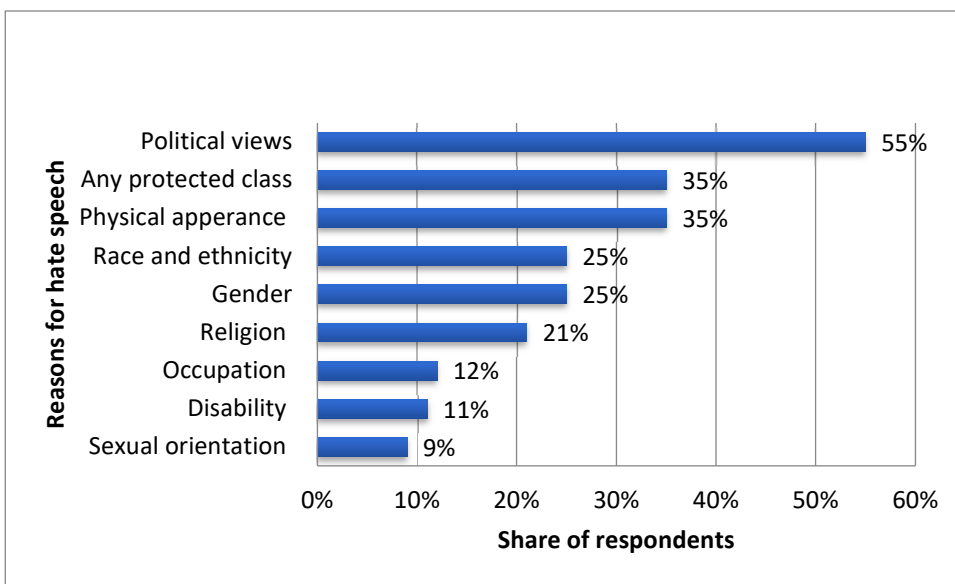


Figure 6 Reasons for online hate according to online harassment victims in the United States as of January 2020

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/971847/us-internet-online-harassment-reasons/>

Table 1 AFRICA 2023 POPULATION AND INTERNET USERS STATISTICS

AFRICA	Population (2022 Est.)	Internet Users 31-DEC- 2000	Internet Users 31-DEC-21	Internet Penetration	Internet Growth % 2000 2021	Facebook subscribers 30-APRIL- 22
Algeria	45,150,879	50,000	37,836,425	83.8 %	50,756 %	26,291,400
Angola	34,592,611	30,000	8,980,670	26.0 %	29,835 %	2,875,600
Benin	12,653,644	15,000	3,801,758	30.0 %	25,245 %	1,686,800
Botswana	2,429,926	15,000	1,247,000	51.3 %	7,493 %	1,191,300
Burkina Faso	21,863,344	10,000	4,594,265	21.0 %	45,842 %	2,539,900
Cameroon	27,646,656	20,000	9,158,422	33.1 %	39,292 %	4,723,600
Congo, Dem. Rep.	94,152,930	500	16,355,917	17.4 %	3,271,083 %	5,117,700
Cote d'Ivoire	27,473,629	40,000	12,253,653	44.6 %	30,534 %	6,554,100
Egypt	105,530,371	450,000	54,741,493	51.9 %	12,064 %	51,286,200
Ethiopia	119,748,379	10,000	21,147,255	17.7 %	211,372 %	7,535,700
Ghana	32,154,245	30,000	14,767,818	45.9 %	49,126 %	9,163,200
Guinea	13,734,762	8,000	2,551,672	18.6 %	31,795 %	2,446,700
Kenya	55,752,020	200,000	46,870,422	85.2 %	23,335 %	12,445,700
Libya	7,024,811	10,000	6,658,900	94.8 %	58,470 %	6,658,900
Madagascar	28,427,328	30,000	2,864,000	10.1 %	9,446 %	2,864,000
Mali	20,855,735	18,800	12,480,176	59.8 %	66,284 %	2,033,300
Morocco	37,344,795	100,000	25,589,581	68.5 %	25,489 %	21,730,000
Mozambique	32,163,047	30,000	6,523,613	20.3 %	21,645 %	2,756,000
Nigeria	211,400,708	200,000	154,301,195	73.0 %	101,484 %	31,860,000
Senegal	17,196,301	40,000	9,749,527	56.7 %	24,273 %	3,802,000
Somalia	16,359,504	200	2,089,900	12.8 %	852,550 %	2,089,900
South Africa	60,041,994	2,400,000	34,545,165	57.5 %	1,339 %	24,600,000
Sudan	44,909,353	30,000	13,124,100	29.2 %	43,647 %	1,300,000
Tanzania	61,498,437	115,000	23,142,960	37.6 %	20,024 %	5,223,000
Tunisia	11,935,766	100,000	8,170,000	68.4 %	8,070 %	8,170,000
Uganda	47,123,531	40,000	18,502,166	39.3 %	46,155 %	3,328,000
Zambia	18,920,651	20,000	9,870,427	52.2 %	49,252 %	2,543,000
Zimbabwe	15,092,171	50,000	8,400,000	55.7 %	16,700 %	1,303,000
TOTAL AFRICA	1,373,486,514	4,514,400	590,296,163	43.0 %	12,975 %	255,412,900
Rest of World	6,502,279,070	356,471,092	4,463,594,959	68.6 %	88.3 %	2,475,026,941
WORLD TOTAL	7,875,765,584	360,985,492	5,053,891,122	64.2 %	100.0 %	2,730,439,841

Source: Internet World Stats <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

Note: while the below-one million-facebook user countries are not included in this table for research purpose, they are available in the data source.

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