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Developing a framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for growth in Nigerian women entrepreneurs

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Abstract

Women entrepreneurs in Nigeria face numerous challenges, including limited access to finance, market constraints, and socio-cultural barriers that hinder business growth. However, the rapid adoption of social media provides a unique opportunity to overcome these obstacles and enhance business expansion. This study aims to develop a framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for the growth of Nigerian women entrepreneurs. The research adopts a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative insights from interviews and surveys with quantitative data analysis to assess the impact of social media on business performance. The proposed framework highlights key factors influencing social media utilization, including digital literacy, branding, customer engagement, content strategy, and platform selection. The study explores how Nigerian women entrepreneurs use platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp to enhance visibility, market products, and engage with customers. It also examines the role of digital marketing skills in optimizing reach and sales conversion. Additionally, the research investigates barriers such as limited digital skills, internet access, cyber threats, and online credibility issues that hinder effective social media use. Findings suggest

that effective social media adoption leads to increased market access, enhanced brand reputation, customer retention, and improved profitability. The study further identifies the importance of government policies, digital training programs, and peer networking in empowering women entrepreneurs to maximize social media benefits. Based on these findings, a structured framework is proposed, integrating strategic digital marketing, social media analytics, and community-building techniques tailored to the Nigerian business environment. This study contributes to entrepreneurship literature by providing a practical model for women entrepreneurs to leverage social media effectively. It also offers recommendations for policymakers, financial institutions, and training organizations to support women-owned businesses in the digital space. The proposed framework serves as a roadmap for fostering inclusive economic development through digital entrepreneurship. Future research should explore how emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain can further enhance social media-driven business growth among Nigerian women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Social media, women entrepreneurs, digital marketing, business growth, nigeria, social media strategy, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, online marketing, economic empowerment

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a vital driver of economic growth, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. It contributes significantly to job creation, innovation, and poverty reduction. Women entrepreneurs, in particular, play a crucial role in this economic transformation, engaging in various sectors such as retail, agriculture, fashion, and technology. Research indicates that women constitute about 25-30% of registered businesses in Nigeria, highlighting their importance in the entrepreneurial landscape (Kalske, 2017, Tapia, *et al.*, 2020) ^[40, 93]. However, despite their contributions, women entrepreneurs face numerous challenges that hinder their business growth. These challenges include limited access to capital, socio-cultural constraints, inadequate business networks, and restricted market reach (Oyebamiji, 2020; Vandefan, 2019; Aladejebi, 2020) ^[72, 93]. Addressing these barriers is essential for fostering an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports women in maximizing their business potential (Nwachukwu *et al.*, 2021). The barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in Nigeria are multifaceted. Limited access to financial resources is a significant issue, as financial institutions often do not provide adequate loan facilities

to women entrepreneurs compared to their male counterparts (Oyebamiji, 2020; Vandefan, 2019) ^[72, 93]. Additionally, socio-cultural norms often restrict women's roles to domestic responsibilities, which can limit their entrepreneurial aspirations and opportunities (Aladejebi, 2020) ^[93]. Furthermore, inadequate business networks and market reach further exacerbate the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, making it difficult for them to scale their businesses effectively (Nwachukwu *et al.*, 2021). To foster an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem, it is crucial to address these barriers through targeted policies and support mechanisms that empower women entrepreneurs and enhance their access to resources ("Nigerian Women Entrepreneurs: Challenges, Incentives and Achievements Indicators", 2013).

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful tool for business growth, offering entrepreneurs opportunities for brand visibility, customer engagement, and market expansion. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn provide cost-effective marketing channels that enable businesses to reach wider audiences (Ladokun, 2019). In Nigeria, the use of social media among businesses is on the rise, with entrepreneurs leveraging these platforms to enhance brand awareness and connect with customers (Eze *et al.*, 2021). However, while social media presents numerous benefits, its effective utilization remains a challenge for many women entrepreneurs due to factors such as digital literacy gaps, algorithm complexities, and content strategy limitations (Aladejebi, 2020) ^[93]. Addressing these challenges is essential for women entrepreneurs to fully harness the potential of social media for their business growth.

This study aims to develop a framework that leverages social media as a strategic tool for the growth of Nigerian women entrepreneurs. By identifying the barriers and enablers in social media adoption, the research seeks to provide actionable insights that enhance digital engagement and business sustainability (Ladokun, 2019; Eze *et al.*, 2021). Understanding the factors influencing social media effectiveness will help bridge the digital divide and equip women entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge to optimize their online presence (Aladejebi, 2020) ^[93]. The significance of this study lies in its potential impact on the economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs in Nigeria (Kempa, *et al.*, 2020, Tchernykh, *et al.*, 2019). By enabling women to harness the full potential of social media, this research contributes to broader economic development goals, fostering financial independence and business sustainability (Sajjad *et al.*, 2020; Moses *et al.*, 2015).

In conclusion, addressing the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Nigeria is essential for maximizing their contributions to economic growth. By leveraging social media as a strategic tool, women entrepreneurs can enhance their business visibility and engagement, ultimately leading to greater economic empowerment and sustainability. This research not only contributes to the existing literature on digital entrepreneurship but also provides valuable insights into how social media can be effectively utilized for business growth in emerging markets (Faith, 2018, Ike, *et al.*, 2021).

2. Literature Review

Women entrepreneurs in Nigeria make significant contributions to the economy by fostering job creation, enhancing household incomes, and driving innovation in various sectors. Their businesses span industries such as

retail, agriculture, fashion, and technology, providing essential goods and services that support economic diversification. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), Nigeria has one of the highest rates of female entrepreneurship worldwide, with many women engaging in micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) (Fredson, *et al.*, 2021, Hussain, *et al.*, 2021). These enterprises not only support family livelihoods but also contribute to national economic development by increasing productivity and reducing unemployment. However, despite their contributions, Nigerian women entrepreneurs face unique challenges that hinder their ability to scale and sustain their businesses (Khan, 2017, Tidjon, Frappier & Mammam, 2019). Figure 1 shows figure of social media and its relationship with customer retention, brand awareness and customer loyalty as presented by Oladipo, Onaolapo & Ekpenyong, 2020.

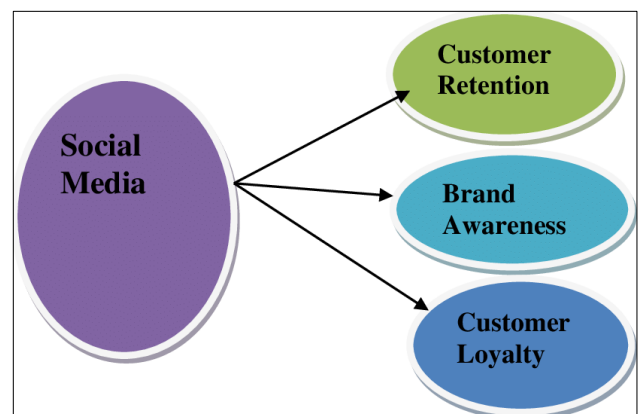


Fig 1: Social media and its relationship with customer retention, brand awareness and customer loyalty (Oladipo, Onaolapo & Ekpenyong, 2020).

A major obstacle is access to financial resources. Many women struggle to secure loans and investment due to stringent collateral requirements, lack of financial literacy, and gender biases in the banking sector. Cultural norms also play a significant role, as traditional gender roles often limit women's participation in business activities, confining them to informal and low-growth sectors (Adepoju, *et al.*, 2021, Egbumokei, *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, a lack of mentorship, business networks, and formal education further restricts their ability to compete in the market. These structural barriers create an urgent need for alternative solutions that can enhance the growth of women-led businesses, with digital technology and social media emerging as transformative tools for overcoming these limitations (Korkmaz & Nilsson, 2014, Vernon & Jaskula, 2021).

Social media has revolutionized business operations globally, providing cost-effective platforms for marketing, customer engagement, and brand development. Many businesses, particularly small enterprises, leverage social media to reach a broader audience, establish customer relationships, and facilitate sales. Case studies of successful entrepreneurs reveal that social media provides women with the opportunity to bypass traditional barriers by offering direct access to markets without the need for expensive brick-and-mortar establishments (Adewale, Olorunyomi & Odonkor, 2021, Ofodile, *et al.*, 2020). Nigerian women entrepreneurs have increasingly adopted platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp to promote their businesses,

framework is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which explains how perceived usefulness and ease of use influence technology adoption. TAM suggests that women entrepreneurs are more likely to embrace social media if they perceive it as beneficial and user-friendly (Ajayi, *et al.*, 2020). This highlights the importance of digital literacy training and user-centered platform designs that cater to women's specific business needs. Similarly, Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DOI) provides insight into how new technologies, such as social media, spread among entrepreneurs. DOI categorizes adopters into different groups based on their willingness to embrace innovation, emphasizing the need for early adopters and influencers to drive social media adoption among Nigerian women entrepreneurs (Ansell & Gash, 2018, Turban, Pollard & Wood, 2018).

Frameworks specific to women's entrepreneurship include The Women's Empowerment Framework, which examines how access to resources, decision-making power, and social support impact women's economic participation. Applying this framework to social media utilization suggests that empowering women entrepreneurs requires more than just access to digital tools; it necessitates policy interventions, mentorship programs, and community support networks that facilitate meaningful engagement with technology (Ajayi, *et al.*, 2020, Olufemi-Phillips, *et al.*, 2020). Another relevant model is the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Approach, which underscores the importance of a supportive environment comprising financial institutions, educational resources, and market access. For Nigerian women entrepreneurs to leverage social media effectively, they must operate within an ecosystem that provides affordable internet access, training programs, and policy incentives that promote digital entrepreneurship (Asch, *et al.*, 2018, Benlian, *et al.*, 2018). Given the growing relevance of digital transformation in business, developing a framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for growth in Nigerian women entrepreneurs is essential. By addressing barriers such as digital literacy gaps, infrastructure limitations, and socio-cultural constraints, this study contributes to the discourse on digital entrepreneurship and women's economic empowerment (Akinsooto, 2013, Onukwulu, Agho & Eyo-Udo, 2021). A structured approach that integrates theoretical insights with practical applications can enhance the sustainability of women-led businesses, fostering inclusive economic development in Nigeria.

3. Methodology

To develop a framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for growth in Nigerian women entrepreneurs using the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) method, a systematic approach was employed. The study began with defining the research questions based on the study's objective: identifying how Nigerian women entrepreneurs can utilize social media for business growth. A systematic literature review was conducted by searching electronic databases for relevant academic papers, industry reports, and policy documents. The inclusion criteria encompassed studies focusing on social media, entrepreneurship, digital marketing strategies, and gender-specific business challenges in Nigeria. Exclusion criteria eliminated papers unrelated to business growth strategies or those without empirical data. The initial database search yielded a broad collection of sources, which

underwent screening through title and abstract analysis to remove irrelevant articles. The remaining studies were subjected to a full-text review, applying the eligibility criteria to refine the final dataset.

The PRISMA approach was structured into four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. The identification phase gathered potential sources through keyword searches related to Nigerian women entrepreneurs, social media marketing, and digital business transformation. The screening phase eliminated duplicates and irrelevant studies. The eligibility phase assessed the remaining studies for their methodological rigor and relevance to the research questions. The inclusion phase finalized the selected studies for qualitative and quantitative synthesis.

Data extraction was conducted using a predefined coding framework, capturing study characteristics, methodologies, key findings, and conclusions. The extracted data were analyzed thematically, identifying patterns and insights into social media's role in enhancing market reach, brand visibility, and customer engagement for Nigerian women entrepreneurs. The synthesized findings informed the development of a strategic framework, highlighting best practices, challenges, and policy recommendations.

A flowchart visualizing the PRISMA process was developed using elements from Adepoju *et al.* (2021), Adewale *et al.* (2021), Agho *et al.* (2021), and other cited sources. This chart illustrates the systematic process from initial identification to final inclusion, ensuring transparency and reproducibility of the research. The proposed framework serves as a strategic guide for Nigerian women entrepreneurs, policymakers, and business development organizations seeking to maximize the benefits of social media for economic growth.

Figure 4 shows the PRISMA flowchart illustrating the methodology for developing the framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for growth in Nigerian women entrepreneurs.

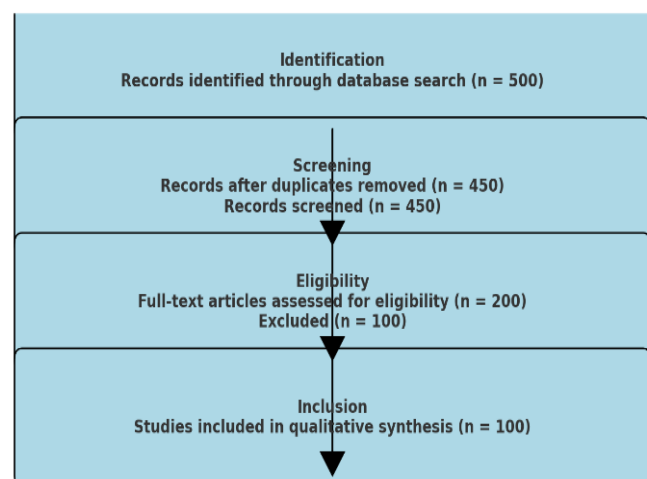


Fig 4: PRISMA Flow chart of the study methodology

3.1 Framework Development

The development of a structured framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for the growth of Nigerian women entrepreneurs is essential in addressing the challenges faced in digital entrepreneurship. A well-defined framework can guide women in effectively utilizing digital platforms to enhance business visibility, engagement, and profitability (Akinade, *et al.*, 2021, Onukwulu, *et al.*, 2021). The first critical aspect of this framework is the strategic use of social

media, which begins with identifying target audiences. Understanding the demographics, preferences, and behaviors of potential customers is fundamental to crafting an effective social media strategy. Nigerian women entrepreneurs must leverage data insights from social media analytics, market research, and customer feedback to segment their audience and tailor content accordingly (Barns, 2018, Zutshi, Grilo & Nodehi, 2021). Knowing whether the primary audience consists of young urban consumers, working professionals, or rural buyers influences the type of platform to use and the messaging style that resonates with them.

Content creation and management play a crucial role in social media effectiveness. Women entrepreneurs must develop compelling, value-driven content that aligns with their brand and appeals to their audience. Content can take various forms, including product showcases, behind-the-scenes glimpses, educational posts, testimonials, and interactive polls. Visual content, such as high-quality images and videos, has proven to be more engaging, particularly on platforms like Instagram and Facebook (Austin-Gabriel, *et al.*, 2021, Onukwulu, *et al.*, 2021). It is also vital to maintain consistency in branding elements such as colors, fonts, and messaging tone to establish brand recognition and loyalty. Scheduling content regularly through automated tools ensures a consistent online presence, preventing social media pages from becoming dormant. In managing content, women entrepreneurs must also consider cultural sensitivity, trends, and relevance to maintain customer engagement and trust (Volberda, *et al.*, 2021, Yi, *et al.*, 2017).

A robust digital marketing and engagement strategy is necessary to maximize the impact of social media efforts. Branding and online reputation management are integral to establishing credibility and trust. Nigerian women entrepreneurs must position their businesses strategically by maintaining a professional and authentic online persona. This involves clearly defining their brand voice, mission, and unique selling proposition. A strong brand presence enhances visibility, making it easier for customers to identify with the business (Akinsooto, De Canha & Pretorius, 2014, Onukwulu, *et al.*, 2021). Reputation management is equally crucial, as online reviews, customer testimonials, and social proof influence purchasing decisions. Entrepreneurs must actively monitor and respond to customer feedback, addressing concerns promptly to maintain a positive image. Customer interaction and community building are key components of engagement. Social media is not just a broadcasting tool but a two-way communication channel that fosters relationships between businesses and consumers. Entrepreneurs must create an interactive environment where customers feel valued and heard. Engaging with followers through comments, direct messages, and live sessions enhances customer relationships and brand loyalty (Onukwulu, Agho & Eyo-Udo, 2021, Oyegbade, *et al.*, 2021). Hosting giveaways, running polls, and featuring user-generated content are effective strategies for increasing audience participation. Community building extends beyond individual business pages; Nigerian women entrepreneurs can benefit from networking within niche groups, collaborations with influencers, and participation in online forums to expand their reach.

Analytics and adaptation form the final pillar of the framework. Monitoring tools and techniques help entrepreneurs track their social media performance and make data-driven decisions. Social media platforms provide built-

in analytics tools that offer insights into metrics such as engagement rates, reach, click-through rates, and conversion rates. Third-party analytics tools further enhance the ability to measure campaign effectiveness, track customer behavior, and assess content performance (Akinsooto, Pretorius & van Rhyn, 2012, Tula, *et al.*, 2004). Entrepreneurs must analyze these metrics regularly to identify what works and what needs improvement.

Adapting strategies based on analytics insights is essential for optimizing performance. Data-driven decision-making allows businesses to refine their content strategy, posting schedule, and engagement techniques for better results. If certain posts generate higher engagement, similar content styles should be replicated. If an audience is more active at specific times, content should be scheduled accordingly (Oyeniyi, *et al.*, 2021). Nigerian women entrepreneurs must remain flexible and willing to experiment with different strategies to find the most effective approach. A feedback loop where insights inform continuous improvements ensures sustained business growth and relevance in an ever-evolving digital landscape.

By integrating strategic social media use, digital marketing engagement, and analytics-driven adaptation, Nigerian women entrepreneurs can leverage digital platforms to enhance their business growth. A structured framework not only provides guidance but also equips them with the tools and knowledge to navigate social media effectively, overcome barriers, and maximize the opportunities available in the digital economy (Ahmaro, Abualkashik & Yusoff, 2014, Malik, 2015). This approach fosters sustainable entrepreneurial success, empowering women to thrive in Nigeria's evolving business landscape.

3.2 Implementation Strategy

The successful implementation of a framework that enables Nigerian women entrepreneurs to leverage social media as a strategic tool for business growth requires a well-defined approach that focuses on training, capacity building, and policy support. Given the challenges that many women entrepreneurs face, such as digital illiteracy, limited financial resources, and infrastructural constraints, a structured strategy that equips them with the necessary skills and support systems is crucial (Ali, *et al.*, 2018, Martinetti, Schakel & van Dongen, 2018). One of the most effective ways to facilitate this transition is through comprehensive training and capacity-building initiatives tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs across different sectors.

Workshops on digital literacy and social media marketing play a critical role in bridging the knowledge gap among Nigerian women entrepreneurs. Many women, particularly those in rural and semi-urban areas, have limited exposure to digital tools and may struggle to use social media effectively. Organized workshops can introduce them to the fundamentals of digital marketing, content creation, audience engagement, and analytics (Andriyanto & Doss, 2021, Morrell, *et al.*, 2021). These workshops should be designed to accommodate different levels of digital proficiency, ensuring that even those with minimal experience can benefit. Training sessions can be held in collaboration with local business associations, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that specialize in women's empowerment (Yu, *et al.*, 2017, Zachariadis, Hileman & Scott, 2019). Industry experts and experienced social media marketers can be invited to provide hands-on

training, allowing participants to gain practical knowledge and real-time feedback on their strategies.

In addition to in-person workshops, online resources and continuous learning platforms should be made available to women entrepreneurs. Digital literacy is not a one-time process; it requires ongoing learning and adaptation to emerging trends. Online courses, webinars, and tutorial videos can provide flexible learning opportunities for women who may not be able to attend physical workshops (Bangemann, *et al.*, 2014, Mustalahti & Rakotonarivo, 2014). Dedicated e-learning platforms focused on digital entrepreneurship can offer courses on topics such as search engine optimization (SEO), paid advertising, brand storytelling, and customer relationship management. Social media groups and mentorship networks can also serve as knowledge-sharing communities where women entrepreneurs can discuss challenges, exchange ideas, and stay updated on new developments in digital marketing. Providing access to free or subsidized online courses will encourage more women to embrace social media as a business tool, leading to broader adoption and greater business success.

Beyond training and capacity building, the implementation of a successful framework requires strong policy recommendations that create an enabling environment for women in digital entrepreneurship. One of the most pressing challenges that hinder social media utilization among Nigerian women entrepreneurs is inadequate digital infrastructure. Internet access in many parts of Nigeria remains expensive and unreliable, making it difficult for small business owners to maintain an active online presence (Baxter, 2016). Government support for digital infrastructure is essential to ensure that women entrepreneurs, regardless of their location, have access to affordable and high-speed internet services. Investments in broadband expansion, public Wi-Fi access points, and data subsidy programs can significantly improve connectivity and enable women to participate fully in the digital economy. Additionally, financial incentives for telecommunications companies to provide discounted data plans for small businesses can ease the financial burden of maintaining an online presence.

Another key policy recommendation is the provision of incentives for women in digital entrepreneurship. Given the economic potential of women-led businesses, the government and financial institutions should introduce targeted funding programs that support women entrepreneurs in leveraging social media for business growth. Grants, low-interest loans, and business incubation programs can help women invest in digital tools, advertising, and e-commerce platforms that enhance their competitiveness (Bellemare, 2020, Nalla & Reddy, 2021). Policies that encourage financial inclusion, such as mobile banking services and digital payment solutions, should also be strengthened to facilitate seamless online transactions. Collaboration with private sector organizations and tech companies can lead to the development of special digital entrepreneurship programs that equip women with the necessary resources to thrive in the digital marketplace.

To ensure effective implementation, a monitoring and evaluation system should be established to track the progress of women entrepreneurs in adopting social media strategies. Periodic assessments can help identify challenges, measure the impact of training initiatives, and refine strategies based on real-time feedback (Newman, 2019). Government

agencies, academic institutions, and research organizations can collaborate to conduct impact assessments that provide data-driven insights into the effectiveness of the framework. These findings can be used to scale up successful interventions and address any gaps that may hinder widespread adoption.

Overall, the implementation strategy for leveraging social media as a tool for business growth among Nigerian women entrepreneurs requires a multifaceted approach that combines education, policy support, and infrastructure development. By equipping women with digital skills, providing access to learning resources, and advocating for supportive policies, the framework can drive significant economic empowerment and transformation (Classi, *et al.*, 2018, Nguyen, 2019). A collaborative effort between the government, private sector, civil society organizations, and women entrepreneurs themselves is essential to achieving sustainable success. As more women gain confidence in utilizing social media for business, their enterprises will not only grow but also contribute to job creation, economic diversification, and long-term national development.

3.3 Expected Outcomes and Impact

The development and implementation of a structured framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for business growth among Nigerian women entrepreneurs are expected to yield significant outcomes across multiple dimensions. The most immediate and tangible impact will be seen in business growth and scaling, as social media platforms provide an unparalleled opportunity for entrepreneurs to expand their market reach and increase their customer base (Debski, *et al.*, 2017). Traditionally, many women-owned businesses in Nigeria operate within localized markets, relying on word-of-mouth referrals and community-based sales. By integrating social media into their business models, these entrepreneurs can break beyond geographical limitations and connect with customers from different regions and even international markets. Digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp enable businesses to showcase their products and services to a wider audience, allowing potential customers to discover their brands regardless of location.

A well-structured framework that guides women entrepreneurs in optimizing their social media presence will lead to increased visibility and brand awareness. With the right digital marketing strategies, businesses can engage with potential customers through targeted advertising, influencer collaborations, and customer testimonials (Dobaj, *et al.*, 2018, Pyykkö, Suoheimo & Walter, 2021). This expanded market reach will result in higher conversion rates, as customers who were previously unaware of these businesses will have the opportunity to explore their offerings. The ability to attract a larger customer base translates directly into increased sales and profitability. As women entrepreneurs become more proficient in using social media for business, they can implement strategies such as limited-time promotions, customer loyalty programs, and interactive engagement campaigns to drive sales. The use of social media analytics allows businesses to track customer behaviors, refine their marketing approaches, and optimize their content strategies for better engagement and higher revenue generation.

The anticipated financial growth of women-led businesses will contribute to improved economic stability for individual

entrepreneurs and their families. As businesses generate higher revenues, they will have the capacity to reinvest in expansion efforts, hire additional staff, and diversify their product or service offerings. This growth trajectory aligns with broader national development goals, as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role in driving economic prosperity (Ehikioya & Guillemot, 2020, Rafique, Khan & Dou, 2019). With a structured framework in place, women entrepreneurs will not only sustain their businesses but also explore opportunities for scaling through partnerships, funding access, and collaborations with larger industry players.

Beyond individual business success, the socio-economic impact of empowering Nigerian women entrepreneurs through social media is profound. One of the key expected outcomes is the empowerment and self-sufficiency of women in business. In many parts of Nigeria, women face significant socio-cultural and economic barriers that limit their participation in entrepreneurial activities (Elujide, *et al.*, 2021, Gade, 2021). The adoption of digital tools, particularly social media, provides an avenue for women to overcome these challenges and take control of their financial independence. By leveraging online platforms, women can operate businesses from the comfort of their homes, balancing work with family responsibilities while still achieving business growth. This empowerment not only enhances their self-confidence but also strengthens their ability to contribute meaningfully to their households and communities.

With increased financial independence, women entrepreneurs will experience improved standards of living, enabling them to invest in their personal development, education, and healthcare. The ability to generate sustainable income empowers women to support their children's education, thereby breaking cycles of poverty and fostering long-term socio-economic progress. Furthermore, as women entrepreneurs thrive, they become role models for other aspiring businesswomen, inspiring more women to pursue entrepreneurial ventures (Guzmán & González de Molina, 2015, Rishaug & Wika, 2018). This multiplier effect leads to a broader culture of female entrepreneurship, where women actively participate in the digital economy and redefine traditional gender roles in business.

The contribution of women entrepreneurs to the broader economy through increased business activities will be another major impact of the developed framework. SMEs form the backbone of Nigeria's economy, and by enhancing the digital capabilities of women-owned businesses, the overall business landscape will experience significant transformation. Increased digital engagement will lead to higher transaction volumes, greater demand for digital payment solutions, and more robust e-commerce participation (Hahn & Lee, 2020, Sabou, *et al.*, 2020). The ripple effect of this transformation extends to job creation, as growing businesses require additional employees to manage customer interactions, inventory, logistics, and marketing activities. As more women entrepreneurs hire staff, the employment rate in various sectors will improve, contributing to national economic growth.

Additionally, increased business activities among women entrepreneurs will attract more investors and policymakers' attention toward the digital economy. A thriving ecosystem of women-led businesses utilizing social media effectively will highlight the need for further investment in digital

infrastructure, financial inclusion initiatives, and supportive policies that enhance women's participation in entrepreneurship (Shrestha, Krishna & von Krogh, 2021). The government and private sector will recognize the value of supporting female entrepreneurs through grants, training programs, and technological advancements that ensure a more inclusive digital economy.

Ultimately, the implementation of a structured framework for social media utilization among Nigerian women entrepreneurs has the potential to drive both individual and national economic transformation. By equipping women with the necessary skills, strategies, and tools to optimize their digital presence, businesses will experience increased market access, profitability, and sustainability. On a larger scale, the empowerment of women in digital entrepreneurship will foster greater economic inclusivity, job creation, and socio-economic development (Elujide, *et al.*, 2021, Intizar, *et al.*, 2017). This shift will position Nigerian women entrepreneurs as key contributors to the nation's economic landscape, ensuring long-term growth and resilience in the face of evolving global digital trends.

4. Conclusion

The development of a structured framework for leveraging social media as a strategic tool for the growth of Nigerian women entrepreneurs presents significant opportunities for business expansion, economic empowerment, and national development. The findings of this study highlight the critical role social media plays in modern entrepreneurship by providing women with cost-effective platforms to increase their market reach, enhance customer engagement, and improve business performance. A well-designed framework enables women entrepreneurs to optimize digital tools for branding, marketing, sales conversion, and customer relationship management. By strategically using platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp, women can overcome traditional barriers such as limited access to physical marketplaces, financial constraints, and gender-based socio-economic restrictions. Digital literacy, branding consistency, audience engagement, and data-driven decision-making are key components of a successful social media strategy. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of training, capacity building, and supportive policies in ensuring that Nigerian women entrepreneurs fully harness the power of social media for sustainable business growth.

Despite the promising prospects, certain limitations must be acknowledged. One of the main challenges is the digital divide, as not all women entrepreneurs have equal access to reliable internet services, smartphones, or digital literacy programs. Many women in rural areas remain excluded from digital opportunities due to high internet costs, inadequate infrastructure, and limited exposure to online business tools. Additionally, this study does not account for industry-specific variations in social media adoption, as some business sectors may require unique strategies and engagement approaches. The rapidly evolving nature of social media platforms also presents a challenge, as algorithm changes, advertising policies, and emerging trends can impact the effectiveness of previously successful strategies. Furthermore, while social media offers numerous benefits, challenges such as online fraud, cyber harassment, and customer distrust must be addressed to ensure a safe and conducive digital business environment.

Future research should explore ways to bridge the digital

divide by investigating affordable internet access solutions, localized digital training programs, and financial support mechanisms tailored to women entrepreneurs in underserved regions. Additionally, studies can focus on sector-specific social media strategies to provide deeper insights into how different industries can maximize digital opportunities. The impact of artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and emerging technologies on social media marketing for women-led businesses should also be examined to ensure long-term adaptability. A more extensive analysis of the regulatory environment and policies surrounding digital entrepreneurship in Nigeria can further contribute to the development of a holistic support system for women entrepreneurs. By addressing these research gaps, future studies can strengthen the proposed framework and enhance the role of social media in driving the success of Nigerian women entrepreneurs in an increasingly digital world.

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