PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON MULTICULTURALISM IN SOUTHERN STATES, NIGERIA[*]

Ifeyinwa Nsude
Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication, Ebonyi State University (Nigeria)
Email: ifeyinwa.nsude@ebsu.edu.ng
Titilayo Remilekun Osuagwu https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0798-4909
PhD, Senior Lecturer, Department of Broadcasting, faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Ebonyi State University (Nigeria)
Email: titilayo.osuagwu@uniport.edu.ng
Etumnu Emeka Williams https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7186-117X
Doctoral Student, Department of Mass Communication, Imo State University, Owerri (Nigeria). Email: etumnuemeka@gmail.com

Abstract. *This study investigated the perceived influence of social media on multiculturalism in the southern states of Nigeria. The uncertainty reduction theory served as the theoretical support for the study. The survey research method was employed with a projected population of about 17,871 thousand people in select southern states of Nigeria. The Wimmer and Dominick sample size calculator was used to derive 384 as the sample size. Multistage and purposive sampling techniques were used, and the questionnaire served as an instrument for gathering data while the data was analyzed using percentages, charts, and mean analysis. Findings revealed that residents in the southern states use social media for multicultural engagements to a large extent. Findings also show that social media promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria by way of enhancing communication competence amongst people from different cultures; it strengthens ties with people from other cultures; and it gives a sense of belonging in a culturally diverse group on social media. It was concluded that social media have a positive influence on multiculturalism in the southern states of Nigeria. It was recommended that residents of the southern states of Nigeria should be encouraged by those stakeholders who are cultural ambassadors to sustain their efforts in using social media for multicultural engagements. Users of social media should be on alert in order to guard against anyone that is capable of causing disunity or tribal war on the social media space. Such a person(s) should be reported so that appropriate action can be taken against them.*

Keywords: *Social media, multiculturalism, culture, groups, southern states, Nigeria*

ԲԱԶՄԱՄՇԱԿՈՒԹԱՅՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՎՐԱ ՍՈՑԻԱԼԱԿԱՆ ՄԵԴԻԱՆԵՐԻ ԱԶԴԵՑՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՀԱՆՐԱՅԻՆ ԸՆԿԱԼՈՒՄՆԵՐԸ ՆԻԳԵՐԻԱՅԻ ՀԱՐԱՎԱՅԻՆ ՆԱՀԱՆԳՆԵՐՈՒՄ

Իֆեինվա Նսուդե
Էբոնիի նահանգի համալսարանի զանգվածային հաղորդակցության ֆակուլտետի դասախոս (Նիգերիա): Էլ. փոստ՝ ifeyinwa.nsude@ebsu.edu.ng

---

Տիտիլայո Ռեմիլեկուն Օսուագվու https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0798-4909
Փ.գ.թ., Էբոնիի պետական համալսարանի հեռարձակման, հաղորդակցման
և լրատվամիջոցների ուսումնասիրությունների ֆակուլտետի ավագ
դասախոս (Նիգերիա): Էլ. փոստ՝ titilayo.osuagwu@uniport.edu.ng
Էտումնու Էմեկա Ուիլլիամս https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7186-117X
Իմոյի պետական համալսարանի զանգվածային հաղորդակցության
ֆակուլտետի դոկտորանտ (ք. Օվերի, Նիգերիա): Էլ. փոստ՝
Etumnuemeka@gmail.com

Ամփոփում: Ուսումնասիրությունը նվիրված է Նիգերիայի հարավային նա-
հանգներում ապրողների՝ բազմամշակութային միջավայրի վրա սոցիալական
մեդիաների հնարավոր ազդեցության վերաբերյալ պատկերացումների բացա-
հայտմանը: Նկարագրելով Նիգերիայի հարավային նահանգների պատմությունն
ու ցույց տալով այդտեղ ապրողների բազմամշակութային կենսակերպի ձևավոր-
ման գործոնները՝ հիմնավորվում է սոցիալական մեդիաների և՛ դրական, և՛ բա-
ցասական ազդեցության հավանականությունը: Հաշվի առնելով բնակչության
ընդհանուր թիվը՝ մոտ 17,871 հազար մարդ, և սահմանելով ընտրանքային ծավա-
լը՝ 384 հոգի, իրականացվել է հարցաթերթիկային հարցում: Հետազոտության
արդյունքները ցույց են տալիս, որ այդ տարածքի բնակիչները լայնորեն օգտա-
գործում են սոցիալական մեդիաներ, դրանց միջոցով շփվելով՝ նպաստում են
բազմամշակութային միջավայրի ընդլայնմանն ու դրանում ավելի խորն են ին-
տեգրվում: Սոցիալական մեդիայի օգտագործումը նպաստում է միջմշակութային
հաղորդակցությունների կարողությունների և փորձի ձեռքբերմանը: Խորհուրդ է
տրվում ավելի լայնորեն կիրառել սոցիալական մեդիան հատկապես հանրային
կարծիքի առաջնորդների կողմից՝ խթանելու բազմամշակութային երկխոսութ-
յունն ու կանխելու ցեղերի միջև հնարավոր հակասությունները, ինչպես նաև բա-
ցահայտելու նման հակասությունները սաղմներին:

Բանալի բառեր – *սոցիալական մեդիա, բազմամշակութայնություն, միջմշա-
կութային հաղորդակցություն, հանրային կարծիքի առաջնորդներ, հարավային
նահանգներ, Նիգերիա*

ВОСПРИЯТИЕ ВЛИЯНИЯ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СЕТЕЙ НА МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРАЛИЗМ В ЮЖНЫХ ШТАТАХ НИГЕРИИ

Ифеинва Нсудэ
Преподаватель кафедры массовой коммуникации, Университет штата Эбони
(Нигерия). Email: ifeyinwa.nsude@ebsu.edu.ng
Титилайо Милекун Осуагву https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0798-4909
Доктор философии, старший преподаватель, факультет телерадиовещания,
коммуникаций и исследований СМИ, Университет штата Эбони (Нигерия)
Email: titilayo.osuagwu@uniport.edu.ng
Этумну Эмека Виллиамс https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7186-117X
Докторант, факультет массовой коммуникации, Университет штата Имо,
Оверри (Нигерия) Email: etumnuemeka@gmail.com

Аннотация. *В данной статье исследуется воздействие социальных сетей на мультикультурализм в южных штатах Нигерии соответственно восприятиям самих жителей. Исходя из населения в 17 871 тысяч человек, была рассчитана выборка в размере 384 респондентов, с которыми был проведен анкетный опрос. Исследование выявило распространенность социальных сетей среди пользователей, а также их положительное воздействие на межкультурную коммуникацию и, соответственно, на взаимодействие культур различных сообществ, проживающих в южных штатах Нигерии. В частности, социальные медиа способствуют развитию у пользователей навыков межкультурной коммуникации и опыта. Рекомендуется более активное использование социальных платформ именно знаменитыми в обществе людьми, мнение которых влияет на общество, в целях преодоления возможных конфликтов и разногласий между представителями различных племен, а также в целях выявления тех лиц, которые провоцируют подобные противоречия.*

Ключевые слова: *социальные сети, мультикультурализм, культура, группы, южные штаты, Нигерия*

Introduction

In this globalized world where information is like oxygen, people from diverse cultures have frequent contacts which call for the need for cooperation. Thus, communicating across cultures presupposes not only a different language but a different culture and this presents both exciting and challenging times for nations. Exciting because of the ability to communicate with people from different cultures without barriers in time and space and this is challenging because technology is said to be furthering individualism and separatism in cultural, religious, and national affairs (Cambell, et al., 2014; Hoter, et al., 2020) and thereby posing a paradox of trust and a threat to the concept of multiculturalism (Bajrami & Shabani, 2019; Condorelli, 2018; Smith, 2008; Goshylyk & Goshylyk, 2010). In particular, Ezeobi (2011) mentions multiculturalism as one of the causes of conflict in Nigeria by pointing out that "Ethnic conflicts in Nigeria and Africa, in general, arise as a result of scarcity of political resources, multiculturalism, religion, militarization of ethnicity among others."

Nigeria is made up of over 217 million people (Worldometre, 2022) over 250 ethnic groups, over 500 languages and over 1000 dialects and cultures (USCIRF Report, 2016; Ezeobi, 2021). All these make Nigeria a country with diverse cultures and a multi-ethnic nation-state. The lack of commonalities birthed by geographical and linguistic divisions often breeds strife, prejudices and stereotypical beliefs. That explains why the country is often riddled with ethnoreligious quagmire and political tensions all the time. To this, Okechukwu, et al. (2019), observe that even villages that have "narrower identities defining them" often clash and sub-ethnic identities also exist within some ethnic groups (Mba, 2014)

The existence of different ethnic groups which are agitating diverse interests in Nigeria attest to the fact of lack of commonalities among the ethnic groups. Notably among such ethnic groups arethe O' dua People Congress (OPC), Bakassi Boys, Egbesu Boys, Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC), Igbo People Congress (IPC), Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and ArewaPeople's Congress (APC) (Ezeobi, 2021).

The commonest conflicts in Nigeria are communal conflictsand ethno-religious

crises which often arise as a result of political tussles, land disputes, chieftaincy tussles,defence of community people, property and pride (Akinteye, 1999; Okechukwu, et al ., 2019; Onwe, et al., 2015) Nigeria has witnessed numerous communal conflicts such as Zango-Kataf crisis in Kaduna State 1999-2001, Tiv-Jukun crisis in Taraba State 1999-2001, Ife Modakeke in Osun State 1999-2000, Eleme-Okrika crisis, Itsekiri-Urhobo crisis 1999-2000, Itsekiri-Ijaw crisis, Aguleri Umuleri conflict in Anambra State 1995-1999, Umuode Oruku conflict, the Igbo-Ikom conflict in Cross-River State and the Ezza-Ezillo conflict in Ebonyi State among others (Mba, 2014; Okechukwu, et al., 2019).

Nigeria is in dire need of multicultural orientation in light of the recent happenings in the country, especially in the eastern geographical zone which has become a theatre of violence recently. Alook at such ethno-religious crises will give a better understanding of the precarious situation. Over 1,800 inmates escaped from the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCOs) facility in Owerri, the state capital of Imo State, after gunmen stormed the police headquarters there, torching many cars in the process. Two officers were slain while inside the Police Zonal Headquarters at Ukpo in Anambra as a result of a bandit/terrorist attack. Over 18 persons were slain in an ethnic conflict between residents and armed herdsmen in Ebonyi State. The Oruku versus Umuode communal crisis that started in 1999 (Okechukwu, et al., 2019) is not an exception. Thus, since the inception of the present political administration of President Mohammad Buhari, the people do not have peace. Up until the time of writing this paper, the eastern part of the south still observes a stay-at-home order every Monday in protest for the release of one of the freedom fighters who had been docked by the administration. All these have led to a lack of trust among the southerners themselves, the other ethnic groups that sojourn in their midst and the government.

The purpose of the current study, therefore, is to examine the influence of social media on multiculturalism in four Southern States in Nigeria. The southern states include Ebonyi, Imo, Bayelsa and Rivers. Overall, this study ascertains whether or not residents of southern Nigeria utilise social media for multicultural engagements and the extent to which they utilize them.

Statement of the Problem

The challenge is always how to promote awareness of multiculturalism as well as increase people's competence in multiculturalism communication using social media (Emmenegger, 2019; Udebunu, 2011). Ethnicity is the opposite of multiculturalism and is a threat to national security since it often seems difficult for the cultures that coexist to assimilate themselves. "In ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, people have fewer friends, trust is lower, and altruism and community cooperation are rarer" (Robert Putman, 2007 as cited in Jandt, 2021, p. 556 citing). Occurrences like the civil war of 1967-1970 and the annulment of the 1993 polls by the military in Nigeria attest to the fact of ethnic rivalry and in consequence leading to social inequality and underdevelopment (Samuel, 2012; Nduba, Nnamdi & Chukwuebuka, 2020).

Chen (2012) and Zaw (2018) argue that new media serve as channels of free expression of opinions and relationship establishment. However, their role in promoting multicultural ideals is unstable as they tend to question the conventional

definition of cultural identity through the weakening or strengthening of the significance of the relationships between people and communities. Some other scholars like Jandt (2021) and Chen (2012) have argued that new identities may be forged in virtual communities. All these attest to the fact of empirical gap and the need to ascertain the nature of the relationship between social media and multiculturalism.

Addressing the global sustainable development goals is a major concern to many countries including Nigeria. This is because the goals serve as a prosperity template to many nations of the world. Goal ten aims to reduce inequality, while goal sixteen aims to achieve peace, justice and strong institutions through the inclusion of every member of society without fear or violence. Further, the last goal advocates partnership of all people, for the attainment of the goals (UNDP, 2022). The attainment of these goals is arguably impossible without peace and multiculturalism. Multiculturalism isa prerequisite for peace since its central goal promotes the acceptability of all and their coexistence. Social media shape feelings and behaviour in the real world. With the Southern people in mind, this study seeks to establish how social media are mitigating cultural tensions and the understanding of the intersections between communication, technology and multiculturalism.

An underlying assumption in this study is that the twin concepts of social media and multiculturalism have not been adequately investigated (Cherng & Davis 2019; McQail, 2010), especially in a culturally diverse country like Nigeria which requires multiculturalism for cohesion and development. MQuail (2010) suggested that the positive cultural potentials of photos and music whose distributions are made possible through new media should be investigated.

Scholars have noted that the technological reality of the 21st century provides the tools to combat the perpetuation of stereotypes and prejudices. It allows for the building of social relationships and acquaintances with other cultures based on common universal values in addition to the unique values of each culture, thus developing a more open, understanding and respectful dialogue (Postmesand Lea 1988; Hoter, et al., 2020, p.2).

Literature Review

Culture is some attributes possessed by a human group and it entails physical environment, religion, tools, practices, customs, traditions or the total way of life (McQuail, 2010). Individuals learn about other people's cultures through the media. In particular, cultural learning is made possible through media's surveillance, correlation and transmission functions (Wilson & Chao, 2013; Dominic, 2013). However, the conventional media have been accused of excluding certain cultures and even redefining some depending on the identity of who is involved whether in-group or out-group. This is evident in the concepts of cultural domination, cultural imperialism, ethnocentrism and media imperialism (Cherng & Davis 2019; Osuagwu, 2010; McQuail, 2010). Thus, the conventional media are said to instigate cultural bigotry.

The influence of the new media on culture is a much-debated scholarship (McQquail, 2010) Thus, cultural scholars have conflicting views regarding the influence on multiculturalism (McQuail, 2010). Some think that new media are further perpetuating negative stereotypes concerning culture (Wilson & Chao,

2013) In what they call "old problems linger in the new era" (p.116) Wilson and Chao, (2013) observed how multicultural challenges persist even in the new communications age. Similarly, McQuail (2010) observe that new technologies have made cultural experiences more accessible to people which in consequence is changing the meaning and salience of culture.

Social media are computer-based interactive and socializing platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram and Linkedin (Anim, 2013). According to Dominic (2011, p. 25), "Social media are online communications that use special techniques that involve participation, conversation, sharing, collaboration and linkage." Thus, the social media are internet based applications that were derived from the ideological basis of web 2.0 which allow creation and exchange of audio visual content as generated by users and in the end networks of acquaintances are enabled (Jumbo et al., 2023; Kaplain & Haelein, 2009; Mcquail,2010).

Multiculturalism also known as cultural pluralism or ethnic pluralism is the idea that different cultures or ethnicities acknowledge their differences within a dominant political culture and enter into dialogue and collaborations without any culture sacrificing its identity. It recognizes each culture as being an integral part of a whole. In other words, multiculturalism presupposes the ability of people of different cultures to coexist and benefit each other. Its major goal is to depersonalise or deindividualise people (Eagan, 2023; Postmes & Lea 2002; Reicher & Postmes, 1995) by breaching cultural boundaries.

Multicultural inclusion means building bridges to promote social inclusion. Austin and Anderson (2008), Akwuebu (2018) see multiculturalism as a term that affirms the recognition that diverse cultures can coexist in the same environment for mutual benefits (Goshilink & Goshilink 2010). The concept of multiculturalism stems from the fact that there is not just one human culture; people from diverse backgrounds are susceptible to communication barriers. However, the interconnectivity of the world makes the need for people from different cultures to communicate.

Some scholars have noted that contact and communication reduce tension and foster cultural tolerance, which is the goal of multiculturalism (Mostafazadeh, et al., 2015; Pettigrew & Troop, 2000; Pettigrew & Troop, 2004). Thus, technological affordances present the opportunity for people to interact deeply and share universal values while arguably retaining indigenous culture. Consequently, openness, dialogue and understanding are promoted (Chukwuere & Onyebukwa, 2018). In virtual interactions, people trust, like, and comment thereby building relationships (Gu et al., 2019; Walther & Bunz, 2005). In the same vein, McMullan (2020), Postmes and Lea (1998), earlier asserted that computer-mediated interactions build social relationships rather than breach them.

Although the cultural impacts of social media are still evolving (Dominic, 2011), a few studies that suggest a positive correlation between social media and multiculturalism exist. For instance, Mollov and Lavie (2001) and Mollov (2006) showed how a one-to-one religious communication medium like email could help in building religious trust and tolerance among the warring Jews and Palestinians. Austin (2006) reported a study that demonstrated the ability of technology (online social interactions) to change perceptions and combat cultural prejudices in Ireland. The study in reference took place between 1999 and 2008 and students and pupils of

Northern and Southern Ireland were sampled. In the same vein, Winda, et al. (2019), in their study titled the "Role of Social Media in Intercultural Communication Competences using Students of Two Universities in Japan," showed that the majority of the students were on Facebook with the motivation to know more about their international friends. Still, Hoter, et al. (2020) using the contact hypothesis recently demonstrated how distance learning could serve the goal of promoting multiculturalism as their research demonstrated that collaborative learning via the internet and other technological tools were helping to reduce bias between Arabs and Jews.

In this regard, Chen (2012) argued that social media affordances allow people of diverse cultures to freely express themselves and establish relationships and communicate with diverse societies. This sounds exciting but poses a threat to ethnic and political unity and diversity. Cooperation is said to be rare in diverse states, yet it is a prerequisite for development. India is the most diverse state in the world and also the most diverse nation states are found in Africa (Jandt, 2021).

Scholars are divided on the role of social media in multicultural engagements. Some scholars have pointed out that people are using social media to create novel kinds of social solidarity and more encompassing identities (Arasaratnam & Doerfel, 2005; Jandt 2021). In contrast, some have argued that social media harm culture because of the dominance of the English language, how to reflect the demographic realities of people has become a challenge and has been a concern to scholars. As Jandt (2021) noted, the challenge of intercultural communication is how to better understand groups with unique cultural identities and collaborate freely to tackle global challenges.

Social media are said to have facilitated communication between people from multiple cultures to fulfil the concept of the global village (Breckling, 2012; Metev & Veiko, 2013). However, Chen (2012) observes that although new media have brought about people's interconnectedness, they have also posed some challenges to the traditional definition of multicultural communication because of the need to connect with people from diverse cultures. For instance, through social media, the rich cultural heritage of the Igbo people is showcased to the world through Atilogu dance as well as the cuisines of the Ogoni people in Rivers.

Brief History of Southern Nigeria

Southern Nigeria was coined in 1900 under the British Protectorate and was specifically called the "Southern Nigeria Protectorate" as a territorial label for those who live below the Niger River in Lokoja. It had its initial capital in Calabar until 1906 when Lagos was annexed to it, made its administrative seat (World History at KMLA, 2007) and was renamed "colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. The protectorate system ended in January 1914 when southern and northern protectorates were amalgamated with Lagos as its capital (Falola, 2009). In 1939, Southern Nigeria was divided into Eastern and Western provinces.

Present-day Southern Nigeria covers the eastern and western regions of the colonial period and the first republic in Nigeria. It comprises two of the three major ethnic groups which include Yoruba and Igbo people and other minority groups like Ijaw, Ogoni, Ikewerre. According to Falola (2009, p.364) "in 1939, the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was divided into two regions, Western Region and Eastern

Region. They remained as political zones for the remainder of the colonial period and into the early years of independence."

Southern Nigeria is made up of 17 states, including Notably, Ebonyi, Abia, Bayelsa, Rivers, Oyo, Ekiti, Enugu, AkwaIbom, Delta, Lagos, Cross River, Osun, Ogun, Anambra, Imo and Edo states. The major occupations of the people are farming and fishing which are supported by its tropical and humid climates. The majority of the people of southern Nigeria practice Christianity as their religion (Falola, 2009).

Theoretical Framework

Some of the theories that emphasize interactions among different cultures are relevant to this study. Such theories include the contact hypothesis, intergroup contact, social identity and uncertainty reduction theories (Berry, 2013). However, for this study, the choice is the uncertainty reduction theory.

The uncertainty reduction theory also called the initial interaction theory was developed in1975 (West & Turner, 2010). It has its root in Shannon and Weaver's information theory Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Charles Chuck Berger and Richard Calabrese developed the uncertainty reduction theory to demonstrate how gaining information about other people can reduce uncertainty about them. Such gained information helps to predict people's opinions as well as their actions which are crucial to relationship development (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).

As listed by West and Turner (2010), the assumptions of the theory include:

1. People experience uncertainty in interpersonal settings.

2. Uncertainty is an aversive state, generating cognitive stress.

3. When strangers meet, their primary concern is to reduce their uncertainty or to increase predictability.

4.Interpersonal communication is a developmental process that occurs through stages.

5.Interpersonal communication is the primary means of uncertainty reduction.

6.The quantity and nature of the information that people share can change through time.

7.It is possible to predict people's behaviour in a law-like fashion.

The theory, using a set of theorems, gave nine main axioms that serve as a lens for investigating and predicting the process of getting to know someone. West and Turner (2014) outlined theorems as seen below:

1.People experience uncertainty in initial interpersonal settings, which can be lessened as verbal communication increases.

2.Uncertainty is inversely correlated to nonverbal affiliative expressiveness.

3.Uncertainty is positively correlated with information-seeking strategies.

4.Intimacy and uncertainty are inversely correlated.

5.Reciprocity is positively correlated with uncertainty.

6.Similarities between individuals will reduce uncertainty.

7.Increased uncertainty results in decreased levels of liking.

8.Shared social networks reduce uncertainty and vice versa.

9.Uncertainty is inversely correlated to communication satisfaction

Types of uncertainty have been identified to include cognitive and behavioural. Cognitive uncertainty involves subject uncertainty which encompasses

the degree of uncertainty associated with the beliefs and thoughts of other individuals. In contrast, behavioural uncertainty entails the level of uncertainty that relates to other people's actions (Redmond, 2015).

Furthermore, people tend to pursue uncertainty reduction goals for a single factor or a combination of three factors notably anticipation of future interaction (whether or not the person expects a future encounter with the other person) and lastly, Incentive value (whether or not the other person possesses the ability to reward or control something we aspire to have and deviance is verified (whether or not the other person they act in a manner that conflict with accepted norms). All these serve as the antecedents that help reduce uncertainty (Kellerman & Rodney, 1990).

The first encounter between strangers was divided into three stages by the theorists: the admission stage, the personal stage, and the exit stage. Interactional patterns that indicate like and disliking are present in each level. The beginning of a relationship is the entry stage. Here, behavioural norms like greetings and laughing at innocent jokes and conversations take place. All of these are dependent on cultural norms. The second stage is the personal stage. The personal phase occurs when strangers begin to find out one another's attitudes, values emotions and beliefs. The involvement at this level is higher than that of the first stage. This is because they have engaged in a plethora of interactions while perceiving each other as strangers. Thus, emotional involvement and disclosure are mutually exclusive. The final stage, the exit stage: is the phase at which the former strangers deliberate on the progression of relationship development or not and this is dependent on mutual liking or dislike (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).

The theory explains further that people seek uncertainty reduction goals using three strategies. The strategies are passive strategy, active strategy, and extractive information seeking. The passive strategy involves a scenario where one person deliberately uses tactics to observe another person and obtain information without being noticed. An example is watching someone in a classroom, restaurant, or any public space without attracting attention. On the other hand, active tactics involve uncertainty reduction without direct contact. For instance, questioning someone's friends to derive information. Also, in interactive strategy, the individual engages his target in a dialogue to reduce the uncertainties between them (Berger, 1995). Still, the most recent strategy for uncertainty reduction is the extractive information-seeking strategy because it depicts the context of computer-mediated that allows gaining a huge amount of information about an individual online (Carr & Joseph, 2014). However, Sanders and Wiseman (1993) noted that some of the strategies for uncertainty reduction are culture-specific because some cultures have been found to involve more self-disclosure than others. Scholars later found that uncertainty reduction strategies are the same both offline and online and the asynchronous nature of online communication makes people disclose more (Gibbs, et al., 2011).

Gudykuns et al. (1987) noted that there are two different kinds of uncertainties, most notably proactive and retroactive uncertainty reductions. They went on to say that anticipating people's most likely alternate actions prior to the initial meeting requires proactive uncertainty reduction. These forecasts are made feasible by the past significance of earlier remarks, observations, or information discovered. The level of intimacy changes following this initial touch. Retroactive uncertainty

reduction, on the other hand, is the process of examining a situation after a contact; it includes providing justifications for the other person's actions and deciphering the significance of behavioural decisions (West & Turner, 2010).

The theory has been criticised for being a product of self–assessment of opinions which is a variable that is hard to measure (Brasher, 2001) and it is said to be only valid at an initial point of interaction after which it impacts negatively on the long run (Honeycutt, 1985) that it is action value and rewards attached to initial interaction determines positive relational experience rather than reducing uncertainty and that it is not in every scenario that people every communication encounter uncertainty neither do people experience anxiety the same way (Kramer,1999) and sometimes uncertainty could be too much that no one is interested in reducing it (Miller, 2005)

Criticisms like the ones above do not restrict the application of the uncertainty theory to this study. Especially in a multicultural setting, research has proven a relationship between uncertainty reductions through communication in multicultural settings. Although the initial scope of the theory was interpersonal communication, it was later expanded to include nonverbal communication, intimacy and reciprocity among others (Brasher, 2006). Still, in the present disposition, where most communication takes place offline, the challenge is how to reduce the uncertainties that are prevalent in online communication. Some scholars have used the theory to explain, for example, people's social network preferences for uncertainty reduction (Gambo & Ozad, 2020). Palmiery, et al., (2012) note the effect of Facebook self-disclosure on perceived uncertainty. In the same vein, Tong (2013) shows the merits of social network sites in stemming uncertainty after relationship dissolution. Also, some scholars have demonstrated the correlation between multicultural communication anxiety and uncertainty (Neuliep, 2012; Neuliep& Ryan, 1988).

Research methodology
The central purpose of this study is to ascertain the influence of social media on multiculturalism in Southern states of Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Find out the extent to which residents of the southern states in Nigeria perceive the use of social media for multicultural engagements.

2. Examine how social media is perceived to promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria.

3. Establish residents' behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southeastern states of Nigeria.

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. To what extent do residents of the southern states in Nigeria perceive the use social media for multicultural engagements?

2. How do you perceive social media in promoting cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria?

3. What are the residents' behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria?

This investigation was done using the survey method. The ideal research design for this study is a survey since it allows respondents' perspectives on the perceived influence of social media on multiculturalism in southern states, Nigeria (Asemah, et

al., 2012; Tayo-Garbson, et al., 2019). The authors used this method to elicit responses from respondents on the perceive influence of social media on multiculturalism in southern states Nigeria. Their responses elicited through the structured questionnaire guided the researchers in measuring the perceive influence of social media on multiculturalism. The population of this study is 17,871,024 according to the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2017), this figure is a combination of two southeast and two south-south states they are Ebonyi-2,880,383, Imo-5,408,756, Rivers-7,303,924 and Bayelsa-2,277,961. The rationale for the states selection was based on proximity to the researchers carrying out the investigation and for easy access to respondents. In order to derive the sample size for the study, the Wimmer and Dominick online sample size calculator was used at 95% confidence level and 5% error limit. Therefore, the sample size was 384. The multistage and purposive sampling techniques were used in this study. At the first stage the researchers purposively selected the state capitals from the selected states. At the second stage from these capitals one LGA was purposively selected. They are Owerri (Owerri Municipal) Abakiliki (Abakiliki) Port Harcourt (Port Harcourt) Yenagoa (Yenagoa). The rationale for selecting the LGAs is based on the fact that most social media users are mostly seen in urban areas due to accessibility to strong internet connection and availability to data that can enable interaction amongst people of different cultural backgrounds. At stage three the researchers randomly selected two communities from each of the LGAs they are Owerri Municipal (Umuoyima and Umuororonjo), Abakiliki (AgbajaUnuhuand NkalikiUnuhu), Port Harcourt (D-line and Diobu), Yenagoa (Ekeki and Opolo). At stage four the researchers purposively distributed the 48 copies of questionnaire proportionately to respondents across the select communities. Questionnaire served as instrument for data collection. The instrument was developed from the objectives and research questions and it has a total of ten (10) items structured in dichotomous and Likert scale format. The 4 points Likert scale was used where strong agree is 4, agree 3, disagree 2 and strongly disagree 1. Also, large extent, moderate extent, little extent, no extent, favorable, unfavorable and neutral was used to measure the responses of respondents. The researchers formulated the questions in simple sentence in order to aid understanding of the subject matter being investigated. The researcher adopted the face-to-face approach to administer the instrument. The instrument was validated by an expert to ensure the instrument is well structured in line with the research questions. For reliability of instrument test, the researchers carried out a test- re-test on 15 respondents and the result showed .78 after computation with Cronbach alpha with the aid of SPSS version 21. This result shows that there is a high level of consistency with the instrument. Data were analysed using simple percentages, pie chart and mean analysis.

Presentation of Data and Analysis

From the 384 copies of questionnaire distributed to respondents 370(96.3%) were retrieved meaning 14(3.7%) copies were not returned. The return rate stood at 96.3% that is to say the 370 copies of questionnaire is valid for analysis.

Research Question 1: To what extent do residents of the southern states in Nigeria perceived the use of social media for multicultural engagements?

Fig 1

Respondents response on the extent people connect across cultures on social media
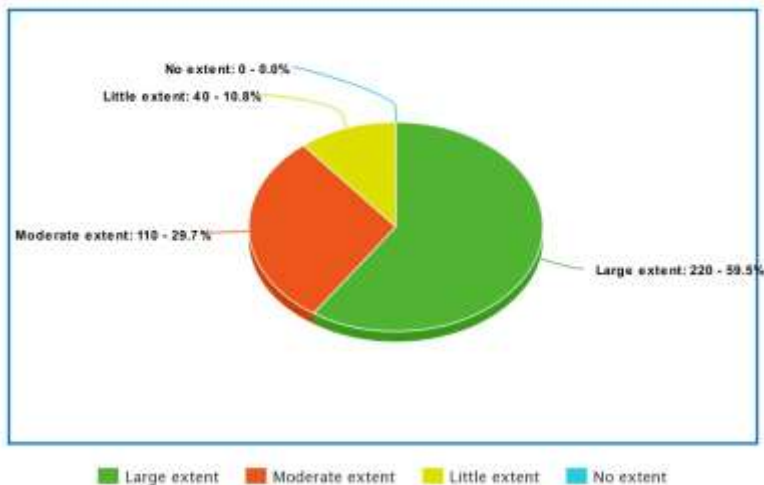
This question was intended to measure the extent to which people connect across cultures on social media. As such, the researchers raised options to be able to get a clear picture of the extent through the scale. Based on the pictorial representation of the data, it is quite obvious that 59.5 percent of the respondents confirmed strongly that they connect across cultures on social media platforms. By implication, the connections they have on these social media platforms will make enormous room for multiculturalism, even in a diverse society such as Nigeria. The statistical value shows that the response is way above average meaning that people leverage social media to connect in such a way that they will share cultural experiences and possibly learn from one another.

Research Question 2: How do you perceive social media in promoting cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria?

Table 1

Respondents Responses on how social media promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	TF	M	Decision
Social media enhances my communication competence with people from other cultures.	238 (64.3%)	132 (35.6%)	- (-)	- (-)	370 (100)	3.6	Accepted
Social media strengthens my ties with people from other cultures.	165 (44.5%)	195 (52.7%)	6 (1.6%)	4 (1.0%)	370 (100)	3.4	Accepted
A sense of belonging in a culturally diverse group on social media signifies cultural inclusion.	130 (35.1%)	210 (56.7%)	25 (6.7%)	5 (1.3%)	370 (100)	3.2	Accepted
social media's interactive nature gives room for cultural inclusion	145 (39.1)	215 (58.1)	7 (1.8)	3 (0.8)	370 (100)	3.3	Accepted
Average mean						**3.3**	

Source: Field survey, 2022

Variables:SA=Strongly Agree, 3.3-4.0: A=Agree,2.5-3.2:D=Disagree, 1.8-2.4:SD=Strongly Disagree, 1.1.7

Decision Rule:

If the average mean score is less than 2.5 (1-2.4), the researchers conclude that the social media does not promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria. But if the average mean score is higher than 2.4 (2.5 – 4.0), the researchers decide that the social media promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria.

In order to answer research question two, the researchers framed these questions and put them in a Likert scale so as to be able to effectively measure the responses from respondents who were studied. From the first item on the scale the mean showed 3.6 which is an indicator that respondents agreed that social media enhances communication competence with people from other cultures. The second item revealed a mean of 3.4 which is an affirmation that social media strengthens ties with people from other cultures. Furthermore, a mean score of 3.2 revealed that a sense of belonging in a culturally diverse group on social media signifies cultural inclusion. Then analysis of data showed that at a mean of 3.3 respondents agreed that social media's interactive nature gives room for cultural inclusion. In summary, from the mean average 3.3 (N=370), it can be concluded that social media promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria. From the above responses it is crystal clear that social media play a great role in promoting cultural inclusion among people of diverse cultural groups who happen to be on the same social media space.

Research Question 3: What are the residents' behavioral dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria?

Fig 2

Respondents response on their attitude towards the spread of other people's cultural values on social media
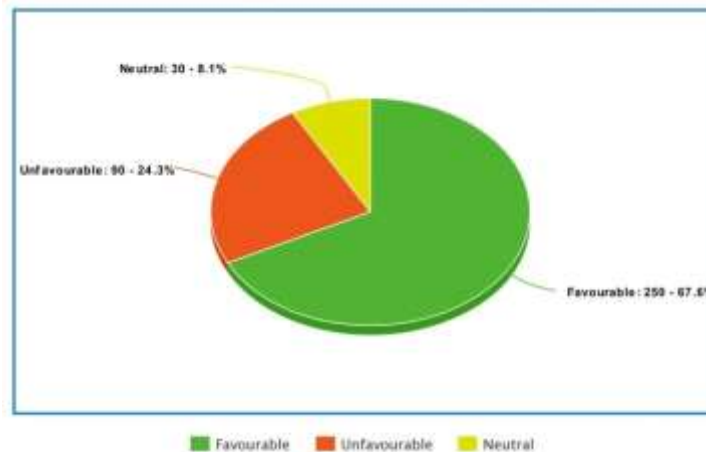
This question was raised to ascertain respondents' attitude towards the spread of other people's cultural values on social media. As such, the options were favorable, unfavorable and neutral. This question provided the basis for the subsequent analysis which enables the researchers to establish the behavioral dispositions of respondents in the study regarding social media and other cultural groups. Therefore, the Fig 2 analysis of data shows that 67.6% of respondents

indicated that they have favourable attitude towards the spread of other people's cultural values on social media. It implies that majority of the respondents have positive attitudes towards the spread of other people cultural values on social media. From the analysis there is a statiscal evidence to show the relationship between respondents' attitude towards the spread of other people's cultural values and social media.

NB: Analysis on table 2 was done based on the responses on fig 2

Table 2

Respondents responses on the behavioral dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	TF	M	Decision
I hardly discriminate against others from the different cultural backgrounds on social media.	125 (36.7%)	137 (40.2%)	70 (20.5)	8 (2.3)	340 (100)	3.1	Accepted
I use social media to support my interaction with people from other cultures.	120 (35.2%)	190 (55.8%)	25 (7.3%)	5 (1.4%)	340 (100)	3.2	Accepted
I use social media to learn more about people from other cultures.	170 (50.0%)	130 (38.2%)	26 (7.6%)	14 (4.1%)	340 (100)	3.3	Accepted
I use social media to talk about how important other cultures are irrespective of the level of their recognition in society.	145 (42.6)	101 (29.7)	78 (22.9)	16 (4.7)	340 (100)	3.1	Accept
Average mean						**3.1**	

Source: Field survey, 2022

Variables:SA=Strongly Agree, 3.3-4.0: A=Agree,2.5-3.2:D=Disagree, 1.8-2.4:SD=Strongly Disagree, 1.1.7

Decision Rule:

If the average mean score is less than 2.5 (1-2.4), the researchers conclude that respondents do not have positive behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria. But if the average mean score is higher than 2.4 (2.5 – 4.0), the researchers decide that respondents have positive behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria.

To be able to answer research question three, the researchers framed Likert scale questions so as to effectively analyze and establish respondents perceived behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria. From item one on the scale a mean of 3.1 revealed that respondents agreed that they hardly discriminate against others from the different cultural backgrounds on social media. The second item at a mean of 3.2 showed that respondents agreed in using social media to support interaction with people from other cultures. Furthermore, at a mean of 3.3 respondents agreed that they use social media to learn more about people from other cultures. The fourth item on the scale revealed that at a mean score of 3.1 respondents confirmed that they use social media to talk about how important other cultures are irrespective of the level of their recognition in society. In summary, from the mean average 3.1 (N=340), it can be concluded that respondents have positive behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria.This can be seen from

their responses. Based on the analysis of data, the researchers infer that respondents have positive behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria. From the statistical evidence there is statistical relationship between the respondents behavioural dispositions and social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The finding revealed that at 59.5%, it was confirmed that respondents connect across cultures on social media. That is to say, they use social media for multicultural engagements to a large extent. The implication of this finding is that people in the southern state of Nigeria leverage social media to a large extent to connect across other cultures. When such occurs, the tendency of multiculturalism will be most likely, with the possibility of social media in the picture. In line with this finding, Pettigrew and Troop, (2000) and Pettigrew and Troop, (2004) revealed that the presence of social media presents the opportunity for people to interact deeply and share universal values while arguably retaining indigenous culture. Some scholars have argued that contact and communication reduce tension and foster cultural tolerance, which is the goal of multiculturalism. In consonance with this finding, Breckling (2012); Metev and Veiko (2013) noted in their study that social media are said to have facilitated communication between people from multiple cultures to fulfill the concept of the global village. Contrary to this finding, Chen (2012) observes that although social media have brought about people's interconnectedness, they have also posed some bottlenecks to multicultural communication because of the need to connect with people from diverse cultures. This finding is consistent with the uncertainty reduction theory, which holds that to demonstrate how gaining information about other people can reduce uncertainty about them; such gained information helps predict people's opinions as well as their actions, which are crucial to relationship development (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).

The findings revealed that social media promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria. Further findings from the mean analysis 3.3 (N=370) confirmed that social media promote cultural inclusion in the southern states of Nigeria by way of enhancing communication competence amongst people from different cultures, strengthening ties with people from other cultures and giving a sense of belonging in a culturally diverse group on social media and its interactive nature. This finding is in line with Chen (2012), who asserted that social media space allows people of diverse cultures to freely express themselves, establish relationships, and communicate with diverse societies. In furtherance to the findings of Arasaratnam and Doerfel (2005) and Jandt (2021), their study revealed that people are using social media to create novel kinds of social solidarity and more encompassing identities. In a similar vein, scholars like Anderson (2008) and Goshilink and Goshilink (2010) revealed in their study that the online space has the propensity to aid multiculturalism where diverse cultures can be recognised and coexist in the same environment for mutual benefits. By implication of this finding, it is obvious that social media have a high tendency to encourage multiculturalism where even the minority groups can be recognised.

Findings from Fig 2 showed that the majority of respondents (67.6%) have a favourable attitude towards the spread of other people's cultural values on social

media. Further findings revealed that at a mean average of 3.1 (N = 340), respondents confirmed that they have positive behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria. From their responses, as seen in table 2, it can be inferred that a majority of them affirmed positive attitudinal dispositions towards other cultures, irrespective of the level of recognition within the southern states. This finding is in consonance with Dominic (2011), who asserted that the cultural impacts of social media are still evolving and that there is a positive correlation between social media and multiculturalism. In a similar vein, Mollov and Lavie (2001) and Mollov (2006) in their studies noted that a one-to-one religious communication medium like email could help in building religious trust and tolerance among the warring Jews and Palestinians. Also, Austin (2006) reported a study that demonstrated the ability of technology (online social interactions) to change perceptions and combat cultural prejudices in Ireland. Besides, in tandem with this finding, Hoter et al. (2020) in their study revealed that collaborative learning via the internet and other technological tools was helping to reduce bias between Arabs and Jews and, as such, promote multiculturalism. According to the uncertainty theory, an interactive strategy used by an individual to engage their target in a dialogue usually aims to reduce the uncertainties between them.

Conclusion

The fact that social media have been used for multicultural engagements by residents of the southern states of Nigeria to a large extent is quite commendable. This could be the reason social media are being used to promote cultural inclusion by way of recognising and respecting even the smallest of cultural groups in the midst of other cultures that are dominant within this region. Based on the findings also, the researchers concluded that social media have a positive influence on multiculturalism because residents confirmed that they have positive behavioural dispositions on social media towards other cultural groups in the southern states of Nigeria.This study has been able to extend literature on previous studies on multiculturalism by adding social media and it will be resourceful for researchers who would want to carry out a study is similar area.Another unique contribution of this study is in the area of raising awareness of government agencies and other stakeholders who are in charge of promoting the unity of people of diverse cultures in Nigeria to the importance of the use of social media in promoting multiculturalism which on the long run can lead to national development when they co-exist without tribal conflict.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study primarily used quantitative data alone to establish the relationship between social media and multiculturalism. A qualitative method could be used, in future research, to get the direct voices of the respondents regarding how they are using the social media for multicultural engagement. Also, an experiment could be performed in future to measure the effect of social media on message effectiveness and multicultural engagements. Still, mixed methods could be used to establish effect and to verify the most employed social media platform health in the promotion of multicultural communication.

Recommendations

In line with the findings, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Residents of the southern states of Nigeria should be encouraged by those stakeholders who are cultural ambassadors to sustain their efforts in using social media for multicultural engagements.

2. The fact that social media promote cultural inclusion is a welcome development. Hence, users of social media should be on alert in order to guard against any online engagement that is capable of causing disaffection, disunity or tribal war on the social media space. Such situations when avoided, the person(s) culpable should be reported so that appropriate action can be taken against them.

3. Residents should maintain the positive behavioural dispositions they have towards other cultural groups on social media or even beyond social media, especially in a period where tribalism and ethnicity are the order of the day in Nigeria.

REFERENCES

Akinteye, A. (1999). Intra-ethnic conflict among the Yoruba.A case of Igbo-Ora. In Otite and Olawale (Eds.), *Community conflict in Nigeria.*Spectrum.

Akwuebu, H. (2018). Multiculturalism and its effects on inequality: a case study of Nigeria (September 27, 2018). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3255991 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3255991

Anim, A. (2013). Media convergence, social media, societal transformation.*The Nigeria Journal of Communication,11*(1),1-24.

Arasaratnam, L. A. &Doerfel, M. L. (2005). Intercultural communication competence: Identifying key components from multicultural perspectives. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29*(2),137–163.

Asemah, E.S., Gujbawu, M., Ekhareafo, D.O. &Okpanachi, R.A. (2012) *Research methods and procedures in mass communication.* Great Future Press.

Austin, R. & Anderson, J. (2008). Building bridges online: Issues of pedagogy and learning outcomes in intercultural education through citizenship. *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education, 4*(1), 86-94.

Austin, R. (2006). The role of ICT in bridge-building and social inclusion: Theory, policy and practice issues. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 29*(2), 145-161.

Bajrami, D & Shabani, A (2019).The role of multicultural education and social media in the affirmation of democratic society. 2019 ENTRENOVA Conference Proceedings

Berger, C. R. (1995). Inscrutable goals, uncertain plans, and the production of communicativeaction. In Berger, C.R., Burgoon, M. (Eds.), *Communication and Social Influence processes*(pp. 1–28). Michigan State University Press.

Berger, C.R., Calabrese, R.J. (1975). Some explorations in initial interaction and Beyond: Toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. *Human Communication Research, 1* (2).99–112. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.1975.tb00258.x.

Berry, J.B. (2013). Intercultural relations in plural societies: Research derived from multiculturalism policy. *Science Direct, 3* (2), 1122-1135. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2007471913709566

Brashers, D. E. (2001).Communication and uncertainty management. *Journal of Communication, 51* (3).477–497. doi:10.1111/j.1460-2466.2001.tb02892.x.

Brashers, D. E. (2006). A theory of communication and uncertainty management. In B. B.

Whaley & B. B. Samter (Eds.), *Explaining communication: Contemporary theories and exemplars.* (pp. 201–218). Erlbaum Associates.

Breckling, J. (2012). *The analysis of directional time series: Applications to wind speed and direction, 61.*Springer Science & Business Media.

Carr, C.T., &Walther, J.B. (2014).*Journal of computer-mediated communication, 19* (4),922–937. doi:10.1111/jcc4.12072.

Cambell, R., Jensen, J., Gomery, D.Fabos, B. &Frechette, J.(2014).*Media in society.* Bedford/St. Martin's

Chen, G.-M. (2012). The impact of new media on intercultural communication in global context. *China Media Research, 8*(2), 1–10.

Cherng, H.-Y. S., & Davis, L. A. (2019). Multicultural matters: An Investigation of Key Assumptions of Multicultural Education Reform in Teacher Education. Journal of Teacher Education, 70(3), 219–236. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487117742884

Chukwuere, J. E., & Onyebukwa, F. (2018). International Review of Management and Marketing The Impacts of Social Media on National Security: A View from the Northern and South-Eastern Region of Nigeria. International Review of Management and Marketing, 8(5).

Condorelli, R. (2018) Cultural differentiation and social integration in complex modern societies reflections on cultural diversity management strategies from a sociological point of view. *Sociology Mind, 8*, 249-303. https://doi.org/10.4236/sm.2018.84019

Dominick, J.R. (2002). *The dynamics of mass communication.* (7thed.). McGraw-Hill.
    Dominick, J.R. (2011). *The dynamics of mass communication: Media in transition.*
(11th edition). McGraw-Hill.

Eagan, J. L. (2023, April 29). Multiculturalism. Encyclopedia Britannica. https://www.britannica.com/topic/multiculturalism

Emmenegger, H. (2019). Multicultural policy, Nigeria, Switzerland, and Canada. https://escholarship.org/content/qt8wr6p1fg/qt8wr6p1fg_noSplash_9e7718295209bc9cfef4552663db80f9.pdf?t=pkrdtw#:~:text=Nigeria%20has%20gone%20through%20multiple,from%20the%20British%20in%201960.

Ezeobi, C. (2021). Analysing ethnicity, ethnic crisis in Nigeria and its management.https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2021/04/21/analysing-ethnicity-ethnic-crises-in-nigeria-and-its-management/

Falola, T. (2009). *Historical dictionary of Nigeria.* Scarecrow Press.

Gambo, S. & Ozad, B. (2021). The influence of uncertainty reduction over social network sites preference. *Journal of theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research 16* (2), 116-127.https://scielo.conicyt.cl/pdf/jtaer/v16n2/0718-1876-jtaer-16-02-00108.pdf

Gibbs, J. L., Ellison, N. B. & Lai, C-H. (2011). First Comes Love, then comes Google: An investigation of uncertainty reduction strategies and self-disclosure in online dating. *Communication Research. 38* (1), 70–100. CiteSeerX 10.1.1.724.93. doi:10.1177/0093650210377091. S2CID 181547.

Goshilink, V. and Goshilink, N. (2010). *A glossary of intercultural communication.*

Grace, R., Tham, J., &Chew, K. (2021). Adapting uncertainty reduction theory for crisis communication: Guidelines for technical communicators. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication. 35* (1), 110–117. doi:10.1177/1050651920959188.

Gudykunst, W.B., Chua, E., &Gray, A.J. (1987). Cultural dissimilarities and uncertainty reduction processes. *Annals of the International Communication Association, 10* (1), 456–469. doi:10.1080/23808985.1987.11678657.

Gu, X., Wang, C., & Lin, L. (2019). Examining scientific literacy through new media. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education, 15*(12).

https://doi.org/10.29333/ejmste/109948

Honeycutt, J.M. (1985). Events that increase uncertainty in personal relationships. *Human Communication Research, 11* (4), 593–604. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2

Hoter, E., Shonfeld, M. & Ganayim, A (2020). Information and communication technology (ICT) in the service of multiculturalism. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, *10*(2). https://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/601

Idowu, E. (2001). *Ethnicity, land rights and communal conflict in Nigeria.* African Notes. 1-4.

Jandt, F.E. (2021). *An introduction to intercultural communication: Identities in a global community.* (10th Edition). Sage.

Jumbo C.N., Asemah E. S., Anyanwu, B.J.C., Onyebuhi, A.C., Etumnu, E.W. & Anyi, O.S.A (2023). Utilisation of new media in communicating insecurity in Southeast Nigeria. *Commicast, 4* (1), 25-36. https://doi.org/10.12928/commicast.v4i1.7604

Kaplain, A.M. &Haelein, M. (2010). *Users of the world, unite! The challenges*. http//ktflexiblelearning.net.au/tkt.

Kellermann, K., & Reynolds, R. (1990). When ignorance is bliss the role of motivation to reduce uncertainty in uncertainty reduction theory. *Human Communication Research,* 17 (1).5–75. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.1990.tb00226.x.

Kramer, M.W. (1999). Motivation to reduce uncertainty: A reconceptualization of uncertainty reduction theory. *Management Communication Quarterly, 13* (2), 305–316. doi:10.1177/0893318999132007.

May, A. Tenzek, & K. E. (2011). Seeking Mrs. right: Uncertainty reduction in online surrogacy Ads. *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication, 12* (1), 27–33. doi:10.1080/17459435.2011.601522.

Mba, P. (2014) Sub-Ethnic identity and conflict in Nigeria: The policy option for the resolution of the conflict between Ezza and Ezillo in Ebonyi State. www.mcsr.org/journal/index.

McMullan, J. (2020). A new understanding of 'New Media': Online platforms as digital mediums. *Convergence, 26*(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856517738159

McQuail, D. (2010). *Mass communication theories.* (6thed) Sage.

Metev, S. M. &Veiko, V. P. (2013). Laser-assisted microtechnology, 19. *Springer Science & Business Media*.

Miller, K. (2005). *Communication theories: Perspectives, processes and contexts*. McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Mollov, B. (2006, June). *Results of Israeli and Palestinian student interactions in CMC: An analysis of attitude changes toward conflicting parties.* Paper presented at the annual

Mollov, B., & Lavie, C. (2001). Culture, dialogue, and perception change in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. *The International Journal of Conflict Management, 12*(1), 69-87.

Mostafazadeh, E., keshtiaray, N., & Ghulizadeh, A. (2015). Analysis of Multi-Cultural Education Concept in Order to Explain Its Components. *Journal of Education and Practice, 6* (1), 1-12.

Moore, C.W. & Woodrow, P.J. (2010). *Handbook of global and multicultural negotiation.*Jossey- Bass.

Nduba, J.O., Nnamdi, M. & Chukwuebuka, O.H. (2020). The crisis of nationalism and ethnic agitations in Nigeria: An analysis of the Indigenous People of Biafra. *International Journal of Academic Pedagogical Research, 4* (4), 4-13

Neuliep, J. W. (March 2012). The relationship among intercultural communication apprehension, ethnocentrism, uncertainty reduction, and communication

satisfaction during initial intercultural interaction: An extension of anxiety and uncertainty management (AUM) Theory. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research, 41*(1). 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/17475759.2011.623239. S2CID 144489448

Neuliep, J.W. & Ryan, D.J. (1998). The influence of intercultural communication apprehension and socio-communicative orientation on uncertainty reduction during initial cross-cultural interaction. *Communication Quarterly, 46* (1).88–99. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463379809370086.

Okechukwu, A.T., Chikwado, K.C &Chwukwuka, M.C. (2019). Destructive nature of communal conflict in Nigeria: A focus on Oruku and Umuode conflict in Enugu State Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS),3*(9).

Onwe, S. O., Nwogbaga, D. M. E., &Nwakamma, M. C. (2015). Effects of social conflicts on the sustainable development of Ebonyi state, A study of Ezillo-EzzaEzillo conflicts (2008- 2014). *Developing Country `studies,5*(3).

Osuagwu, T.R. (2010). Communicating culture through media advocacy: A look at some cultural practices in Okun Land of Kogi State, Nigeria. In C.U. Omego, W.C. Ihejirika, E.E. Kari &C.l. Ochonogor (Eds.), *Journal of Linguistics & Communication Studies*, *2* (1), 315-326.

Palmieri, C. Prestano, K., Gandley, R., Overton, E. & Zhang, Q. (2012). The Facebook phenomenon: Online self-disclosure and uncertainty reduction. *China Media Report Overseas*, *8* (3).

Pettigrew, T. F., &Tropp, L. R. (2000). Does intergroup contact reduce prejudice? Recent metaanalyticfindings.In S. Oskamp (Ed.), *Reducing prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 93- 114).Erlbaum.

Pettigrew, T. F., &Tropp, L. R. (2004). *A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory* (unpublished manuscript). University of California, Santa Cruz, CA.

Postmes, T., Spears, R., & Lea, M. (1998). Breaching or building social boundaries?SIDE-effects of computer-mediated communication. *Communication Research, 25*(6), 689-715.

Postmes, T., Spears, R., & Lea, M. (2002). Intergroup differentiation in computer-mediated communication: Effects of depersonalization. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 6*(1), 3-16.

Redmond, M. (2015). *Uncertainty reduction theory.*English Technical Reports and White Papers.

Reicher, S. D., Spears, R., &Postmes, T. (1995). A social identity model of deindividuationphenomena.*European Review of Social Psychology, 6,* 161-198.

Samuel, O. O. (2012). *A Historical analysis of ethnic conflict in Nigeria.* https://www.grin.com/document/202626

Sanders, J. A. & Wiseman, R. L., (1993).Uncertainty reduction among ethnicities in the United States. *Intercultural Communication Studies,* 3(1).

Shonfeld, M., Hoter, E., Ganayem, A., Sloma, N., &Wated, H. (2008). *Pride and prejudice: How can ICT intervention reduce bias, stigmas and ethnic prejudice among prospective teachers?* In K. McFerrin, et al. (Eds.), Proceedings of Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education International Conference (pp. 4328-4330). AACE.

Smith, R. O. (2008). The paradox of trust in online collaborative groups.*Distance Education, 29*(3), 325-340.

Tayo-Garbson, S. S., Njoku, F. C. &Etumnu, E. W. (2019). Owerri residents' perception of women in journalism. *SAU Journal of Management and Social Sciences, 4*(1&2), 261-270.

Tong, S.T. (2013). Facebook use during relationship termination: Uncertainty reduction and surveillance. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, *16* (11).788–793 https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2012.0549

Udebunu, C. (2011). Nigeria and the dialect of multiculturalism. Ogirisi: A new journal of African studies 8. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/og/article/viewFile/71757/60714

UNDP (2022). The SDGS in action. https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals

USCIRF Report (2015). United States Commission on international religious freedom https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/USCIRF%20Annual%20Report%202015%20%282%29.pdf

Walther, J. B., &Bunz, U. (2005). The rules of virtual groups: Trust, liking, and performance in computer-mediated communication. *Journal of Communication, 55*(4), 828-846.

West, R.L., Turner, L.H. (2010). *Introduction to communication theory: Analysis and application.* McGraw-Hill. pp. 147–165.

Wilson, C.C., Gutierrez, F. &Chao, L. M. (2013). *Racism, sexism and the media: Multicultural issues into the new communications age.* Sage Publications.

Winda, N. & Nasution, B. (2019). *The role of social media in intercultural communication competences.* In Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Social, Economy, Education and Humanity (ICoSEEH2019) Sustainable Development in Developing Country for Facing Industrial Revolution 4.0. 483-491.

Worldometre (2022). Nigeria population live. https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/

Zaw, H. (2018). The impact of social media on cultural adaptation process: Study on Chinese government scholarship students. *Advances in Journalism and Communication, 6,* 75-89. https://doi.org.10.4236/ajc.2018.63007.