

Use of Digital Media Platforms for Social Change in Nigeria

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Abstract

The increasing penetration of digital media platforms in Nigeria has significantly transformed social activism, civic engagement, and public discourse. This study examines the role of digital media in driving social change, focusing on its impact on advocacy, governance, human rights, and community mobilization. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram have become critical tools for raising awareness, shaping public opinion, and influencing policy decisions. The #EndSARS movement, among other online campaigns, has demonstrated how digital activism can translate into real-world change. Additionally, digital platforms have facilitated access to educational resources, health information, and grassroots fundraising initiatives, bridging gaps in communication and social development. However, challenges such as digital illiteracy, misinformation, internet censorship, and disparities in digital access continue to hinder the effectiveness of digital advocacy in Nigeria. Despite these obstacles, the study highlights the growing potential of digital media as a force for social transformation and calls for improved digital literacy, policy reforms, and enhanced infrastructure to maximize its impact. The findings contribute to understanding how digital media can be leveraged for inclusive and sustainable social change in Nigeria. In the area of education and health, digital platforms have played a transformative role. Online learning platforms and social media pages provide access to educational resources, bridging the gap for people in underserved communities.

Keywords

Digital Media,
Nigeria, Platforms,
Social Change, and
Uses



I. Introduction

The use of digital media platforms for social change in Nigeria has grown significantly over the past decade, driven by increased internet penetration, smartphone usage, and the proliferation of social networking sites. Digital media has become a powerful tool for advocacy, civic engagement, activism, and social mobilization, enabling individuals and organizations to amplify their voices, raise awareness, and push for societal transformation. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp have been instrumental in driving social change in Nigeria. Twitter, in particular, has been at the forefront of digital activism, with hashtags such as #EndSARS, #BringBackOurGirls, and #SayNoToRape gaining global traction (Maradun et al., 2021). The #EndSARS movement, which began as an online campaign against police brutality, evolved into nationwide protests that pressured the government to disband the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). This demonstrates how digital platforms can serve as catalysts for offline action, mobilizing large populations and influencing policy decisions.

Beyond activism, digital media platforms have facilitated public discourse on governance, human rights, and social justice. Through online forums, blogs, and live video broadcasts, citizens can engage with policymakers, demand accountability, and challenge narratives promoted by the mainstream media. The interactive nature of these platforms allows for real-time feedback, fostering a participatory culture where marginalized voices can be heard. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups have leveraged digital media for advocacy, fundraising, and community engagement (Maradun et al., 2022). Crowdsourcing campaigns on platforms like GoFundMe and local fundraising sites have helped raise money for medical treatments, disaster relief, and educational initiatives. Digital storytelling, through compelling videos and testimonials, has also been used to humanize social issues and generate empathy among the public.

In the area of education and health, digital platforms have played a transformative role. Online learning platforms and social media pages provide access to educational resources, bridging the gap for students in underserved communities. Health campaigns run on Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube help disseminate critical information on maternal health, vaccinations, mental health awareness, and disease prevention, particularly during public health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the use of digital media for social change in Nigeria is not without challenges. Issues such as internet censorship, misinformation, cyberbullying, and digital illiteracy hinder its full potential (Obada et al., 2024). Government regulations, including the attempted Twitter ban and proposals for social media restrictions, raise concerns about digital rights and freedom of expression. Additionally, disparities in internet access, particularly between urban and rural areas, limit the inclusivity of digital advocacy efforts.

Despite these challenges, digital media continues to redefine social activism and civic engagement in Nigeria. With ongoing improvements in technology, digital literacy, and internet accessibility, the role of digital platforms in shaping social change is expected to grow, offering new opportunities for advocacy, education, and community-driven solutions to societal issues. In the digital age, social media platforms have become powerful tools for communication, information dissemination, and social mobilization (Namadi & Aondover, 2020). Social change is a complex phenomenon that encompasses alterations in societal structures, behaviours, and norms over time. It is a dynamic process driven by various factors, including technological advancements, cultural shifts, economic developments, and political movements. This essay aims to explore the multifaceted nature of social change, its impact on individuals and communities, and the mechanisms through which it occurs. Social change is influenced by a myriad of interconnected factors. Technological advancements, such as the proliferation of the internet and social media, have revolutionized communication and connectivity, facilitating the rapid dissemination of information and ideas (Castells, 2010).

Cultural shifts, including changing attitudes towards gender roles, diversity, and inclusion, have challenged traditional norms and values, leading to transformations in societal attitudes and behaviours (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Economic globalisation has interconnected economies and societies on a global scale, reshaping labour markets, consumption patterns, and social inequalities (Held & McGrew, 2007). Political movements, ranging from grassroots activism to revolutionary uprisings, have mobilised individuals and communities to advocate for social justice, human rights, and political reform (Tilly, 2004). Social change has profound implications for individuals, communities, and societies. It can

lead to improvements in living standards, healthcare, education, and overall quality of life (Sen, 1999).

However, it can also exacerbate social inequalities, marginalize vulnerable populations, and create new forms of social exclusion (Piketty, 2014). Social change can challenge existing power structures and institutions, leading to conflicts, resistance, and social unrest (Giddens, 1984). Yet, it can also foster innovation, creativity, and resilience in the face of adversity. Social change occurs through a variety of mechanisms, including collective action, cultural diffusion, technological innovation, and institutional reform. Collective action, such as social movements, protests, and advocacy campaigns, mobilises individuals to challenge injustices, promote social reforms, and effect policy changes (McAdam et al., 2001). Cultural diffusion spreads new ideas, values, and practices across societies through migration, globalisation, and media dissemination (Rogers, 2003).

Technological innovation drives social change by creating new opportunities for communication, collaboration, and economic development (Castells, 2010). Institutional reform involves changes in laws, policies, and governance structures to address social problems and promote societal progress (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Social change is a fundamental aspect of human societies, shaping the course of history and influencing the lives of individuals and communities around the world. By understanding the factors driving social change, its impact on society, and the mechanisms through which it occurs, we can better comprehend the dynamics of modern society and work towards creating a more just, equitable, and sustainable future.

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis in 1989, serves as a foundational theory for understanding how users come to accept and use new technology (Davis, 1989). TAM posits that two primary factors influence technology adoption: *perceived usefulness* and *perceived ease of use*. According to Davis, perceived usefulness is the extent to which a person believes that using a particular system will enhance their job performance, while perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which a person believes that using the system will be free from effort. These factors shape users' attitudes toward technology, which in turn affect their intentions to use the technology and ultimately their actual usage behavior (Onyejelem & Aondover, 2024a).

In the context of this study on the use of digital media platforms in Nigeria, TAM provides a valuable framework for analyzing how healthcare providers, administrators, and patients respond to digital media. For example, digital media is perceived as useful for reaching a larger audience quickly, thus facilitating health awareness and education (Onyejelem & Aondover, 2024b). Furthermore, the perceived ease of use of platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook, which are widely familiar and accessible, contributes to higher acceptance and frequent utilization in these hospitals. TAM also helps explain the challenges encountered in the adoption of digital media in this context. Many users, particularly patients and administrative staff, may have concerns about privacy or face barriers due to limited digital literacy, which affect their perceptions of ease of use and, subsequently, their willingness to engage with these platforms. This study's findings are consistent with TAM's premise that perceived ease of use significantly impacts the intention to use digital media in healthcare (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Overall, applying TAM to this study highlights that for digital media platforms to be more widely accepted and effectively used in healthcare settings, there must be attention to both the utility of the platforms in meeting healthcare

objectives and the simplicity of their operation for users across different levels of digital proficiency.

2.2 Digital Media Platforms

Digital media platforms have become integral tools for communication and advocacy, transforming how individuals and organizations engage with social issues. The rise of these platforms, including social media, blogs, and online forums, has democratized the flow of information, allowing for greater public participation in discourse and action around social change. In recent years, digital media has been increasingly utilized to mobilize communities, raise awareness, and influence public policy. Owens-Ibie and Aondover (2024) assert that digital platforms are effective in raising awareness about environmental issues, as they allow for the dissemination of information and mobilization of support for environmental causes. This effectiveness is attributed to the ability of digital platforms to reach large audiences quickly and engage them in meaningful ways, thereby fostering a broader public understanding and action towards addressing environmental challenges. The role of digital media in promoting social change is particularly significant in regions where traditional media outlets may be limited or biased, providing a space for marginalized voices to be heard and for grassroots movements to gain traction. The platforms can be used to drive awareness, campaign and action around important issues. From diverse fields of knowledge linked to health issues, it is safe to argue that digital media can have both a positive and a negative impact on public health (Aliough et al., 2023; Airaoje et al., 2024).

Research shows that digital media responses are effective strategies to gain feedback on potential public health policy proposals. Neta et al in Aliough et al., (2023) observed that digital media platforms, particularly social media, enable real-time engagement with the public, allowing policymakers to gather diverse feedback on health policy proposals. Digital media provides an unprecedented opportunity to understand values and expectations about health, and to track healthy behaviors and outcomes in timely ways. These platforms are used by various stakeholders, including health institutions, professionals, and the public, to advance health research, provide medical education, and promote health interventions.

The nature of health communication is changing globally as more people are relying on the internet for health information. SpringerLink in Pate et al., (2020) asserts that the rise of telemedicine and online doctor consultations reflects a significant shift in health communication. These digital services provide accessible and convenient care, especially important during public health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (Pate et al., 2020). The scholar argues that telemedicine allows for remote consultations, follow-up visits, and continuous patient monitoring, making healthcare more accessible, especially for those in remote or underserved areas. The internet has empowered consumers by providing access to a vast array of health information and resources. This democratization of information means that individuals can educate themselves about their health conditions, treatment options, and preventive measures. However, this empowerment comes with the responsibility to critically evaluate the sources of information, as not all online content is accurate or reliable. Empowered consumers are more likely to engage in shared decision-making with their healthcare providers, advocating for their needs and preferences. This method not only saves time and resources but also reduces the risk of spreading infections by minimizing physical contact.

In short, the advent of the internet has profoundly transformed the way people seek health information, offering a vast array of online resources that are readily accessible. Saint et al., (2024) observed that many individuals now prefer to use the internet as their first source of health information before consulting healthcare professionals. This trend is driven

by the convenience and immediacy of online searches, allowing users to quickly find answers to their health-related questions. The internet provides access to a wide range of information, from symptoms and treatment options to patient experiences and reviews of healthcare providers. However, the sheer volume of information available online can be overwhelming and confusing, making it crucial for users to discern credible sources from unreliable ones. The reliance on online health information underscores the need for high-quality, easily accessible digital health content. Accurate, clear, and user-friendly content can help individuals make informed health decisions and better manage their health conditions. This is particularly important given that misinformation and misleading content can lead to misdiagnosis, unnecessary anxiety, or inappropriate treatment choices. High-quality digital health content should be based on evidence and reviewed by medical professionals to ensure its accuracy and reliability. Additionally, it should be written in a way that is understandable to a general audience, avoiding overly technical language that might be inaccessible to some users.

The availability of such content can serve as a valuable resource for individuals seeking to educate themselves about their health and make informed decisions. Health information-seeking behavior varies significantly across different demographic groups, influenced by factors such as age, education, and digital literacy. For instance, younger individuals who are more digitally savvy are more likely to use the internet for health information than older adults who may have limited digital skills (Vitalis et al., 2025). Similarly, people with higher education levels may be better equipped to critically evaluate the quality of online health information compared to those with lower education levels. These variations highlight the importance of healthcare providers understanding the diverse ways in which patients access and use digital health resources. By engaging with digital platforms, healthcare providers can better communicate with patients, providing accurate information and addressing misconceptions. This engagement can also include guiding patients to reliable online resources, offering telehealth services, and using digital tools to enhance patient education and communication. Understanding and leveraging the digital landscape can help healthcare providers meet patients where they are, improving the overall quality of care and patient satisfaction.

Digital platforms enable personalized health communication, tailoring information to individual needs and preferences. This personalization can improve the relevance and effectiveness of health messages (Yar'Adua et al., 2023). Digital platforms have revolutionized the way health information is communicated, offering unprecedented opportunities for personalization. By leveraging data analytics, machine learning, and user input, these platforms can deliver tailored health messages that align with an individual's specific needs and preferences. For example, a digital platform can use data from wearable devices to monitor a user's physical activity and provide personalized feedback and recommendations. This personalized approach ensures that the information is relevant to the user, making it more likely to be understood and acted upon. This level of customization is particularly important in health communication, where generic advice may not address the unique concerns or conditions of each individual. The effectiveness of personalized health communication through digital platforms is further enhanced by the ability to segment audiences based on various criteria, such as age, gender, health status, and lifestyle choices.

For instance, a platform might offer different dietary advice to a young athlete compared to an older adult managing diabetes. By considering these factors, digital platforms can present information in a way that resonates with the user's specific situation, making it more relatable and actionable. This not only improves the user's engagement with the content but also increases the likelihood of behavior change, as the advice feels directly relevant to

their life. Moreover, personalized health communication can foster a sense of empowerment and ownership over one's health. When users receive information that is specifically tailored to their needs, they may feel more in control of their health decisions and more motivated to make positive changes. This empowerment can lead to better health outcomes, as individuals are more likely to follow through with recommendations when they perceive them as applicable and beneficial (Namadi & Aondover, 2020). Digital platforms can also provide ongoing support and reminders, further enhancing adherence to health advice.

In sum, the personalization of health messages through digital platforms not only enhances the relevance and effectiveness of the communication but also plays a crucial role in promoting healthier behaviors and improving overall well-being. Personalization in health communication involves tailoring health messages and information to the individual characteristics, needs, and preferences of each person. This can include factors such as age, gender, cultural background, health status, and personal preferences. Digital platforms enable this personalization by using data analytics to customize the content and format of health information. Digital platforms leverage advanced data analytics to gather and interpret individual health data, enabling the delivery of personalized health information tailored to the user's unique health profile and preferences. By leveraging data from various sources, such as electronic health records, wearable devices, and user interactions, these platforms can provide customized health messages that are more relevant and specific to the individual's needs. This personalization enhances the effectiveness of health communication, making the information more engaging and actionable for users (Mojaye & Aondover, 2022).

As a result, personalized communication can significantly increase the relevance and impact of health messages, leading to improved user engagement, better adherence to health recommendations, and ultimately, better health outcomes. This connotes that personalized communication can increase the relevance and impact of health messages, improving engagement and outcomes. Maikaba and Msughter (2019) posit that data analytics in digital health platforms plays a crucial role in personalizing health information. By analyzing user data such as medical history, lifestyle choices, and engagement with digital content these platforms can create customized health information that closely matches each individual's unique health needs and preferences. This process involves using advanced algorithms and machine learning techniques to interpret complex data sets, enabling the delivery of specific and relevant health content to users. This tailored approach not only enhances the relevance of the information provided but also increases the likelihood of positive health outcomes, as users are more likely to engage with and act on information that is directly applicable to their personal circumstances.

The integration of digital tools in Nigerian healthcare is still in its nascent stages, with limited evidence of systematic utilization of social media and other internet-based platforms by hospitals to enhance health communication, health promotion, or disease prevention. As such, while there is growing awareness of the potential of digital platforms in healthcare in Nigeria, it is not clear the extent to which it can be argued that hospitals are taking advantage of the internet and its related platforms (Social-Media) to influence healthcare outcomes or impact on health promotion, disease prevention or health literacy generally. This idea prompted this research. This involves leveraging online platforms, including social media, to disseminate information, engage with patients, and facilitate communication within the medical community. The increasing reliance on digital media necessitates a greater focus on improving digital health literacy among the public to ensure effective healthcare decision-making (Kurfi et al, 2021).

This broad field includes a variety of digital tools and channels, such as websites, blogs, forums, mobile apps, and social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and

Instagram. These platforms will enhance professionals, and patients to connect and share information in real-time, fostering a more interactive and informed healthcare environment. Social media, in particular, plays a significant role in digital healthcare media by providing a space for health-related discussions, education, and awareness campaigns. Healthcare providers use social media to share educational content, updates on medical advancements, and public health announcements. For instance, during health crises such as pandemics, social media platforms can quickly disseminate critical information about prevention measures, symptoms, and treatment options to a wide audience. Additionally, these platforms allow for two-way communication, enabling healthcare providers to engage directly with patients, answer questions, and provide support.

Patients can also join online groups and forums to connect with others who have similar health conditions, share experiences, and offer mutual support. This sense of community can be particularly important for individuals dealing with chronic illnesses or rare diseases, where finding others with similar experiences can be challenging. Healthcare professionals can also participate in these online communities, providing expert advice and guidance. By utilizing digital media, the healthcare industry can enhance patient education, improve access to information, and support a more connected and collaborative approach to health management.

Digital media platforms are online spaces that facilitate the creation, sharing, and interaction of digital content among users. These platforms encompass a variety of formats, including social media sites, video-sharing platforms, blogs, and online forums. Their impact on communication, business, and society is profound and multifaceted. Digital media platforms refer to online channels and tools that enable users to create, share, and interact with digital content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). These platforms have revolutionized the way we communicate, access information, and engage with each other (Castells, 2013). Examples of digital media platforms include social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as well as blogging and video-sharing platforms like WordPress and YouTube.

Digital media platforms offer various features and functionalities that enable users to create and share content, connect with others, and build online communities (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). For instance, social media platforms provide features like newsfeeds, likes, comments, and shares, which enable users to interact with each other and share content (Idris & Msughter, 2022). Similarly, video-sharing platforms like YouTube provide features like video uploading, commenting, and sharing, which enable users to create and share video content.

Digital media platforms have also enabled new forms of creativity, collaboration, and innovation. For example, social media platforms have given rise to new forms of creative expression, such as memes and viral challenges (Hile et al., 2022). Similarly, video-sharing platforms have enabled creators to produce and share high-quality video content, such as vlogs and educational videos.

III. Result and Discussion

3.1 Understanding Digital Media Platforms

Digital media platforms are comprehensive online environments designed to facilitate the creation, sharing, and interaction with diverse types of digital content. These platforms serve as hubs where users can engage with media in multiple forms, such as text, images, video, and audio. The versatility of digital media platforms allows for a wide range of user-generated content, from blog posts and articles to photos, podcasts, and videos. This variety enables users to express themselves creatively and share their perspectives with a broad

audience (Hile et al., 2023). The interactivity of these platforms also fosters community building, as users can comment on, like, and share content, thereby creating networks of shared interests and social connections.

The significance of digital media platforms extends beyond mere content sharing; they play a crucial role in shaping contemporary communication and information dissemination. With the proliferation of social media sites, streaming services, and other digital tools, these platforms have become essential in how people consume news, entertainment, and educational content. They also provide businesses and organizations with powerful tools for marketing, branding, and customer engagement (Di Fátima, 2023). By leveraging the capabilities of digital media platforms, users can participate in global conversations, access a wealth of information, and even influence social and cultural trends. This democratization of media production and consumption highlights the transformative impact of digital media platforms on society.

Digital media platforms are internet-based technologies designed to enable the distribution and consumption of digital content across a wide array of devices and formats. These platforms leverage the internet's global reach and advanced technological capabilities to deliver content such as articles, videos, podcasts, and images to users worldwide. The seamless integration of these platforms with devices like smartphones, tablets, laptops, and smart TVs allows users to access content anytime, anywhere. This accessibility is further enhanced by the diverse range of formats that digital media can take, including streaming video, downloadable files, and interactive web content. As a result, digital media platforms have revolutionized how information and entertainment are consumed, making it easier for users to engage with content in ways that suit their preferences and lifestyles (Aonover & Akin-Odukoya, 2024).

The impact of digital media platforms extends beyond content accessibility; they also play a crucial role in shaping the digital economy and influencing cultural and social dynamics. By providing creators with tools to publish and monetize their work, these platforms have democratized content creation, enabling individuals and small businesses to reach global audiences without the need for traditional media channels. Additionally, the data-driven nature of digital media platforms allows for targeted advertising and personalized content recommendations, which enhance user experience and increase engagement (Aliyu et al., 2023). This has led to a more tailored and efficient way of delivering content, catering to specific interests and demographics. Furthermore, the interactive features of these platforms, such as comments, likes, and shares, foster a participatory culture where users not only consume content but also actively contribute to discussions and trends. This participatory nature underscores the significant role digital media platforms play in contemporary society, influencing not only how content is consumed but also how it is created and shared.

Osterrieder (2013) emphasizes that digital platforms play a crucial role in coordinating crisis response efforts during natural disasters. These platforms are instrumental in mobilizing resources and volunteers, as well as facilitating the sharing of vital information. This coordination helps in managing and mitigating the impacts of crises by enabling rapid communication, efficient allocation of aid, and real-time updates. By harnessing the power of digital networks, communities and organizations can respond more effectively and efficiently to emergencies, ultimately reducing the overall damage and aiding recovery efforts. Social media platforms significantly enhance civic engagement by connecting individuals with political campaigns, community initiatives, and policy discussions. These platforms provide a space for users to access information, participate in dialogue, and become involved in various civic activities. This increased connectivity and access to information empower people to become more informed about social and political issues, ultimately fostering a more engaged

and active citizenry. By bridging gaps between the public and civic processes, social media helps cultivate a more participatory and responsive society.

3.2 The Role of Digital Media in Healthcare

Digital media technologies facilitate remote patient consultations, diagnosis, and treatment, significantly expanding the scope and accessibility of healthcare services. Digital media have revolutionized telemedicine and telehealth, enabling healthcare services to reach patients regardless of geographical barriers. Telemedicine, facilitated by video conferencing, mobile apps, and other digital tools, allows for remote consultations, diagnosis, and treatment. This has been particularly crucial during global emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, where in-person consultations were often impossible. Telehealth not only provides continuous care for patients with chronic conditions but also enhances the accessibility of healthcare services for underserved populations, reducing the need for physical travel and minimizing wait times. This expansion of telehealth has fundamentally shifted the healthcare paradigm, making healthcare more flexible and patient-centered.

The proliferation of digital media platforms such as social media, websites, and online forums has transformed the dissemination of health information. These platforms allow for rapid and widespread distribution of health education, updates, and public health messages. During health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, social media played a critical role in spreading accurate health information and countering misinformation. The immediacy and broad reach of digital media enable public health authorities to communicate with the public efficiently, educate people on preventive measures, and promote health literacy. This democratization of information empowers individuals to make informed health decisions. Social media and other digital platforms enable rapid dissemination of health information, education, and awareness to broad audiences. (Aonover et al., 2025).

Digital media tools, such as patient portals and apps, empower patients by providing access to their health data, enabling self-management, and facilitating communication with healthcare providers. In other words, digital media tools, including patient portals, mobile health apps, and wearable devices, have empowered patients by providing them with direct access to their health data. These tools facilitate self-management of health conditions, allow patients to monitor their progress, and enhance communication between patients and healthcare providers. For example, patients can use mobile apps to track their symptoms, medication adherence, and vital signs, which can then be shared with their healthcare providers in real time. This increased engagement fosters a sense of control over one's health, leading to better health outcomes and a more personalized approach to healthcare. The empowerment of patients through digital media is a key factor in the shift toward patient-centered care.

Digital therapeutics, which is a subset of digital health (the use of software-based interventions), helps to prevent, manage, or treat medical conditions. These digital solutions, often delivered through mobile health (mHealth) apps, are designed to support patients in managing chronic diseases, mental health conditions, and rehabilitation. For instance, apps that provide cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) for anxiety and depression are becoming increasingly popular and have shown efficacy in clinical trials. Digital therapeutics offer a scalable, cost-effective way to deliver care, particularly for conditions that require long-term management. The rise of mHealth has also facilitated the continuous monitoring of patients' health metrics, leading to timely interventions and improved health outcomes.

Digital media platforms are increasingly being utilized for healthcare marketing and public relations, helping healthcare organizations to promote their services, build their brand, and manage their reputation. Through targeted online advertising, social media campaigns,

and content marketing, healthcare providers can reach potential patients and inform them about available services, innovations, and preventive care options. Additionally, digital media allows healthcare organizations to engage with their communities, respond to feedback, and manage public perception, which is critical during times of crisis. Effective use of digital marketing in healthcare can lead to increased patient satisfaction, improved patient retention, and a stronger brand presence in the competitive healthcare market.

3.3 Social Change and Its Mechanisms

Social change refers to significant alterations in the patterns of social structures, cultural norms, and societal behaviors over time. Mechanisms of social change include institutional transformations, technological advancements, and cultural shifts driven by social movements and policy changes. This definition emphasizes the multifaceted nature of social change, where transformations occur across different aspects of society. The mechanisms driving these changes include institutional transformations such as changes in governance, law, and education alongside technological advancements that reshape how people interact and function within society (Vitalis et al., 2025). Cultural shifts, often driven by social movements and policy changes, play a crucial role in altering societal norms and values. This definition encapsulates the dynamic interplay between structural, technological, and cultural factors in driving social change.

Social change is the process by which societies evolve through changes in cultural, economic, and political structures. Mechanisms include collective action, social movements, policy interventions, and technological innovation. Tilly's view above highlights social change as the process by which societies evolve through alterations in cultural, economic, and political structures. The mechanisms here include collective action, where groups of people mobilize to advocate for change; social movements, which are organized efforts to promote or resist changes in society; policy interventions, where governments or organizations implement strategies to address societal issues; and technological innovation, which can disrupt existing social norms and create new opportunities or challenges. Tilly's perspective underscores the role of human agency and organized efforts in the process of social change.

Castells (2020) emphasizes the transformation of social institutions, behavior patterns, and social relations as central to social change. This definition points to the interconnectedness of societal components, where changes in one area can ripple through others. Mechanisms such as technological innovations are seen as catalysts that reshape how people communicate, work, and interact, thereby influencing broader societal norms and institutions. Economic shifts, such as changes in the labor market or global trade, can also drive social change by altering the distribution of resources and opportunities. Social movements are recognized for their ability to mobilize people around shared grievances or aspirations, leading to significant societal transformations.

Social change involves alterations in societal norms, values, and structures, facilitated by mechanisms such as collective behavior, social networks, and institutional change. Collective behavior in this regard is the spontaneous actions taken by groups of people, often in response to an event or issue, which can lead to broader social change if it gains enough traction. Social networks are crucial in this context as they provide the channels through which information, ideas, and mobilization efforts spread. Institutional change refers to the adaptation or transformation of formal organizations, such as governments or corporations, in response to shifting societal expectations or pressures. This perspective highlights the importance of relationships and communication in driving social change.

Ritzer and Stepnisky in Tarrow (2021) conceptualize social change as significant shifts in societal norms, roles, and structures, driven by innovation, social movements, political reform, and economic change. Innovation, whether technological or social, introduces new ways of doing things, which can disrupt established norms and practices. Social movements are seen as organized efforts to challenge the status quo and advocate for change, often leading to shifts in societal values or policies. Political reform refers to changes in laws or governance structures that can alter the distribution of power and resources within society. Economic change, such as shifts in employment patterns or wealth distribution, is recognized as a powerful driver of social change, as it directly impacts people's lives and societal structures.

As for Tarrow (2021), a process of societal transformation where the existing social order is altered through mechanisms such as social conflict, innovation, and collective action is social change. However, social conflict is struggles between different groups within society, often over resources, power, or values, which can lead to changes in societal structures and norms. Innovation is highlighted as a mechanism that introduces new ideas, technologies, or practices that can disrupt the existing social order. Collective action, as a coordinated effort by groups of people, is seen as a powerful force for change, especially when it challenges existing power structures or societal norms.

3.4 Digital Media in Nigeria

Digital media in Nigeria encompasses a wide range of electronic tools, platforms, and channels that are used for the creation, dissemination, and consumption of information and content, particularly over the internet. This includes social media, websites, blogs, and online news platforms that have become crucial in shaping public discourse and mobilizing social change. This emphasizes how digital media has transformed public discourse by providing platforms like social media, blogs, and online news sites, which are pivotal in shaping opinions and driving social change. In the Nigerian context, these digital tools have played a crucial role in mobilizing public sentiment and enabling more participatory forms of communication, particularly in times of political or social unrest.

Digital media serves as the electronic channels that facilitate communication and the exchange of information in real-time or asynchronously, particularly through the internet (Aondover et al., 2025). This includes platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp, which have significantly influenced political engagement and activism in Nigeria. Uwalaka and Amadi (2021) focus on digital media as electronic channels that facilitate both real-time and asynchronous communication, particularly highlighting platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp. These platforms have become significant in Nigeria for political engagement and activism, as seen in movements such as #EndSARS. The ability of these platforms to mobilize large groups of people quickly and efficiently underscores their importance in the Nigerian political landscape, where they serve as tools for both organizing protests and disseminating information.

The convergence of various technological platforms that are instrumental in Nigeria's evolving media landscape is digital media. This underscores how digital media, including social networking sites and mobile technologies, has become a critical tool for entertainment and advocacy in the country. This perspective is especially relevant in the context of social movements like #BringBackOurGirls, where digital platforms facilitated global awareness and advocacy for the cause, illustrating the powerful role of digital media in effecting social change.

Digital media in Nigeria deals with the integration of information and communication technologies that allow for the production, distribution, and consumption of content. This

emphasizes the role of social media platforms in shaping public opinion and facilitating grassroots movements in the country. In the Nigerian context, these platforms have become essential in the democratization of information, enabling individuals to voice their opinions and engage in collective action without the need for traditional media gatekeepers. This highlights the centrality of digital platforms in the communication strategies of both individuals and organizations in Nigeria. The authors particularly focus on how these platforms are instrumental in youth engagement, offering young Nigerians new avenues to express themselves, connect with others, and participate in civic and social activities.

Adeagbo (2021) defines digital media in Nigeria as online platforms and applications that enable the digital distribution of content, such as news, videos, and social media posts. The definition stresses how digital media has become a critical component of the political and social landscape in Nigeria. These platforms have significantly transformed the Nigerian public sphere by providing alternative spaces for discourse, especially in a context where traditional media may be constrained by political and economic pressures.

Nwoye (2022) sees digital media in Nigeria as various internet-based platforms and services that enable the distribution and consumption of digital content. The definition underscores the pivotal role of digital media in shaping contemporary Nigerian culture and society. Through these platforms, cultural narratives are created, shared, and contested, allowing for a dynamic exchange of ideas that influences how Nigerians perceive and engage with their cultural heritage and identity. Digital platforms have not only changed how Nigerians access information and entertainment but also how they engage with their culture, leading to new forms of cultural expression and interaction.

IV. Conclusion

Digital media platforms have become indispensable tools for social change in Nigeria, shaping activism, governance, education, and public discourse. The widespread use of platforms like Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram has enabled individuals and organizations to mobilize for justice, demand accountability, and bridge communication gaps across various social issues. The #EndSARS movement stands as a landmark example of how digital activism can translate into tangible political and social reforms. Additionally, digital platforms have facilitated access to critical information in health and education, empowering communities with knowledge and resources. Despite these advancements, significant challenges persist, including digital illiteracy, misinformation, internet censorship, and infrastructural disparities that limit equal access to digital tools. Government-imposed restrictions on social media and the threat of regulation pose further concerns for free expression and civic engagement. To maximize the potential of digital media for sustainable social transformation, there is a need for strategic policies that promote digital literacy, improve internet accessibility, and safeguard freedom of speech online. Strengthening collaborations between civil society, policymakers, and technology stakeholders will also be crucial in ensuring that digital platforms remain a force for positive change.

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