SOCIAL MEDIA
POLL REPORT

November 2019
SOCIAL MEDIA POLL REPORT

NIGERIA’S TELEDENSITY AND PREFERRED INTERNET-ACCESS DEVICE

61% of Nigerians have access to the internet. = 120 million Nigerians

NW = 57% SW = 68%
NE = 67% SE = 53%
NC = 56% SS = 64%

94% of Nigerians who have access to the internet do so via their Mobile Phone

TOP 4 FAVORITE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND SOME REASONS FOR THEIR PREFERENCE

51% Whatsapp
26% Speed and Simplicity
22% Privacy

45% Facebook
20% Connectivity
19% Wider reach

2% Twitter
2% Instagram

31% Feedback for Government
25% Racial Diversity

47% More Realistic
29% More enjoyable

12% of Nigerians claim that their social media account had been hacked in the past:

91% Facebook
7% Whatsapp
1% Twitter
1% Instagram

39.6M Nigerians have a twitter account, representing 20% of the population

46% actively use the platform for:

33% Get Trending News
21% Social Interaction
20% Business Advertisement
18% Employment Opportunities

IMPACT OF TWITTER IN NIGERIA

29% Advocacy
25% Easier Connectivity
17% Better Social Interaction

13% Advertisement
8% Instant Information
7% Employment Opportunities

NOIPolls is the No.1 for credible country-specific polling service in the west African region. This poll was conducted by NOIPolls Limited, for more detailed information on the poll and methodology used, please visit www.noi-polls.com

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1.0 Executive Summary

A new public opinion poll conducted by NOIPolls in the week commencing on October 14th, 2019 has revealed that 61 percent of Nigerians have access to the internet. When applied to Nigeria’s estimated population of 198 million by the Nigeria Population Commission,¹ this translates to about 120 million Nigerians having access to the internet. Interestingly, when looking at the demographics, 70 percent of young Nigerians aged between 18 – 35 years have access to the internet compared to the 56 percent for those aged between 36 and 60 years and 28 percent for those aged 61 years and above. Of the proportion of respondents that claimed to have access to the internet, an overwhelming majority (94 percent) indicated that they mostly access the internet through their mobile phones. This proportion was equally high across the six geo-political zones, and across age demographics; indicating a wide use of smart phones in the country. This wide access to the internet on mobile phones across Nigeria shows that there is a huge market and high demand for smart phones in Nigeria, giving credence to the claim that Nigeria is Africa’s biggest smartphone market.

Most respondents (95 percent) who access the internet revealed that they use the internet to engage social networking sites and applications. This finding also held true across geo-political zones and across various age demographics. On the level of awareness, results show that Facebook (95 percent) and WhatsApp (94 percent) are the most widely known social networking sites in the country; followed by Instagram (50 percent), and Twitter (42 percent), among others. Polls on the proportion of respondents using each social networking platform produced the following results - Facebook (86 percent), WhatsApp (84 percent), Instagram (19 percent), Twitter (11 percent), and Snapchat (2 percent). However, with regards to preference, WhatsApp (51 percent) is the most preferred social networking site/application, followed by Facebook (45 percent), Twitter (2 percent), and Instagram (2 percent).

Some of the leading reasons Nigerians provided for their preference of WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter respectively include; “It’s Simple and Fast” (26 percent), “Easy to Connect to People With” (20 percent), “The Platform Allows Government to Obtain Feedback from The Public” (31 percent) and “It seems more real than other platform”(47 percent). Regarding the average number of hours spent in a day on social media sites/applications, Twitter captured the largest daily cumulative value, as 19 percent of Twitter users disclosed that they spend 10 hours and more engaging on it. This was followed by WhatsApp with 8 percent of users revealing they spend upwards of 10 hours daily on the average.

Furthermore, the poll results show that respondents considered Facebook (98 percent), Instagram (88 percent), WhatsApp (77 percent), and Snapchat (74 percent) most effective for advertising, while Twitter (98 percent) was considered most effective for gaining attention on topical issues and trending subjects.

With regards to security, the poll results show that 12 percent of Nigerians reported that their social media accounts have been hacked previously; and of this proportion, 91 percent mentioned Facebook as the affected platform, while 7 percent confirmed that their WhatsApp account has been hacked.

The CEO of Twitter, Jack Dorsey recently visited Nigeria and for good reason as 20 percent of the respondents reported that they have a Twitter account. This figure amounts to about 39.6 million Nigerians. Majority of these

¹ https://www.legit.ng/1248015-nigeria-a-population-198-million-people--npc.html
are young people as the poll showed that young people aged between 18 and 35 years are twice as likely to have a Twitter account (26 percent) than older people aged 36 years and above (13 percent). Among those that have a Twitter account, 45 percent disclosed that they are actively involved on Twitter - by sending out Tweets or pictures, or by participating in conversations or other activities using their accounts. The poll also revealed that Twitter users in Nigeria mostly use the platform to get trending news (33 percent), interact with friends (21 percent) and for advertising businesses, amongst other things. Interestingly, a higher proportion (29 percent) of Twitter users acknowledged that giving voice to many voiceless Nigerians is the greatest impact Twitter has made in Nigeria. Finally, with regards to features missing on Twitter, 39 percent recommended that the owners of Twitter increase the number of words allowed per Tweet, as many respondents during the course of the survey expressed that they would prefer to write a whole lot in one tweet.

2.0 Background and Objectives
Social media networks or platforms are websites and computer programs that allow people to interconnect and share information on the internet using computers, mobile phones and other internet enabled devices. Examples of social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Snapchat. The fundamental aim of social media sites is to enhance communication through socializing. The advantages of these social media platforms are enormous, given that they are not bound by space and time. Social media platforms allow users globally to meet friends; exchange text, images, audio files and videos; and most importantly stay connected.

Nigeria has continued to enjoy technological advancement, especially in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These ICT advancements have provided Nigerians with fast internet access, with which they engage in social media activities on various internet enabled devices. According to the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), Nigeria currently has about 122 million internet users\(^2\). The number of social network users in Nigeria in 2018 stood at approximately 29.3 million users; the figure is projected to grow to 36.8 million in 2023\(^3\). Recently, there has been news of a bill to regulate the use of social media in Nigeria. The bill, which has passed second reading in the Nigerian senate, if passed into law, Nigerians found guilty of making false remarks on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other similar media, would have faced two years in jail or a fine of 2 million naira.\(^4\) Against this backdrop, NOIPolls conducted a survey to understand how Nigerians use social media, examining their preferences for each platform, and their future expectations from these platforms.

3.0 Survey Methodology
The survey was conducted through telephone interviews in the week commencing October 14\(^{th}\), 2019. In a proportionate random nationwide selected sample, 1,000 phone-owning Nigerians, 18 years and above, were interviewed across the six geopolitical zones in the country using a well-structured questionnaire. This sample size provides a 95% confidence interval that the results obtained are within a range of plus or minus 4.65% of the opinions of the population. The interviews were conducted in English, Pidgin-English, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The use of several Nigerian languages reduced the likelihood of a non-response bias.

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4.0 Demographic Distribution

The demographic distribution of the respondents was analyzed by the following groups: Gender, Age-Group, Geo-Political Zones, and Occupation, as illustrated in Figure 1 below. The gender and the geo-political zone demographic distribution of the respondents were in the same proportion with the 2016 National Population Census.

**Gender:** The proportion of male and female respondents was almost equal, with 51 percent and 49 percent respectively.

**Age-Group:** The age-group with the highest frequency in the survey was 18 – 35 years (49 percent), and the lowest age-group represented was 60+ years (6 percent).

**Geo-Political Zone**

All geo-political zones were adequately represented in the survey, the highest represented zone being the North-West Zone (24 percent) and the lowest being the South-East Zone (12 percent).

**Occupation:** The highest proportion of respondents surveyed were Self-Employed Traders (30 percent), followed by Government Workers/Civil Servants (17 percent). The lowest represented occupation in the survey was Religious/Traditional Leaders (with 1 percent).

![Summary of Demographic Variables for the Social Media Poll (N = 1,000) October, 2019](image)

Figure 1: Demographic Distribution

5.0 Survey Results

*Social Media Poll Report _ November 2019*
Respondents to the poll were asked sixteen specific questions. This section of the report presents findings from each question.

5.1 Proportion of Nigerians Who Have Access to The Internet
The first question sought to measure the level of internet penetration in Nigeria, and the poll revealed that 61 percent of Nigerians have access to the internet. This translates to about 120 million Nigerians having access to the internet factoring Nigeria’s current population estimate of 198 million according to the Nigeria Population Commission. This figure corresponds to the data from Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), which puts the numbers of Nigerians with access to internet at 122 million. Interestingly, proportion of Nigerians with access to internet was highest among young Nigerians between 18 – 35 years (70 percent).

Figure 2: Population Of Nigerians With Access To The Internet

5.2 Most-Used Device In Accessing The Internet In Nigeria
Of the proportion who claimed to have access to the internet, an overwhelming majority (94 percent) indicated that they mostly access the internet on their mobile phones. This proportion was equally high across the six geopolitical zones and across age demographic; highlighting a wide use of smart phones in the country.

The wide access of the internet on mobile phones across Nigeria shows there is a huge market and high demand for smart phones in the country, and it gives credence to the claim that Nigeria is Africa’s biggest smartphone market.

Figure 3: Mostly Used Device For Accessing The Internet

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5 https://www.legit.ng/1248015-nigeria-a-population-198-million-people---npc.html
5.3 Population Of Nigerians Who Use The Internet For Social Networking

Most respondents (95 percent) who access the internet revealed that they use the internet to engage social networking sites and applications. This finding held true across geo-political zones and across various age demographics. However, it is observed that the older the individual, the less likely they are to engage social networking sites and applications. There was an even split by gender, on engagement on social networking sites, as 95 percent of males and females each acknowledged engaging social networking sites on the internet.

![Figure 4: Proportion of Nigerians who use the internet for social networking](image)

5.4 Awareness Of Social Networking Sites/Apps

On the level of awareness of social networking sites and applications, results show that Facebook is the most widely known social networking site (95 percent) in the country, followed closely by WhatsApp (94 percent), Instagram (50 percent), and Twitter (42 percent), among others. In other words, more than 90 percent of Nigerians who have access to the internet know of Facebook and WhatsApp.

![Figure 5: Awareness on social networking sites/Apps](image)

5.5 Perception On Commonly Used Social Networking Sites/Apps

Furthermore, when respondents were asked which of these social networking sites/apps they use, most respondents indicated they use Facebook (86 percent) and WhatsApp (84 percent) the most, followed by
Instagram (19 percent), and Twitter (11 percent). These results go to show how deeply entrenched social networking sites/applications like Facebook and WhatsApp are in Nigeria.

Some reasons may explain the entrenchment of Facebook in Nigeria, such as its prolonged presence compared to other platforms (Facebook is the oldest of the mention social networking platforms), ease of use, and the capacity to engage that platform with minimal data usage. WhatsApp’s wide use may be due to the ease of connection on the platform as you only need the phone number of a contact to connect on WhatsApp. These and other reasons may explain the extensive use of these two platforms.

![Image](https://example.com/image.png)

**Figure 6: Perception on commonly used social networking sites/Apps**

5.6 **Perception On Most-Preferred Social Networking Sites/Apps**

Interestingly, WhatsApp (51 percent) is the most preferred social networking site/application, followed by Facebook (45 percent), Twitter (2 percent), and Instagram (2 percent). Overwhelmingly, WhatsApp is the most preferred social networking site for respondents 61 years and above (84 percent). With regards to gender, results show some interesting trends – amongst females, WhatsApp was preferred the most (58 percent) while amongst males, Facebook was the most preferred social networking site (51 percent). Across geo-political zones, respondents in the South East preferred Facebook (63 percent) to WhatsApp (27 percent) while respondents in the North West preferred WhatsApp (62 percent) to Facebook (35 percent).

![Image](https://example.com/image.png)

**Figure 7: Perception on mostly preferred social networking sites/Apps**

Social Media Poll Report _ November 2019
5.7 Reasons Given For Preferring A Particular Social Networking Site/App

Some of the leading reasons respondents provided for their preference of WhatsApp include; “It’s Simple and Fast” (26 percent), “It Has More Privacy Than Other Platforms” (22 percent), “Low Charges” (21 percent), “Quick Messaging” (14 percent), “Easy to Add Friends” (9 percent), and “Easy To Navigate” (8 percent).

**Figure 8: Reasons given for WhatsApp**

“Easy To Connect with People” (20 percent), “Wide Reach” (19 percent), “Ease Of Use” (18 percent), and “Ability to ‘advertise their business’”, (13 percent), are the leading reasons why people prefer Facebook. Other reasons mentioned include “Meeting Old Friends” (9 percent), “Getting Instant Information” (9 percent), “Enjoy Using It” (7 percent), “Receive ‘Notification Message Via SMS, Even Without Data’” (4 percent), and “Getting To See and Learn a Lot of Things” (1 percent).

**Figure 9: Reasons given for Facebook**

Reasons proffered by internet users for the preference of Twitter include; “It’s A Platform That Allows ‘Government To Obtain Feedback From The Public’” (31 percent), “I Meet Different People There” (25 percent), “It Gives Real and Reliable News” (14 percent), and “It’s Educative” (14 percent), among others. Indeed, a lot of civil protests and various forms of advocacy engage Twitter to promulgate their cause, and that’s possibly why a large proportion indicated government gets feedback from people on twitter.
Figure 10: Reasons given for Twitter

With respect to Instagram, 47 percent indicated they prefer it because “It Seems More Real Than Others”, 29 percent prefer it simply because they ‘Enjoy it More”. 12 percent prefer it because they can “Share Pictures” while 8 percent prefer it because of the “Video Contents”.

Figure 11: Reasons given for Instagram

5.8 Average Number Of Hours Spent On Different Social Networking Sites/Apps

With regards to the average number of hours spent in a day on social media sites/applications, Twitter captured the largest daily cumulative value, as 19 percent of its users disclosed that they spend 10 hours and more engaging on it. This was followed by WhatsApp, with 8 percent of its users revealing that they spend upwards of 10 hours daily on average on the platform.
5.9 Perception On The Effectiveness Of Social Networking Sites/Apps

Poll results show that Facebook is considered an effective social networking site/application when it comes to Advertising (97 percent), Gaining Attention For An Issue/Trending Topic (92 percent), Activism/Advocacy (91 percent), Communicating Grievances Or Dissatisfaction (86 percent), Influencing Government Policy Decision (84 percent), and Job Opportunities (80 percent).

![Figure 13: Effectiveness of Facebook on some attributes](image)

Opinion on the effectiveness of WhatsApp in specific areas revealed that the platform is most effective for advertising and getting job opportunities, as stated by 77 percent and 72 percent of Nigerians respectively; as well as in other aspects as shown in the chart below.

![Figure 14: Effectiveness of Facebook on some attributes](image)

Similarly, Twitter users in Nigeria disclosed that it is most effective in gaining attention for an issue or trending topic (98 percent) in the country. This is followed by 90 percent who use it to communicate grievances or
dissatisfaction; 88 percent for influencing government policy decision; and 84 percent who use it for activism/advocacy, among other things.

Figure 15: Effectiveness of Twitter on some attributes

The poll also revealed that a large proportion of Nigerians (88 percent) who use Instagram believe it is mostly effective in advertising products and services.

Figure 16: Effectiveness of Twitter on some attributes

74 percent of Nigerians who use Snapchat also mentioned that it is mostly effective in advertising products and services.
5.10 Proportion Of Nigerians Whose Social Media Accounts Have Been Hacked

It is no longer news that social media is now an important feature in the lives of most Nigerians. Therefore, it is important for Nigerians to ensure that their various social media accounts are secured. In line with this, the poll results show that 12 percent of Nigerians acknowledged that their social media accounts have been hacked previously. This proportion is similar across gender, age and geo-political zones except for respondents in the North West at 8 percent.

5.11 Commonly Hacked Social Media Account

Respondents who stated that their social media accounts had been hacked were further asked to mention which one(s). The poll findings revealed that, out of the 12 percent whose accounts have been hacked, an overwhelming majority (91 percent) of Nigerians in this category mentioned Facebook. This was followed, by a long margin, by 7 percent of Nigerians who mentioned WhatsApp.
5.12 Proportion Of Nigerians Who Have Twitter Accounts
The recent visit of Jack Dorsey, the CEO of Twitter to Nigeria is for good reason as a deeper analysis on Twitter revealed that 20 percent of respondents confirmed having a Twitter account, representing about 39.6 million Nigerians. This figure corresponds with other data which reports that 19.64 percent of Nigerians have a Twitter account.\(^7\)

At 26 percent, male respondents doubled the proportion of female respondent who have a Twitter account (13 percent). Younger respondents aged 18 – 35 years also doubled the proportion of respondents aged 36 years and above with a Twitter account. The North West had the least proportion of respondents with Twitter accounts (14 percent) while the North Central had the highest (29 percent).

5.13 Proportion Of Nigerians Active On Twitter
Of the proportion who have a Twitter account, 46 percent disclosed that they are actively involved on it by way of either sending out Tweets or pictures or engaging in conversations or other activities on their accounts. With regards to gender, there are more male respondents (51 percent) than female respondents (34 percent) in this category.

\(^7\) https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/nigeria
5.14 The Major Use Of Twitter In Nigeria

Subsequently, the poll findings show that 33 percent of Nigerians use Twitter to get trending news, and this is mostly common to Nigerians residing in the South-South Zone. Also, 21 percent mentioned that they use it mostly for interacting with friends, while 20 percent see it as a platform for advertising businesses. Gender analysis revealed that more female (54 percent) than male (27 percent) respondents use Twitter to get trending news.

5.15 Greatest Impact Of Twitter In Nigeria

The poll further sought to know the greatest impact of Twitter in Nigeria, and results revealed that 29 percent of Nigerians are of the opinion that Twitter has given voice to many voiceless people. During the course of the survey, some respondents mentioned that Nigerians can now express their concerns on issues that they feel are going wrong in the country in real-time. Additionally, 25 percent of respondents stated that Twitter makes it easier to connect with different people, while 17 percent stated that the platform makes people interact better, and these attributes are seen as the most important aspect of social media.
5.16 Perception On Features Adjudged Missing On Twitter

With regards to features missing on Twitter, 39 percent of Nigerians recommended that the number of words allowed per Tweet should increase, as respondents during the course of the survey expressed that they would prefer to write a whole lot in one Tweet. Other suggestions include making it easier to create an account (31 percent) and ensuring age restrictions in account creation (16 percent), amongst other features.

6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the poll revealed that about 120 million Nigerians (61 percent) have access the internet and of this proportion, 94 percent access the internet through their mobile phones - indicating a wide use of smart phones in the country. Most Nigerians who access the internet use it for social networking sites/applications such as
WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. However, WhatsApp (51 percent) and Facebook (45 percent) are the most preferred social networking sites/applications in the country, mainly because Nigerians believe they are simple and fast (26 percent), easy to connect to people with (20 percent) respectively.

Additionally, the poll indicated that respondents considered Facebook (98 percent), Instagram (88 percent), WhatsApp (77 percent), and Snapchat (74 percent) most effective for advertising, while Twitter (98 percent) was considered most effective for gaining attention on topical issues and trending subjects. More findings revealed that 20 percent of respondents reported that they have a Twitter account, and this figure represents about 39.6 million Nigerians. Of this proportion, 45 percent disclosed that they are actively involved on Twitter - by way of either sending out Tweets or pictures or engaging in conversations or other activities using their accounts.

Given the proportion of Nigerians on social media, government and other decision makers can connect with communities across the country on Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter, given the number of Nigerians who use these platforms. For instance, social media can be effectively utilized in improving work processes in sectors such as education and health. When used effectively, social media could be immensely advantageous in developing Nigeria’s economy and its various sectors. Finally, as the Nigerian population continues to grow and technology adoption levels continue to rise, social media will continue to serve as a vital tool that will shape the opinions of youths and more importantly, allow for direct interactions and conversations in a virtual town hall setting.