

Motivations for Self-disclosure on Social Media among Female Students in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

The study examined the motivations for self- disclosure on social media among Nigerian female university students and how these motivations affect their usage of social media. Three research questions were designed to guide this study. A survey was conducted by administering 300 copies of questionnaire to students of University of Ilorin; Al-Hikma University; and Kwara State University. Copies of the questionnaire were administered through the multistage sampling technique and were analysed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings indicated that Nigerian girls self- disclose information on social media to establish their identities and to gain more friends. The findings further revealed that Nigerian girls are hesitant about self- disclosure on social media because of their lack of trust for people on the platform. This could be attributed to why some prefer to self-disclose anonymously online.

Keywords: Self- disclosure, Social Media, Female Students, Nigerian Universities.

Introduction

The social media have overtime been acknowledged as some of the most phenomenal breakthroughs in the world of Information and Communication Technology. The veracity of this claim could be perceived in the pace of the growth of the social media sites over the few years of their emergence. As part of the new possibilities social media technologies have afforded its users, millions of people routinely self-disclose personal information on social networking sites (SNSs). Self-disclosure refers to the telling of the previously unknown so that it becomes shared knowledge, the “process of making the self known to others” (Jourard & Laskow, 1958, p. 91). From expressing deep personal feelings and opinions to documenting mundane details of daily life, this type of public self-disclosure shared with multiple, diverse, and often ill-defined audiences blurs the boundaries between publicness and privacy (Bazarova & Choi, 2014).

Self- disclosure fulfills the fundamental needs for social connectedness and belonging and is intrinsically rewarding though it carries inherent risks of vulnerability and information loss because a discloser gives up some degree of privacy and personal control by sharing information with others. Hence, disclosure decisions and strategies reflect a balance of conflicting needs aimed at maximizing strategic rewards and minimizing personal risks. (Jourard, 1971, Tamir & Mitchell, 2012, Altman, 1975 & Petronio, 2002 in Bazarova & Choi, 2014).

Statement of the problem

Online self- disclosure activities often involve the update of status, upload of pictures, chatting and having a personal diary which friends can have access to on social networking sites. While scholars like Derlega and Grzelak (1979) have highlighted the benefits of self- disclosure as social validation, self- expression, relational development, identity clarification and social control, other scholars have argued that self- disclosure can be risky because it may invite ridicule or even rejection, thereby placing the discloser in a socially awkward or vulnerable position (Pennebaker, 1989, Okorie, Ekeanyanwu & Obanua, 2010). It is also believed that self- disclosure makes hidden things known, adding uncertainty to the relationship as “it involves the risk of confiding in others, the responsibility of deeper awareness, and the danger that one’s confidence may be breached” (Corcoran and Spencer, 2000) in (Okorie and Ekeanyanwu, 2014). Hence, online self- disclosure could have negative implications on image, identity and computer-mediated relationship on cyberspace.

Over the years, literature on self- disclosure have dwelled more on the establishment of the benefits and disadvantages of self- disclosure online (Okorie and Ekeanyanwu, 2014) and the differences between online public self- disclosure and the traditional communication settings’ public self- disclosure (Bazarova & Choi, 2014). Consequently, these studies have failed to establish the motivations for self- disclosure on social media among various individuals and how these motivations influence the usage of social media amongst them. Premised on this inadequacy, this study establishes the motivations for self- disclosure on social media and how these motivations affect the usage of social media among Nigerian female university students.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to:

1. Examine how often Nigerian female university students self- disclose on social media.
2. Ascertain the motivations for self- disclosure on social media among Nigerian female university students.
3. Find out how the motivations for self- disclosure influence the usage of Social Media among Nigerian female university students.

Theoretical Framework

The Social Penetration Theory identifies the process of increasing disclosure and intimacy within a relationship and represents a formative theory in the intellectual history of relationship theory (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008). It was propounded in 1973 by Irwin Altman and Dalmas Taylor (Altman & Taylor, 1973).

The theory proposed that for any relationship to occur, the individuals involved needs to go through four major stages of relational development: The first stage is the orientation stage which explains that communicators become acquainted by observing mannerisms and by exchanging information about themselves. The second stage is the exploratory stage where people peel off a layer or two and allow some elements of their personality to show through in their verbal and non-verbal communication. The relationship continues its progress to the affective exchange stage where more layers of personality are peeled off until almost the whole personality shows through. The people in the relationship then develop an understanding of one another and are able to move into deep communication involving intimate topics. The relationship then reaches its last stage- stable exchange where all the layers are peeled off and the core of the individual's personality is reached (Lujan & Nobis, 2016).

This implies that social penetration has been used to explain how human interaction is like an economic transaction, where you seek to maximize rewards and minimize costs. This theory has however been criticized based on the fact that it does not hold up very well to the actual experience of relationships in daily life. The idea that you move increasingly from public to private in a linear fashion now seems naïve. In their later writings, Altman and his colleagues recognized this limitation and revised social- penetration theory to provide a more complex notion of relational development as more than a linear progression from privacy to openness. Relationship development came to be seen as involving cycles of stability and change as a

couple manages its contradictory needs for predictability and flexibility (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008, p.203).

Given that social penetration theory seeks to explain how relationships are formed, why they end and the process they must go through in order to prosper (McCarthy, 2009), its suitability for this study is germane.

Another theory worthy of inspection is the Communication Privacy Management Theory that was first developed by Sandra Petronio in 1991. The assumption of this theory is that individuals maintain and coordinate privacy boundaries with various communication partners depending on the perceived benefits and costs of information disclosure.

Using the Communication Privacy Management theory to explain this study, one is likely to imply that Nigerian female university students feel a sense of ownership towards the private information they have and thus they actively work to maintain control of what, when and with whom the information is shared. Also it can be implied that the disclosure of private information by Nigerian girls is regulated by certain privacy rules which include culture, gender, motivation, context and risk/benefit ratios. The disclosure of this private information can however help to create a confidant or draw the person(s) involved into a collective privacy boundary, whether willingly or reluctantly (Petronio, 2002).

Literature Review

Gender Differences in Self-disclosure

The issue of gender differences in self-disclosure has received enormous attention from scholars who have shown that men and women use different criteria for deciding when to open or close their boundaries. Dindia and Allen (1992) proposed that women more than men are often inclined to talk about intimate or personal topics with each other while men only tend to disclose while engaged in some activity.

Li (2006) similarly conducted a study to examine the content of Computer Mediated Messages sent by both gender. Li discovered that the messages sent by males were more confrontational and autonomous while female messages were supportive and rapport building. Also in a series of studies focusing exclusively on female adolescents personal home pages, Stern (2002)

discovered that girls' home pages were personal, intimate and immediate while home pages authored by men provided less biographical information than those produced by the women.

Quite a number of reasons have been deduced as reasons for this perceived gender differences in self-disclosure. Petronio (2002) stated that these differences may be due to the variations in how men and women are socialized, their gender role expectation or how men and women use different criteria in defining and controlling private information. While men have been taught traditionally to exercise restraint in sharing their feelings, women have been socialized to be more expressive and open in their communication. Also women are concerned with and evaluate their interpersonal relationships more often than men. As Burnett (1990) opined, men are bothered about the practical aspects that make relationships possible, regardless of what went on in them unlike women who care more about monitoring and evaluating the intrinsic relational events (Sheldon, 2013).

Dimensions of Self-disclosure

One of the ways to examine how relationships are formed is by looking at it from the angle of cost and reward. Social exchange theory proposes that the relationships we choose to create and maintain are the ones that maximize our rewards and minimize our costs. According to this, we are more self-centered and not necessarily concerned with equality. The basic idea is that relationships that give us the most benefits for the least amount of effort are the ones we value the most and are likely to keep long-term (Long-Crowell, 2016).

Similarly, Lujan and Nobis (2016) posited that even without thinking about it, we weigh each relationship and interaction with each other on a reward-cost scale. If the interaction was positive, then that relationship is looked upon favorably. But if the interaction was not positive then the relationship will be evaluated for its cost compared to its rewards or benefits. These scholars also noted that people want to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs when they are in a relationship with somebody. However, this evaluation is not always as logical as it seems on paper and it sometimes takes one person a great deal of time to realize that their costs are much greater than their rewards and that a relationship is not beneficial. Once this realization is achieved relationships will go through what is referred to as de-penetration. When the

relationship starts to break down, then there is a withdrawal of disclosure which leads to termination of the relationship.

Reasons for Self-disclosure

Self-disclosure has been identified as a way of showing others who we are and what our needs are (Derlega, 1979) in Leung (2002). As part of the reasons why we open up to others, past research has suggested that loneliness could motivate people to increase their self-disclosure. This means that the desire to escape loneliness generates the need to share feelings and thoughts with others (Kamarovsky, 1974). However, Leung (2002) stated that loneliness and self-disclosure can simply not be linked in a unidirectional causal way. More likely, they should be seen as an influence on one another or as part of the same package such that both tend to co-occur with no particular causal relation.

In a not too dissimilar fashion, Owen (2011) identified social comparison as a reason for self-disclosure. This researcher posited that people evaluate themselves based on how they compare themselves with others. In essence, people tend to disclose information about intellectual aptitude or athletic abilities in order to see how they relate to others. Also, Owen suggested that disclosures about abilities or talents can lead to self-validation if the person to whom we disclose reacts positively. Thus, by disclosing information about our beliefs and values, we can determine if they are the same as or different from others.

Owen (2011) additionally noted that people often disclose fantasies or thoughts to others in order to determine whether they are acceptable or unacceptable. This implies that we can engage in social comparison as the discloser or the receiver of disclosures, which in essence allow us to determine whether or not we are interested in pursuing a relationship with another person.

Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites are tools that allow users to create a personal profile of them containing information such as age, location and interests. These personal profiles can then be connected with family, friends and colleagues, where information can be shared among one another. These connections create a network of users where anyone connected to the network can view everyone else's profile and therefore interact with them (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

The emergence of these sites has significantly altered today's media landscape and has presented individuals with new opportunities to meet different people from different background across the globe. According to Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe (2007), social networking allows individuals to present themselves, articulate their social networks, and establish or maintain connections with others. These sites can be oriented towards work related contexts e.g. LinkedIn.com, romantic relationship initiation, the original goal of Friendster.com, connecting those with shared interests such as music or politics e.g. MySpace.com, or the college student population (the original incarnation of Facebook.com). Participants may use the sites to interact with people they already know offline or to meet new people.

Empirical Review

Bazarova and Choi (2014) carried out a study on self- disclosure in social media in order to extend the functional approach to disclosure motivations and characteristics on social network sites. They introduced the functional model of self- disclosure on social network sites by integrating a functional theory of self- disclosure and research on audience representations as situational cues for activating interpersonal goals. According to the model, people pursue strategic goals and disclose differently depending on social media affordances and disclosure intimacy. The results of their empirical study examining self- disclosure motivations and characteristics in Facebook status updates, wall posts, and private messaging lend support to this model and provide insights into the motivational drivers of self- disclosure on social networking sites, helping to reconcile traditional views of self- disclosure and self- disclosing behaviors in new media contexts.

Similarly, Sheldon (2013) examined gender differences in self-disclosure between Facebook friends and between face-to-face friends. Using a one-way ANOVA to test the hypothesis that women will self-disclose to their Facebook and face-to-face friends more than men, the results derived provided partial support for the hypothesis. He discovered that women disclosed to their exclusive face-to-face friends and exclusive Facebook friends more than men while men had more intimate discussions with their recently added Facebook friends than women did. Overall, his findings suggested that, regardless of the medium, both genders disclose more to the person they consider more intimate.

In view of the near absence of literature on the motivations for self- disclosure on social media among various individuals and how these motivations affect their usage of social media, this study sets out to fill this gap.

Methodology

The design for this study was Descriptive Design. The researchers used survey method which is aimed at collecting large samples from a population in order to examine the distribution incidence and interaction of the phenomenon of the study. The basis for selecting this research design was to determine the state of the female demographics which forms the focus of this study. The questionnaire was used to reach the population of the study. The population of the study consisted of female university students most especially within the age bracket of 16 to 30 years. Based on accessibility, resources and time constraints, we selected the sample from the three tertiary institutions in Kwara State, Nigeria.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the three institutions which comprised University of Ilorin, Kwara State University and Al-Hikma University. They are federal, state and privately owned institutions respectively and have a vibrant population of student with high percentages of Nigerian girls who use the social media (Onasanya, Yahya, Akingbemisilu, & Ayelaagbe, 2013). The purposive sampling technique was deemed appropriate for this study because it is a form of non-probability sampling technique which is characterized by the use of judgment and deliberate effort to obtain representative sampling by including presumable typical areas of group in the sample (Hassan, 1998).

In addition, the proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 300 respondents from the three universities selected for the study. A proportional stratified sampling according to James (2010) gives the researcher the opportunity to select respondents at random from the sub group in proportion to the size of the group in the total population. Thus, each institution was stratified into 5 faculties, from which 2 departments were chosen. This makes a total of ten departments.

Thereafter, 10 students were purposefully selected from each of the departments from the selected faculties in each of the three selected university. Since 10 departments were selected from each university, it means that a total of 100 students were selected from each university to

make a total of 300 respondents. The respondents were chosen purposefully through a screening to ensure that those chosen were the ones who use social media regularly. This is in line with the assertion that purposive sampling technique should be used to include respondents, subjects or elements selected for specific characteristics or qualities and to eliminate those who fail to meet these criteria (Wimmer & Dominick, 2016).

Data Analysis and Presentation

The return rate was 100% as a result of the personal approach adopted in administering the instrument; hence all 300 copies of the questionnaire were received, data was collated from them and used for the analysis.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
16 – 20	208	69.3
21 – 25	82	27.3
26 – 30	10	3.3
Total	300	100

The result shows that 69.3% (208) of the respondents are within the age group of 16- 20 while 27.3% (82) are within the age range of 21- 25 (5). The remaining 3.3% (10) belong to the age group of 26 and 30 years.

Table 2: Type of Social Media Used by Respondents

Social Media	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	89	29.7
Twitter	16	5.3
Whatsapp	155	51.7
Instagram	38	12.7
Others	2	0.7
Total	300	100

The choice of social media used by respondents as represented in table 2 shows that 29.7% (89) use Facebook, 5.3% (16) use Twitter, 51.7% (155) use Whatsapp, 12.7% (38) use Instagram while 0.7% (2) make use of other forms of social media.

Research Question 1: How often do Nigerian girls self- disclose on Social Media?

Table 3: Frequency of Girls' Self- Disclosure on Social Media

Frequency of Self- Disclosure	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	227	75.7
Weekly	32	10.7
Less Often	41	13.7
Total	300	100

Table 3 indicates that 75.7% (227) of the respondents self- disclose information daily on social media, 10.7% (32) disclose information weekly while 13.7% (41) self- disclose information on social media less often.

Table 4: Personal Information Disclosed on Social Media

Personal Information	Frequency	Percentage
Personal	164	54.7
Descriptors/Characteristics		
Ethnicity	37	12.3
Marital Status	30	10
Health	5	1.7
Financial	1	0.3
Educational History	49	16.3
Employment	8	2.7
Political Affiliation	3	1
Sexuality	3	1

Total	300	100
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Table 4 reveals that out of the 300 respondents representing 100%, 54.7% (164) disclose information about their personal characteristics on social media, 12.3% (37) disclose information their ethnicity, 10% (30) disclose information about their marital status, 1.7% (5) disclose information their health, 0.3% (1) respondent reveals information about her financial status, 16.3% (49) reveal information about their educational history, 2.7% (8) reveal information about their employment, 1% (3) disclose information about their political affiliation and 1% (3) of the respondents disclose information about their sexuality on social media.

Research Question 2: What are the motivations for self- disclosure on social media among Nigerian girls?

Table 5: Motivations for Respondents' Self- Disclosure on Social Media

Motivations	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
To establish identity	30 (10%)	76 (25.3%)	15 (5%)	85 (28.3%)	94 (31.3%)	300 (100%)
To increase self value	29 (9.7%)	45 (15%)	34 (11.3%)	90 (30%)	102 (34%)	300 (100%)
To establish certain impressions about self	30 (10%)	81 (27%)	39 (13%)	59 (19.7%)	91 (30.3%)	300 (100%)
To gain friends	36 (12%)	77 (25.7%)	45 (15%)	61 (20.3%)	81 (27%)	300 (100%)
To maintain intimacy with friends	25 (8.3%)	69 (23%)	35 (11.7%)	88 (29.3%)	83 (27.7%)	300 (100%)
To satisfy the demands of groups on Social media	12 (4%)	32 (10.7%)	41 (13.7%)	88 (29.3%)	127 (42.3%)	300 (100%)
To gain sympathy and support from friends	5 (1.7%)	41 (13.7%)	19 (6.3%)	79 (26.3%)	156 (52%)	300 (100%)
To make people learn from my experiences	29 (9.7%)	70 (23.3%)	52 (17.3%)	82 (27.3%)	67 (22.3%)	300 (100%)
To show off achievements	24 (8%)	30 (10%)	36 (12%)	90 (30%)	120 (40%)	300 (100%)

Table 5 indicates that out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 10% (30) strongly agreed that they self-disclose information on social media in order to establish their identities, 25.3% (76) agreed, 5% (15) were not sure, 28.3% (85) disagreed while 31.3% (94) strongly disagreed that they disclose information about self on social media in order to establish their identities. Also, the table reveals that out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 9.7% (29) strongly agreed that they reveal information about self on social media in order to increase their self value, 15% (45) agreed, 11.3% (34) were not sure, 30% (90) disagreed while 34% (102) strongly disagreed that they self-disclose information on social media in order to increase their self value. Similarly out of the 300 respondents representing 100%, 10% (30) of the respondents strongly agreed that they self-disclose information on social media due to the need to establish certain impressions about themselves, 27% (81) agreed, 13% (39) were undecided, 19.7% (59) disagreed and 30.3% (91) strongly agreed on this. As regards the self- disclosure of the 300 (100%) respondents on social media in order to gain friends, 12% (36) strongly agreed, 25.7% (77) agreed, 15% (45) were not sure, 20.3% (61) disagreed and 27% (81) of the respondents strongly disagreed. In the same vein, out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 8.3% (25) respondents strongly agreed that their self-disclosure on the social media is motivated by the need to maintain intimacy with friends, 23% (69) agreed, 11.7% (35) were undecided, 29.3% (88) disagreed while 27.7% (83) strongly disagreed. Also, out of the 300 respondents representing 100%, 4% (12) respondents strongly agreed that their self- disclosure on the social media is motivated by the need to satisfy the groups on social media, 10.7% (32) agreed, 13.7% (41) were not sure, 29.3% (88) disagreed while 42.3% (127) strongly disagreed. Similarly, out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 1.7% (5) of the respondents strongly agreed that self- disclosure on social media is motivated by the need to gain sympathy and support from friends, 13.7% (41) agreed, 6.3% (19) were undecided, 26.3% (79) disagreed and 52% (156) strongly disagreed. In a similar vein, out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 9.7% (29) of the respondents strongly agreed that the need to make people learn from their experiences motivates their self- disclosure on social media, 23.3% (70) agreed, 17.3% (52) were not sure, 27.3% (82) disagreed while 22.3% (67) strongly disagreed. As regards the self- disclosure of the 300 (100%) respondents on social media in order to show off achievements, 8% (24) of the respondents strongly agreed, 10% (30) agreed, 12% (36) were undecided, 30% (90) disagreed while 40% (120) of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Research Question 3: How do the motivations for self- disclosure influence the usage of social media among Nigerian girls?

Table 6: Frequency of Respondents' Status Update on Social Media

Frequency of Status Update	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	105	35%
Weekly	56	18.7%
Less often	139	46.3%
Total	300	100%

Table 6 reveals that out of the 220 respondents representing 100%, 35% (105) update their status on social media daily, 18.7% (56) update their status weekly and 46.3% (139) of the respondents update their status less often on social media.

Table 7: Usage of Social Media by Respondents as Influenced by Motivations

Category	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
I always shun external applications requesting access into my account	63 (21%)	70 (23.3%)	44 (14.7%)	59 (19.7%)	64 (21.3%)	300 (100%)
I do not self disclose on social media because I do not trust the people on the platform	65 (21.7%)	84 (28%)	44 (14.7%)	59 (19.7%)	48 (16%)	300 (100%)
I do not disclose information about self on social media in order not to feel vulnerable	49 (16.3%)	78 (26%)	35 (11.7%)	66 (22%)	72 (24%)	300 (100%)
I prefer to be anonymous on social media	57 (19%)	81 (27%)	48 (16%)	71 (23.7%)	43 (14.3%)	300 (100%)
I reveal information anonymously on social media	41 (13.7%)	62 (20.7%)	41 (13.7%)	86 (28.7%)	70 (23.3%)	300 (100%)

Table 7 indicates that out of the 300 respondents representing 100%, 21% (63) strongly agreed that they always shun external applications requesting access into their social media accounts, 23.3% (70) agreed, 14.7% (44) were not sure, 19.7% (59) disagreed and 21.3% (64) strongly disagreed. Also, out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 21.7% (65) strongly agreed that they do not

self disclose information on social media because they do not trust the people on the platform, 28% (84) agreed, 14.7% (44) were undecided, 19.7% (59) disagreed while 16% (48) strongly disagreed. Similarly, out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 16.3% (49) strongly agreed that they do not disclose information about self on social media in order not to feel vulnerable, 26% (78) agreed, 11.7% (35) were not sure, 22% (66) disagreed and 24% (72) strongly disagreed. Also, out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 19% (57) strongly agreed that they prefer to be anonymous on social media, 27% (81) agreed, 16% (48) were undecided, 23.7% (71) disagreed while 14.3% (43) strongly disagreed. In a similar vein, out of the 300 (100%) respondents, 13.7% (41) strongly agreed that they reveal information anonymously on social media, 20.7% (62) agreed, 13.7% (41) were unsure, 28.7% (86) disagreed and 23.3% (70) strongly disagreed.

Discussion of Findings

Research question one bothered on the frequency of Nigerian girls' self- disclosure on social media. The result indicates that 75.7 percent of the respondents disclosed information daily about themselves on social media, 10.7 percent self- disclose weekly while 13.7 percent disclosed less often.

The question on what motivates Nigerian girls towards self- disclosure on social media reveals on table 5 that while 25.3 percent of the respondents agreed that they self- disclose on social media in order to establish their identities, 28.3 percent disagreed. As regards the issue of self- disclosure on social media in order to increase self- value, 15 percent of the respondents agreed on this while 30 percent disagreed. Similarly, the result of findings indicates that 27 percent of the respondents agreed that they use social media to establish certain impressions about themselves while 19.7 percent disagreed. In a similar vein, the number of respondents, 25.7 percent, who agreed that self- disclosure on social media is motivated by the need to gain friends is greater than those who disagreed, 20.3 percent as indicated in table 5. This is not dissimilar to the finding that 23 percent of the respondent agreed that self- disclosure is motivated by the need to maintain intimacy while 29.3 percent disagreed.

Research question three deals with how motivations for self- disclosure influence the usage of social media among Nigerian girls. The research findings revealed that 19 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that they prefer to be anonymous on social media as opposed to the

14.3 percent who strongly disagreed. Related to this is the data in table 7 which showed that 13.7 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that they self- disclose anonymously on social media while 23.3 percent strongly disagreed.

This foregoing may explain why 21.7 percent of the respondents strongly agreed that they do not self- disclose information on social media because they do not trust people on the platform while 16 percent strongly disagreed. On the contrary however, while 16.3 percent of respondents strongly agreed that they do not disclose information on social media in order not to feel vulnerable, 24 percent strongly disagreed.

Conclusion

The chances afforded by the social media extend to the ability to make the self- known to others. Although this affordability comes with certain benefits such as social validation, self- expression, identity clarification, literature has shown that it comes with attendant challenges such as placing the discloser in an awkward or vulnerable position.

Apart from the variance in the cost and benefits of self- disclosing on the social media, differences abound in the motives behind the self- disclosure of different gender on social media. This particular area informed this study, wherein the focus was on the motivation for self- disclosure on social media among Nigerian female university students.

It was discovered that a larger percentage of the respondents self- disclose information daily on the social media. The reasons for this action as shown by the study ranged from the need of Nigerian female university students to establish their identities to making other people learn from their experiences. This study was able to give credence to the literature that posited that self- disclosure on social media could place the discloser in a vulnerable position. Majority of the respondents as revealed by the study expressed their hesitancy at revealing information to strangers or at accepting group application requests. This is probably why most of the respondents revealed their preference at being anonymous and to reveal information anonymously on the social media.

This study therefore shows that even though the usage of social media is widely embraced for self- disclosure, Nigerian female university students still exhibit certain amount of caution while utilizing the media for the purpose of self- disclosure.

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