



## Social Media and Feminism Movement

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**Abstract:** There is a great chance that the widespread use of social media and the unparalleled adoption of new technologies by women will bring gender equality and women's rights issues to the forefront of public policy and media coverage. The paper examined the social media and feminism movement in Nigeria. The chapter was anchored on the Technological Determinism theory and the Feminist Muted Group theory. The researcher employed the library research method in executing the study. The paper concluded that activism today cannot be understood without the activity and role of social media. The paper recommended amongst others that feminists should sue for gender equity rather than gender equality as men and women are not of equal strength by nature.

**Keywords:** Social media, Feminism, Public media

Received:13-09-2025 | Accepted:15-10-2025 | Published:20-10-2025

**How to Cite:** Oparaugo, B. (2025). Social Media and Feminism Movement. *Polyscholars Journal of Advance Research and Publication*. 1 (1), 26-33

### INTRODUCTION

Roughly a decade ago, there weren't many public platforms available for anyone who wanted to combat misogyny. Discussions centered on feminism and feminist principles were scarce. Rush Limbaugh called feminism advocates "feminazis," and many famous people rejected the term "feminist," including actress Shailene Woodley, music sensation Katy Perry, and actress Kaley Cuoco. Prior to Twitter and Facebook's development as news platforms, only city dwellers or those with the means to take time off from work were able to attend protests. Writing a letter back then was visible only to the receiver (Chittal, 2015).

Zimmerman (2017) noticed that as of late, virtual entertainment stages play played huge parts in the ascent of women's activist development and its presence in the open arena at public and global levels. This has in any case, been the principal motor of the fourth wave. Nonetheless, these organizations and their environment have presented new techniques for correspondence and association that have affected how the development has created as of late. This new improvement has permitted the change of individual into aggregate talks and has too incorporated a variety of voices and exchanges

and the democratization of open arena (Baer, 2016; Clark, 2014; Davis, 2019).

By mid-nineteenth 100 years till today, there has been an advancement of women's activist belief system and reasoning. This has brought about what is referred to the present time as "women's activist waves". In the digital age, feminist activists use digital tools to amplify activism and women's liberation initiatives. Throughout the entire existence of women's liberation development, women's activists have utilized various strategies and assets to lobby for change. Women's activist activists have battled against all types of oppression ladies during this time, upholding for ladies' freedoms to cast a ballot and be decided in favor of, own property, access early termination and regenerative medical services, equivalent compensation and maternity leave, and security from abusive behavior at home and assault, as well as the capacity to sue their victimizers.

The primary flood of women's activist activism centered around ladies' more right than wrong to cast a ballot. According to Derby (2019), the fight for equal social and legal rights for women dominated the second wave of mobilization. One of the most serious defects of second-wave woman's rights was that it

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Volume-1| Issue-1| 2025

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neglected to incorporate ladies who were neither white nor center or high society. Dark and earthy colored common ladies were methodically rejected from second-wave woman's rights. Third-wave feminism was the result of this exclusion and aimed to challenge femininity definitions that focused on the experiences of heterosexual white middle-class women. During the third wave of the feminist movement, intersectionality plays a significant role in operational frameworks.

Gu, Jiang, and Ye (2021) define feminism as a collection of political, social, and ideological movements aimed at defining and establishing the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the sexes. The development of the Web has given the public a free space for popular assessment. Woman's rights has been broadly spread in this free space. An ever increasing number of ladies decide to become women's activists and stand up as women's activists in the media. Feminism has grown rapidly as a result of the ease with which feminists can join like-minded groups and participate in the propagation of feminist values, particularly with the rise of Weibo. Feminists can freely use new media with men, rebel against patriarchy through new media, and express emotions they can't express in real life on the Internet thanks to the convenient Internet.

Online entertainment empowers fortitude between ladies who have shared encounters and has re-imagined women's liberation in general, making it more comprehensive to anybody envious of spreading mindfulness and participate in activism. In 2017, the engaged #MeToo development started to spread the nation over, acquiring prominence after the openness of sexual maltreatment claims against Harvey Weinstein. A small bunch of entertainers who were physically badgering and attacked by the American film maker started to stand up via virtual entertainment, acquiring reactions from superstars like Gwyneth Paltrow, Ashley Judd, Uma Thurman, and Jennifer Lawrence.

The force of this development reveals insight into sexism in Hollywood, permitting ladies to involve a virtual entertainment stage as a potential chance to be heard. Kuang (2021) present that it energizes fortitude between ladies who have shared encounters and has re-imagined women's liberation all in all, making web-based entertainment more

comprehensive to anybody with the longing to spread mindfulness and take part in activism.

### **Social Media and Feminism Movement**

Whether in terms of affordances (technical characteristics), agents (who shares), or narratives (what is shared), it would be naive to believe that social media are by definition "feminist." Rather, the stages on which well known women's liberation flourishes exist in a reality where sexism actually exists and the constant struggle between woman's rights' goals and the people who expect to crush it is mercilessly self-evident (Marwick, 2017). Famous sexism prospers via online entertainment stages. At the point when Banet-Weiser (2018) saw 'men's privileges' gatherings, for instance, she perceived how these ladies detesting bunches developed close by standard women's liberation programs.

The presence and safeguard of woman's rights online have advanced in lockstep with the development of women's liberation's comprehension. The early web-based rendition of women's activist battle, cyberfeminism, was a lot of in accordance with women's activist convictions. Cyberfeminism was communicated in two kinds of web-based spaces in the main ten years of the twenty-first hundred years: e-zines and online journals. The earliest women's activist profiles or grrrl e-zines, as Warnick (1999) calls attention to, zeroed in on the medium's imaginative structures as well as the (absence of) inclusion of women's activist points on the Web.

Virtual entertainment democratized women's activist activism, opening up investment to anybody with a Twitter account and a craving to battle the man controlled society. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram have made activism easier than ever by removing barriers like distance and location. They have also created a platform for awareness and change by facilitating public dialogues (Chattal, 2015).

Platforms like YouTube, which could be called the new e-zines, demonstrate how social media's creative appropriation of technology combines traditional activist methods like pamphlets and protests with an endless development of online activism. YouTube, as indicated by creators like Szostak, "works as an encouraging group of people for ladies committed to the overall objective of acknowledgment and regard" (2013, p. 56),

and hence its women's activist potential inside the rambling web-based circle can be accepted. Individual web journals distributed by youthful women's activists, focusing on their specific encounters, were the other fundamental cyberfeminist appearances.

The objectives of these early women's activist 'powerhouses,' as per Keller (2012), were to bring issues to light about how to figure out woman's rights as a type of activism and local area cooperation. Women's activist bloggers wanted to help a reason they were enthusiastic about thusly, as a considerable lot of them couldn't genuinely take part in meetings or shows inferable from an absence of assets or geographic distance. In what might be depicted as expanding 'counter-publics,' the most well known websites had significant remark segments and gatherings where supporters could trade perspectives and perspectives. (Warner, 2002; Fraser, 1990).

Even though these places of expression are still important, they have been replaced by intense discussions on social media platforms like Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, where short (audio-visual) messages and hashtags are used as weapons in a cultural conflict rather than lengthy written articles. Ladies of variety, lesbian ladies, transsexual people, average ladies, and ladies with useful variety are completely addressed in cyberfeminism, which is the polar absolute opposite of postfeminist triviality.

The present women's activists utilize the Web as a stage to lift and give a space to discuss and to communicate the hardships of ladies on the fringe, as Cochrane (2013) claims in her book "All the Radical Ladies: The Ascent of the Fourth Flood of Woman's rights". Online women's liberation is multifaceted and relentless, as seen by the rise of 'interconnected' women's activist hashtags like #WhiteFeminism and #FuckNormality. Knowing how to recognize talks that really engage ladies and those that help the typification of the female body and the smothering of ladies' voices via online entertainment is essential for the virtual game.

### **Social Media and Feminist Organizations**

The primary force behind the fourth wave of feminism is social media (Zimmerman, 2017). There is no denying the benefits and potential of social networks for forming communities and establishing connections, as well as for

amplifying and bolstering the reach of feminist activist groups' discourses (Maloney, 2017; Tufekci, 2014). To assist reflect on and revise its identity and self-understanding, this entails bringing together disparate social groups and establishing new forms of action, visibility, and protest (Baer, 2016). (Sener, 2021). However, the extent to which these networks may enhance and transform society remains largely unclear, leading to divergent views on the function of social media as an activist tool. These discussions uncover that interpersonal organizations are not the idealistic even discourse public spaces that were envisioned initially (LeFebvre and Armstrong, 2018). What's more, this reality has likewise turned into the most elevated articulation of independence, connected to the arranged independence (Wellman, 2002), which saw the presence of another sort of women's liberation, "pop woman's rights" (Banet-Weiser, 2018), otherwise called "feel-good women's liberation" or "standard women's liberation" (Phipps, 2020).

Pop woman's rights embraces an individualistic and performative idea of women's liberation in view of the de-contextualization and de-politicization of the development, being accessible to the overall population, "to a great extent since it has lost all feeling of scholarly meticulousness or political difficulties" (Kiraly and Tyler, 2015, p. 10). The support of famous people and powerhouses has been vital in the extension of this peculiarity. The last option, what's more, are considered by Rottenberg (2014) to act as an illustration of the independent women's activist that has created inside the neoliberal buyer culture, driven by the conviction that a particular kind of balance has previously been reached. According to this viewpoint, the domineering woman's rights of interpersonal organizations is blamed for being driven by straight, white, and advantaged ladies, and hence there is more noteworthy perceivability of the issues and issues that worry them. In addition, it is argued that the practices that define the influencers are the promotion of self-exploitation and "do it yourself" values (Banet-Weiser, 2018), which are associated with neoliberal culture, the context of cyberfetishism (Morozov, 2009), and the commodification of feminist ideas. This prompts ware women's liberation (Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer, 2017) or femvertising (Varghese and Kumar, 2020) since it includes utilizing women's activist

messages and thoughts fully intent on acquiring financial increase.

Creators like Maloney (2017) demonstrate the way that this peculiarity can lead to an unplanned women's liberation shaped by individuals in informal organizations who, without participating in women's activist activism, are viewed as women's activist references because of the kind of messages and movement tracked down on their profiles. This point is connected to the expression "performative activism" or "slacktivism" (Christensen, 2011; Rotman and others, 2011), which results from the association of "bum," an obscure or sluggish individual, and "activism." It tends to be characterized as action created in interpersonal organizations with okay and minimal expense to the client whose design is to bring issues to light and deliver some sort of progress or fulfillment on a decreased scale contrasted with the individual associated with the action (Rotman *et al.*, 2011). This can incorporate little virtual entertainment cooperations like loving or sharing a women's activist post. Albeit these terms at first had an encouraging implication, making developments of progress at a low level, the elevated degrees of multiplication as of late by powerhouses, miniature superstars and the overall presence of assessment pioneers and well known people on informal organizations has prompted its utilization being related with pessimistic impacts.

### **Social Media as Effective Medium in Promoting Feminism Movement**

Social media has emerged as a potent instrument in recent years for online communities to mobilize campaigns and increase awareness on a variety of problems. Women's voices, both individual and collective, have shown to be essential in advancing women's rights both domestically and globally. Social media has proven especially crucial for women's rights organizations in their efforts to demand more transparency and action on gender equality. A growing number of women are using various social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, and Pinterest, to discuss policies, mobilize campaigns for gender equality, and promote awareness. In recent years, India, Kenya, and Niger have demonstrated how grassroots women's networks have brought about changes in laws and norms. In any case, significantly more should be finished for ladies' voices from common society to be more

noticeable in dynamic cycles. This internet based conversation opens the discussion on how new media can widen the extension for activity on ladies' freedoms and orientation correspondence inside a post-2015 plan (Wikigender, 2015).

With the ascent and development of new media innovation and online entertainment stages universally, there is a quickly developing consciousness of socio-social issues intensified by web-based entertainment powerhouses like Rupi Kaur, Mona Elhataway, Adwoa Aboah among others. In a web minute in 2019, there are around 1 million individuals signing into Facebook and around 87,500 individuals tweeting. African women's activists and ladies' privileges developments and associations structure a piece of this measurement and are drawing in with different clients on the web (Derby, 2019).

Through new media technologies like feminist blogs, online visual storyboards, feminist zines, and e-magazines, among others, African feminist scholars and activists are able to publish their work online and document their individual experiences within the patriarchy. Through social media, they can also participate in feminist critique and public discourse. Ladies' privileges developments and associations are executing computerized missions to make mindfulness and energize discourse around foundational issues influencing ladies, for example, orientation based separation and types of savagery against ladies. Rape, body energy/independence, sex laborer privileges, LGBTQI+ freedoms and chauvinist negligible hostilities inside African settings are issues that have been brought to the front through African women's activist activism in computerized spaces (Derby, 2019).

Web-based entertainment has ended up being a strong vehicle for carrying ladies' freedoms issues to the consideration of a more extensive public, stirring activity in the city of urban communities all over the planet and empowering strategy creators to move forward responsibilities to orientation uniformity (Loiseau and Nowacka, 2015). Late cases in Turkey and India mirror the capability of web-based entertainment to overcome any barrier that frequently isolates grassroots ladies' activism from strategy making processes. Gender equality and women's rights issues have significant opportunities to be brought to

the forefront of policymaking and media attention thanks to the explosion of social media and the unprecedented use of new technologies by women. In 1995, the Beijing Stage for Activity perceived and anticipated the media's "capability to make a far more prominent commitment to the progression of ladies" (para. 234). This call has been reverberated in the proposed focuses under Objective 5 of the post-2015 Supportable Advancement Objectives (SDGs). Like in 1995, challenges stay in using media to battle separation, counter orientation generalizations and bring issues to light of ladies' freedoms issues. Even though women use social media more than men do worldwide (McPherson, 2014), many women still do not have access to this technology due to infrastructure, costs, and social norms that discriminate against them (ICRW, 2010).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was anchored on the Technological Determinism theory and the Feminist Muted Group theory.

### Technological Determinism Theory

This hypothesis was propounded by Canadian researcher, Marshal McLuhan in 1962. The hypothesis holds that media innovation shapes how we as people in a general public think, feel act, and how society works as we move starting with one innovation age then onto the next. Mechanical determinism is a reductionist hypothesis that intends to give a causative connection among innovation and a general public's temperament. It tries to explain who or what might be able to control human affairs. The theory raises the question of how much technological factors influence human thought and behavior. According to Okoye & Oparaugo (2019), it is used to explain how technological advancement affects even public opinion, audience attitude and behavior, and life course.

Likewise, the mechanical determinists trust that specific specialized advancements, correspondence innovations or media, or most comprehensively, innovation by and large, are the sole or prime precursor reasons for change in the public eye. Likewise, innovation is viewed as the basic condition hidden the example of social association (Chandler, 2019). Mechanical determinists decipher innovation overall and correspondences advancements specifically as the premise of

society before, present and, surprisingly, what's in store. They hold that advancements, for example, composing or print or TV or the PC changed society.

In its outrageous structure, the whole type of society is viewed not set in stone by innovation; new advancements change society at each level, including establishments, social connection and people. In any event, a great many social and social peculiarities is viewed as molded by innovation. " According to Chandler (2019), "human factors" and social arrangements are regarded as secondary.

Most translations of innovative determinism share two general thoughts:

That the improvement of innovation itself follows an anticipated, recognizable way generally past social or political impact and that innovation thusly has "impacts" on social orders that are innate, rather than society molded or delivered on the grounds that that society coordinates itself to help and further foster an innovation whenever it has been presented.

Severe followers to innovative determinism don't really accept that the impact of innovation contrasts in light of how much an innovation is or can be utilized as opposed to thinking about innovation as a component of a bigger range of human action. An approach known as technological determinism holds that technological advancements or developments in technology are the primary cause of social change. When a technology is stable, its design tends to dictate user behavior without taking into account the social and cultural context in which it was developed.

The statement that "the uses made of technology are determined by the structure of the technology itself, that is, its function follow from its form" ignores the fact that a society or culture interacts with and even shapes technologies. This explains why using social media platforms to spread the feminism movement is the most effective strategy. This is so in light of the fact that the traditional press wouldn't offer a 100 percent chance of certain voices to be heard due to race, age, orientation or sexual personality, and so on.

### Feminist Muted Group Theory

The research is based on the feminist muted group theory. As indicated by the

contention, certain gatherings are quieted in light of the fact that they come up short on ability to ascend out and support themselves. This is because women believe men are the majority in society, making women's points of view the least qualified. Females should likewise act in much the same way to predominant gatherings in their impression of things to be a piece of a local area and to run the show. Mill operator (2005) made sense of the thought by expressing that the prevailing gathering locally (guys) controls the different types of articulation.

The idea features how troublesome it is for ladies to be acknowledged into and turned into a piece of an association whose standards were overwhelmingly evolved in a male-ruled society. This speculation is appropriate to the issues that Nigerian female writers experience. In Nigeria, rules are written in a man-made language, which contributes in characterizing, depreciating, and barring ladies (Griffin, 2003). The speculation, then again, underlines that since ladies have next to zero solidarity to oppose, they experience issues putting themselves out there or guaranteeing that their voices are heard via virtual entertainment stages.

This theory applies to this study because it explains that men have silenced women due to their gender for years.

## METHODOLOGY

The author adopted the library research approach as the most suitable method in writing the paper. This is because the paper relied heavily on secondary sources of data, with a bit of primary sources of data which were sourced from observation of social media posts on feminism movement in Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

Activism today can't be perceived without the action and job of online entertainment (Cammaerts, 2015; Tufekci, 2014). In any case, the elements and designs of these organizations condition how dissident gatherings coordinate their web-based presence for certain difficulties that go against the pith of grassroots activism, which understands the rationales of centre-organized aggregate activities (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013). The feminism movement and social media have been the focus of this chapter. The outcome of the enormous women's activist preparations in Nigeria overall and in Enugu

city specifically, as of late, is basically because of countless messages and cooperations via virtual entertainment. These organizations were utilized by individuals to self-express their viewpoints on the overall objective of the activity and orientation uniformity through their singular character, generally with no alliance to any political or lobbyist association. Regardless of the ascent of slacktivism present via online entertainment, with individuals just posting content of a preparation or cause to make their own picture, these connective activities have had the option to set a plan in the country, especially around Global Ladies' Day. However, some women felt the need to get involved in the political movement by starting formal organizations, such as Women in Nigeria – WIN. These organizations were crucial to the success of feminist mobilizations because of their online calls to action to get people to participate in activities that took place offline. This large number of boards of trustees consider online entertainment profiles fundamental to be important for the public advanced circle. This duality makes a few hierarchical hardships for the lobbyist boards because of the various rationales of disconnected aggregate activities which are profoundly concentrated contrasted with online elements, in view of self-expression and decentralization (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013; van Dijck and Poell, 2013). The most aggregate computerized stages utilized are WhatsApp and Wire however they stay interior to each commission.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher hereby make the following recommendations:

- Those supporting feminism online should as well endeavor they are feminists too, offline.
- Feminists should sue for gender equity rather than gender equality as men and women are not of equal strength by nature.
- Feminists in Nigeria should understand that the movement is to better the lives and positions of women in the society and not hatred for men.
- Nigerian feminists should stop posting emotional write-ups that seem to upset women (feminists) against the male folks.

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