Social Media Use and its Implications on Cyberethical Behaviour in Nigeria: Perspectives of Generation Z Girls

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Abstract
This study examined how young Nigerian internet users view social media use and cyberethics. This study included all secondary school-aged female Nigerians from the six geopolitical zones. Thirty-six females aged 13–15, the generation's median age, were chosen from each zone and state. The tool for data collection was an open-ended survey. The results revealed that young women used multiple social media platforms. The characteristics of the various social media platforms which showed minimal text, short videos, and photo-editing filters showed that their peers heavily influenced their use of social media. This study also found that Generation Z females believed that large number of online followers implied a high sense of self-esteem and that any activities that increased followership was acceptable. They also underestimated online risks. Female Gen Z posted sexually suggestive videos online due to peer pressure and the need for peer acceptance, showing a lack of awareness of the consequences of such conduct. The study recommended that schools and all organisations put in place policies to ensure positive use of the Internet. Similarly, the study also recommended modifications of school curricula to include cyberethical awareness. Parenting techniques should also adequately teach societal awareness and the risks of exposing children to early exposure to the Internet.

Keywords: cyberethical behaviour, digital natives, female generation Z, gen Z, information behaviour, online followers, online safety, perception, social media use.

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Introduction
As a social animal, man has always desired interaction and communication. With the use of papyrus plates to record information for future use, various methods of ensuring communication have existed throughout the ages. When it was necessary to deliver information to people who were not in the same location, the telegram, the horse rider, and traditional methods such as talking drums were utilised. The development of technology has led to the use of social media as a primary tool for disseminating information (Agha et al., 2021; Benis et al., 2021).

The so-called Web2 technologies have brought about a revolution in public and private communication (Shahghasemi and Prosser, 2019). Due to the prevalence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet (see for example Sabzali, et al., 2022), a world without social media is almost inconceivable (Dunmade, 2022). Virtually, all Internet users make use of social media in some aspect of their lives, including entertainment, education, fashion, and lifestyle decisions. This is especially true for younger generations, for whom a world without social media and the Internet before the advent of the Internet is virtually incomprehensible (Mahmoudabadi & Mollahabaddi, 2021; Symkowiak et al., 2021).

Generation Z (Gen Z) is the youngest generational cohort to be studied with an interest in internet and social media research. According to Thangavel, Pathak and Chandra (2021), this cohort, known as "the generation that has never been offline", consists of individuals born between 1996 and 2010. Generation Z differs from the cohort that precedes them, commonly referred to as "the Millennials"; those born between 1980 and 1995; as those who had ICT and its attendants during their formative years, but not from birth; as a result, their worldview is notably distinct from all previous generations.

Albescu (2022) asserts that generation Z is also referred to as the first generation of digital natives and is characterised by their youth and desire for play and enjoyment. This generation conducts all of its

activities online, from banking to shopping, because connectivity is a part of their lifestyle.

Bulut and Maraba (2021) stated that Generation Z has distinctive habits and personality traits due to their varied social, economic, and historical experiences as a result of the era in which they were raised. Technology has shaped Generation Z, which is tech-savvy, individualistic, business-minded, fiscally aware, and adept at multitasking. They value both teamwork and individual autonomy.

Kaloeti et al. (2021) asserted that Generation Z females, like all females in an online environment, are typically more vulnerable than males; therefore, it is essential to investigate the causes of this vulnerability in order to take preventative measures.

Dunmade (2022) also documents this vulnerability of the female gender in everyday life. This is especially true given that technology and its most distinctive component, the Internet, play significant roles in shaping the perceptions, characteristics, attitudes, and awareness of this generational cohort.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate the perspectives of female Generation Z towards social media use, and its implications on cyberethical behaviour in Nigeria.

The specific objectives of the study were to:
1. to determine the types of social media platforms being used by female Generation Z in Nigeria;
2. to identify the nature of activities carried out on social media platforms by female Generation Z in Nigeria;
3. to establish the perception of female Generation Z towards online safety in Nigeria; and
4. to establish the perception of female Generation Z towards online followership on social media platforms in Nigeria.

Literature review
Generations

In 1863, French philosopher Emile Littre defined a generation as all men living roughly at the same time (Robert, 1979). Strauss and Howe (1991) defined a generation as the span of years between births, or the average time it takes for one birth group to be born, mature, and produce offspring. Generational cohorts are defined as groups of individuals who were born at the same time and share similar life experiences and significant traumatic events during their formative years. As a result of

these experiences and occurrences, individuals within each group share similar values, world views, attitudes, and beliefs, distinguishing them from other cohort groups (Strauss & Howe, 1991; Ismail et al., 2020).

Generation Z

Generation Z comprises over 27% of the world's population, with the majority residing in emerging nations such as China, India, and Nigeria. In Nigeria, Generation Z makes up more than a quarter of the population, and half of them are female. A 2014 survey revealed that members of Generation Z view themselves as tough, loving, tolerant, tech-savvy, and responsible (Koulopoulos & Keldsen, 2016; Iorgulescu, 2016; Ninan, 2021). Nigeria's Generation Z did not experience the military's totalitarianism or the effects of the Colonial Masters in any way other than reading about them in history textbooks. Consequently, they support freedom of expression and are unconcerned about its repercussions.

Ugoh (2021) was informed of the recent EndSARS demonstration, which attracted a sizable number of young participants and was almost entirely mobilised and organised through social media. In comparison to previous generations at their age, they have greater access to information and make more considered decisions (Kardes et al., 2010).

According to Marc (2001), these are the students that our traditional educational system is ill-equipped to teach or accommodate. There are now more globally connected and mobile than ever before due to technological advancements (Babin et al., 2016).

Susilawati et al. (2021) opined that although the current generation is digitally native, they are not necessarily digitally literate; therefore, there is an urgent need to use social media as a tool to enhance learning.

Social media Use

As Bourke (2019) argues, social media use does not occur in isolation. Similarly, Dunmade (2022) asserted that social media users exhibit certain behaviours as a result of being online. These actions may be positive or negative and are referred to as cyberethical behaviour. Conforming to cyberethical standards is a social responsibility of individuals in the digital age. Cyberethics can therefore be defined as the different motives and thought processes that come into play when an individual has the opportunity to interact with other individuals in an online environment (Blanchette & Ellington, 2018; Liywalii, 2020). Cyberethics is also the philosophical study of the ethics of online computer use, including user behaviour and the effects of this behaviour on individuals and society. Cyberethics, as defined by Dunmade (2022), is

the moral conduct that must be observed when operating in cyberspace. Various behaviours and factors come into play when an individual is in an online environment and has the opportunity to interact with both known and unknown individuals as a result of the development of ICT that enables real-time remote communication. Based on so many predetermined factors, the manifestation of these behaviours could be deemed positive or negative.

According to Carlson and Lee (2015), social media are internet platforms that enable global user collaboration and sharing. Users can quickly access information from a large, geographically dispersed group of individuals via social networks. Based on these social media platforms, individuals now have numerous options for connecting with potential contacts, collaborating with one another, and providing value.

Online safety and online influencers
Kimmons (2020) defines online safety as the process of ensuring the personal security of all Internet users. Either short-term or long-term cyber security awareness is capable of ensuring online safety. Parents, teachers, and school administrators are urged by Dunmade (2022) to discuss Cybersafety scenarios with their children to prevent them from becoming victims of paedophiles, scammers, or other individuals with nefarious intentions toward children. According to Wolf (2020), Generation Z is easily persuaded by individuals they perceive to be genuine. In this context, Wolf (2020) defined (online) influencers as individuals with a reputation for knowledge and expertise on a particular subject. They post frequently about a variety of topics on their preferred social media platforms, amassing large followings of devoted supporters who closely follow their opinions. They are common individuals whose expertise in a particular specialised field has made them popular. Consequently, they typically have a substantial social media following among fans in that region. Obviously, a person's level of influence is determined by more than the number of followers they have; it also depends on how they interact with those followers (Ozuem et al., 2021; Tobon & Garcia-Madariaga, 2021).

Empirical studies on social media use
Numerous researchers have documented that secondary school students in Nigeria make extensive use of social media. Recent studies, including Ngonso (2019), on a study among rural secondary school students in Rural Edo State, have documented that rural adolescents and youth have access to social media via their own or their parents' internet-access mobile phones, though not for academic purposes but to enhance their social

lives. Additionally, they favour Facebook over other social networking platforms. In addition, they were exposed to other social media platforms, such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp, among others.

In their study on social media as an educational tool, Olowo et al. (2020) reported the use of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube among secondary school students in Osun State, Nigeria. The results revealed a significant correlation between secondary school students' academic achievement and their use of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube. The study concluded that the use of Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube by teachers and students in secondary schools improved their academic performance. According to the findings, secondary school students and teachers should utilise social media as a collaborative platform for instruction and learning.

Aderibigbe, Owolabi and Okorie (2022) observed an increase in students in South Africa and Nigeria abusing and misusing cybertechnology in recent years. Conclusions from the study revealed that undergraduate students from the two institutions examined engaged in a greater number of unethical online behaviours, confirming that Nigerian undergraduates are more likely to engage in these vices. On the basis of the findings of the study, it was recommended that Nigeria and South Africa examine their cyber ethics policies and raise awareness about the negative effects of inappropriate cyberbehaviour.

Theoretical framework of social media use and cyberethical behaviour
Social Media Use and Cyberethical Behaviour can be explained by drawing upon several key theoretical perspectives, including:

Social cognitive theory
This theory, which was propounded by Bandura (2002) emphasizes the role of social learning and observation in shaping human behavior. It suggests that individuals learn by observing others and imitating their behavior. Tsai & Chistyakova (2022) opined that in the context of social media use and cyberethical behavior, this theory suggests that individuals may learn ethical and responsible online behavior by observing positive examples from others in their social networks.

Reasoned action approach
Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) propounded the Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) as a behavioural theory and an integrated framework for examining prediction and changes in human behaviour. The Reasoned Action Approach (RAA), an extension of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

(TPB) (Ajzen, 1991). This theory emphasizes the role of attitudes, norms, and perceived behavioral control in shaping human behavior. It suggests that an individual's behavior is influenced by their intentions, which are in turn shaped by their attitudes towards the behavior, subjective norms (i.e., what others think they should do), and perceived behavioral control (i.e., the degree to which they feel they have control over the behavior). Dunmade (2022), also used the model to examine the extent to which perception and awareness have a relationship with female postgraduate students' attitude toward cyberethical behaviour in universities in North Central Nigeria. In the context of social media use and cyberethical behavior, this theory suggests that individuals' ethical behavior online may be influenced by their attitudes towards such behavior, the norms in their social networks regarding such behavior, and their perceived control over their behavior online.

Social exchange theory
This theory, propounded by George Homans in 1958, emphasizes the concept of reciprocity in social interactions. It suggests that individuals engage in social interactions with the expectation of receiving benefits in return (Cook et al., 2013). In the context of social media use and cyberethical behavior, Welsh et al. (2022) maintained that this theory suggests that individuals may engage in ethical online behavior as a way of reciprocating the positive behavior of others in their social networks.

Self-Determination Theory
This theory, propounded by Bandura in 1977, emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation in shaping human behavior. It suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in behaviors that align with their personal values and interests (Mottram et al., 2023). Lin and Xiao (2023) stated that in the context of social media use and cyberethical behavior, this theory suggests that individuals who are intrinsically motivated to behave ethically online are more likely to engage in such behavior.

Overall, these theoretical perspectives provide a framework for understanding the complex interplay between individual, social, and environmental factors that shape social media use and cyberethical behavior.

Methodology
In this section, we describe the methodology utilised to conduct the study. It includes the design, population, sample, data collection instrument, method of administration, data analysis, and presentation of results.

This study focused on exploring the views of young Nigerian female internet users regarding social media use and cyberethics. An open-ended survey was used as the tool for data collection, which allowed for in-depth exploration of the participants' attitudes towards social media use and cyberethics. Open-ended surveys are ideal because despite the fact that there are numerous other qualitative techniques available , it is one of the most widely used qualitative research methods (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The data collected from the survey were analysed thematically, allowing for the identification of key themes and patterns in the participants' responses. Overall, this study employed a qualitative research methodology, which enabled a detailed exploration of the participants' experiences and perspectives on social media use and cyberethics. The results of the analysis and transcription of the data collected from the open-ended survey were outlined. The results are presented in a topical manner.

Population and sample
The population for the study comprised all females who are part of the Generation Z cohort in Nigeria, who had a personal mobile device. Females of secondary school age, aged between 13 and 15 years who owned their personal smart mobile device that they used every day were purposively selected. Using the median range of the generation, with one participant from each state in the country was selected, based on personal knowledge of the parents of the respondents. Thus, a total of 36 females that represent the sample for the study.

Instrument
Pre-formed items relating to the four objectives of the study were developed, and sent to the WhatsApp ® platform of each respondent through phone numbers collected from their parents, after having obtained parental consent as the respondents were minors. A short video clip lasting one minute and forty-five seconds, explaining the aim of the survey was sent to the individual phone numbers of the respondents, and it explained the concept of cyberethical behaviour. This was done to enable the respondents have proper understanding of appropriate cyber behaviour, and its implications on and its relevance in social media use.

The procedure of administration
The researchers contacted parents of adolescents they knew personally, based on their states of origin and whether or not their children had

mobile devices that they used daily with minimal parental supervision. Parents were informed of the purpose of the survey and asked if they would allow their wards or children to participate. This procedure was repeated until each state had a single respondent. Regarding ethical considerations, the parents of the respondents were asked for informed consent, and they expressed their children's intention and willingness to participate in the study. Similarly, they were permitted to withdraw their participation if they believed it could prove otherwise. Each parent was then given a consent letter in writing and asked to complete it on behalf of their children or wards. They were informed that participation was entirely voluntary and could be terminated at any time without repercussions.

After completing the form, the intended respondents' phone numbers were collected and stored. The questionnaire was now sent to respondents individually by the researcher. No online group platform was ever established, preventing respondents from meeting and ensuring as much anonymity as social media would permit. The respondents were given the option of typing their responses or sending voice notes; however, they all chose the latter option, which required them to send audio clips to the researcher via WhatsApp. The responses were categorised according to geopolitical zone.

Results
The responses for each geopolitical zone were coded in Table 1.

Table 1. The responses for each geopolitical zone

S/NO	Geopolitical Zone	Abbreviation
1	North Central	NC
2	North East	NE
3	North West	NW
4	South East	SE
5	South South	SS
6	South West	SW

The types of social media platforms being used by female Generation Z in Nigeria
Responses of participants were grouped and reported on geopolitical zone basis. Female Generation Z were asked to indicate which social media platforms they used. The results reveal that they made use of several various platforms. The responses were summarised as follows:

RNC1: My parents don't really understand social media like that. They just say that I spend too much time pressing my phone and that it hinders me from school work and house chores. If only they knew what I was up to. Once my mum is coming, I know how to hide my apps so that even if she seizes my phone, she can't really know what I am doing online.

RNE1: I have so many different apps on my phone, and I use them all a lot. The apps my friends use also determines the apps I use, so that I can see what each person is up to. I love Likee and Tiktok, especially. They are cool and fun to use. Very easy to learn and all my friends use it as well.

RNW1: I like WhatsApp and Instagram the most. Any money I have goes on subscribing to buy data. Being online enables me to connect with my friends. I use virtually all the common social networking sites, but WhatsApp an Instagram are the ones I use the most. If a new app comes out and my friends find it interesting. I am off to download it so I can interact and mingle.

RSE1: I generally use WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat. I almost never use Facebook because I run the risk of running into my parents and older family members there and that would be really awkward. Imagine I post something online and my teacher or aunty sees my posts. Old people like to monitor what we young people are doing. For what? I don't need them breathing on my neck. Even my WhatsApp status and Last Seen…. I have to prevent my parents and family members from viewing it. I am not a fan of older people knowing what I am up to.

RSS1: I watch a lot of videos on YouTube especially at night because my network allows a free YouTube nightly plan. Virtually everything under the sun exists as a YouTube video. I catch my fun a lot there.

RSW1: I use TikTok a lot and Snapchat. I love these platforms because they make me happy and help me to see how creative I can be. TikTok allows me to use filters to modify my features and create interesting effects, which I can share with my friends and followers. By the time they see what I am up to, they are

interested in seeing what I have to offer. In a matter of minutes, I can use the front camera of my phone to create a video for people to like and share. It doesn't even have to be long; 30 seconds is enough to produce an interesting content. If it's too long, people will lose interest. I don't even need to write too much, just me vibing to less than a minute of a trending song is good for me.

Based on the comments of the respondents, the result show that a wide variety of social media platforms are being used by Generation Z girls.

They are not fond of being monitored or corrected, as they intentionally avoid platforms on which their activities can be monitored, or find a way of restricting access to their online activities, for the platforms that they have to use. Also, they commented that their parents had insufficient understanding of the use of some of these platforms

Similarly, results reveal that Nigerian Gen Z girls use social media with caution only when they felt there could be repercussions or penalties from parents for misbehaviour. Otherwise on platforms where there was no guided adult supervision, all manner of content was created to fulfil their need for engagement and peer acceptance. Similarly, the comments of the respondents highlight that most Gen Z girls cannot commit to watching long videos, implying a short attention span. Similarly, night hours that should be spent sleeping and resting are engaged in being awake on social media.

These findings are in consonance with the findings of Ngonso (2019) and Olowo et al (2020) on use and applications of various social media platforms among young internet users.

The nature of activities carried out on social media platforms by female Generation Z in Nigeria

Based on their perception, the respondents were asked to indicate the nature of activities they engaged in while using social media.

The results revealed that majority of respondents believed that social media platforms were majorly for entertainment. They posited that if they needed assistance on classwork or assignments, Google was their friend. They only used the identified social media chat platforms to ask academic questions. While justifying the reason for this conduct, some explanations were offered. For instance, respondents indicated that:

RNC2: I can boldly say that I make use of social media platforms to chat with my friends and significant others to check up on what is going on in their lives. I love finding out about trending topics on Twitter or Instagram. I share memes to make social commentary and make people laugh. Nigeria is tough oh, lets lighten up a bit, please.

RNE2: Yes, for me, social media is all about fun and cruise. I laugh, I play, I enjoy myself and forget about the stress of school. There are so many short videos of people and skits creating content just to catch fun. You can't be sad on social media. Its laughter and vibes all the way.

Few respondents commented that they used social media for educational purposes like asking questions about assignments and purposeful learningvia YouTube. The positive uses to which social media engagement could result were hardly explored by this demographic.

RNW2: I hardly use social media for school work, except if I am stressed, and I just want to watch a YouTube video about what I want to learn about. Also, I can ask my colleagues if they have done their assignments from WhatsApp. Some open groups on Telegram also allow joining, but the stress is much if I don't have a direct link. I will rather use Google for my assignments

RSE2: Social media is my escape. There is a wide variety of what I use it to do, but majorly it is for stress release. When I come back from school after a long day, there is no better means of relaxing than checking what is trending on social media.

RSS2: I use social media for a wide variety of activities. It's a tool for recreation and entertainment and a means of keeping in touch with the world at large. All the apps have different uses, and I use them to see the trending latest designs for clothes, hairstyles, how to dress and so much more. Social media is like a big sister to me. It mentors me and makes me an ideal and relevant teenager.

RSW2: I use the commonly used social media sites like Instagram, WhatsApp and Twitter. I get a lot of information from there, but its majorly about life and fashion. I also use it to ask my

> *colleagues questions about school work, and assignments, but*
> *for me, it's more about enjoying myself.*

The findings of the study revealed that Nigerian Gen Z girls used readily social media majorly for entertainment, and while they also used it for school work, it was because they had no other easily accessible alternatives. The study is in agreement with earlier studies conducted on young internet users in Indonesia by Kominfo (2014) and more recent studies by Supratman (2018) who maintained that reasons children use the Internet and social media include seeking information, to connect with friends (old and new), and for entertainment, with virtually no educational benefit.

However, this is at variance with the findings of Serbanescu (2022) who maintained that Gen Z use Facebook and Instagram to stay informed about the world, and also to acquire additional knowledge. Nigerian Gen Z purposely avoid Facebook, and restrict access to what parents and guardians can view about them.

This is also in agreement with the findings of Oerther and Oerther (2021) in a study on available research for parents of digital natives who documented that there is need for more monitoring and mentoring by parents. This was also documented by Susilawati et al. (2021) who stated that teachers and parents hardly use social media as an educational tool.

To investigate the perception of female Generation Z towards online safety in Nigeria

Respondents were asked to indicate their perspective on how to maintain online safety. Findings revealed that respondents indicated that female Gen Z generally changed their passwords very frequently, so as to prevent unauthorised access to their media accounts. They maintained that generally they remembered their passwords, across a multiplicity of social media platforms. However, their perception towards understanding the implications of online predators and internet strangers reaching out to them was low. They did not understand that even deleted files and content, while they couldn't be accessed by them and their peers were still available on the Internet and could be accessed by hackers and individuals with superior technical skills. The general opinion of female Gen Z in Nigeria is that even though they have heard that the Internet has risks, the risks were far away from them because they were young.

Sequel to the aforementioned submissions, other explanations and

the perceptions of the risks involved in being online by respondents thus:

> *RNC3: I have different passwords that I use for my social media accounts. I hardly ever forget my password, and I change it very frequently. Sometimes, I log into my account on my friend's phone, or my friend can ask to use my phone. I can't forget my password. It is like forgetting my name. sometimes my sibling will use my phone, and I have to log out. So, forgetting my password rarely happens. I try to use the two-factor verification to keep my account safe. More than that, there is nothing else I do to maintain safety.*

> *RNE3: One of the reasons I love Snapchat is that once I send a message or video and my viewer looks at it, it is automatically deleted. This is another way that I am sure that my content is safe. They said that the Internet can be a very dangerous place, but for me, I am sure that I am safe.*

> *RNW3: I have online friends and followers that I have never seen before in my life. I don't see them as threats to me, because I am not the only person that they follow. I also follow people I haven't met before. Anybody can follow anybody, this is 2022. That's how we roll.*

> *RSE3: Online safety doesn't mean so much to me, there is no one to tell me about it. My teachers and parents are not that much active on social media, and I can hardly ask my elders about it I just pray that I don't become a victim of an online predator. I really don't know what the enemy is, and how to protect myself.*

> *RSS3: I have heard about online safety and I am aware of hackers and what they can do. But I am young and I don't have access to so much money, so I think I am safe. I am hardly likely to be a victim of online fraud.*

> *RSW3: Online safety hardly applies to me. I feel that the internet and social media is a safe place to be.*

The findings of the study revealed that the perception of female Generation Z towards online safety in Nigeria is barely adequate. While they seemed to understand the use of passwords in protecting their

social media accounts, they did not understand the implications of relating with online strangers. Similarly, findings revealed that while they did realise that they were vulnerable online, they had no idea on how to prevent themselves from the onslaughts of online predators, who were likely to take advantage of their naivete. The study is in consonance with the findings of Debb, Schaffer and Colson (2020) who similarly documented that Gen Z were more likely to perceive themselves as vulnerable to online victimization, perhaps due to their young ages and life inexperience

The perception of female Generation Z towards online followership on social media platforms in Nigeria

Respondents were asked to state their perceptions towards online followership among female Gen Z in Nigeria. Findings revealed that respondents indicated thus:

> *RNC4: Not only myself, a lot of us girls tend to admire accounts and handles with large amounts of followers, sometimes ranging into millions of followers. Once you have a high number of followers on Instagram or and other platform, you become and influencer, and as an influencer, other people can actually pay you promote their brand for them. Influencers like@papaya_ex has over a million followers on Instagram, she's a superstar!!! So many of them like that. I can create content and make videos of myself doing anything to increase my followership!! My parents are not aware of what I do, as long as I use small sense and don't disgrace the family, by the time my friends see me, imagine the likes and follows that I will get.*

> *RNE4: Oh Goodness! The popular girls in school are the ones who get likes and shares for their videos. It is so important to do what makes me feel accepted among my mates and friends. Even people that I don't know get to see my videos. When I am finally grown up and don't need to ask for mummy and daddy approval. I could be a video vixen, making mad money from what I love doing.*

> *RNW4: I like the idea of following someone on social media. If the person has similar ideas to what I like I follow them. I also like the idea of people following me on social media. The more followers signify that a person is in touch with what people*

like, and the influencer that has a lot of followers can actually dictate what their interests can be.

RSE4: Influencers dictate what we wear. We see them looking nice and make the same styles or outfits. For example, if my influencer likes a particular musician, it's possible that I may also like that music. The musician himself may even be an influencer himself. My generation is big on online following. My generation loves trendsetters.

RSS4: If only I could amass a wide followership and become an Instagram influencer. I could spend all my free time making videos. Even my parents will be glad to see the amount of money I could make from this, so long I stay within decency limits.

RSW4: online followership is very important. I follow people and people likewise follow me. The aim is to follow people that you have interest in, so that you can know more about their lives, and their likes and dislikes.

The results showed that the role played by influencers is of high relevance to female Generation Z, who see influencers and people with a high number of online followers as role models worthy of emulation. All respondents wished to have a large online followership, to ensure acceptance among their peers.

This is in consonance with the study of Newbert (2020) and earlier studies by Naidu (2018) who stated that generation Z were strongly influenced by the opinions of influencers in their use and activities on social media.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the widespread use of social media among young Nigerian females and the need for increased awareness of cyberethics. The findings indicate that peer influence plays a significant role in shaping the behavior of young people online, with many Generation Z females valuing the number of followers and likes over responsible and ethical behavior. The study also reveals a lack of awareness of the risks associated with online activity, particularly regarding the sharing of sexually suggestive content. Therefore, it is imperative for schools, organizations, and parents to prioritize educating young people about the dangers of irresponsible online behavior and to provide them with

the necessary tools to navigate the online world safely and ethically.

Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of fostering positive online behavior and creating a safe and inclusive digital environment for young people in Nigeria. By raising awareness of cyberethics and promoting responsible social media use, the risks associated with online activity can be mitigated to ensure that young people are equipped with the necessary tools to navigate the online world safely and responsibly.

Recommendations
Though participants of this study were drawn from all over Nigeria, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to the general population of Nigeria because of the method of sampling. However, in light of these findings, this study recommends the following:

1. Secondary School Administrators implement policies to ensure positive use of the Internet, not only as a source of entertainment during their free time at home, but also for acquiring vital life skills and improving education.
2. Modifications to school curricula to include correct use of social media and cyberethical awareness, with the goal of promoting appropriate cyberethical behaviour online.
3. Future research should consider systematic sample selection to further investigate the roles of cultural and psychosocial factors that influence parents' perspectives of parenting digital natives in homes around the globe.
4. Parents and caregivers should also adopt effective parenting techniques that promote societal awareness and caution against excessive early Internet exposure.
5. Societal awareness should be carried out with the goal of reinforcing the positive uses of social media among this generational cohort. This will result in a change in the online behaviour of Generation Z girls, which will have a direct impact on instilling and encouraging proper cyberethical conduct.

Ethical considerations
The authors have completely considered ethical issues, including informed consent, plagiarism, data fabrication, misconduct, and/or falsification, double publication and/or redundancy, submission, etc.

Conflicts of interests
The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.
Data availability

The dataset generated and analyzed during the current study is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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