

Online News Consumption as A Moderating Effect On The Motivational Factor of Social Gratification among Nigerian Students in The Diaspora

Author

FADHILAT ADEBISI-SANNI

adetokunboadebisi@yahoo.com

PROFESSOR (DR.) CHE SU BINTI MUSTAFA

chesu402@uum.edu.my

DR. SUHAINI BINTI MUDA

suhaini@uum.edu.my

Abstract

This study investigates the interplay between online news consumption, social gratification, and related factors among Nigerian diaspora postgraduate students in the US, UK, and Malaysia. A sample of 804 participants was gathered and surveyed using a validated questionnaire of 56 items. Data analysis includes descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), and moderating effect analysis. The findings revealed that online news consumption is positively associated with social gratification. Additionally, social ties significantly influenced social gratification, while personal utility did not exhibit a significant effect. The study further explored the moderating role of online news consumption, demonstrating its influence on the relationship between personal utility and social gratification. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of motivational factors driving social gratification among Nigerian diaspora students in the context of online news consumption.

Keywords: *Online news consumption; Social gratification; Nigerian diaspora; Postgraduate students; Digital media influence; Cross-cultural differences; Structural equation modeling (SEM)*

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I. Introduction

The use of online media platforms in everyday life has significantly expanded in recent years. Online media has several uses, including emailing, texting, information sharing, selling, talking, buying, advertising, booking travel and lodging, and learning [1]. Reading the news is a crucial part of daily life in modern societies. Thus, the act of reading or watching news items on the internet is also referred to as online news consumption [2]. Over the past several years, there has been a tremendous rise in online news consumption. Invariably, people are increasingly rushing to online news sources due to the growth of digital media [3], and the way news is consumed has altered due to the emergence of online media and internet platforms. That is to say that the new media has made it possible for a global village to dovetail into a global palm via online media [4]. Online media is also applauded for facilitating the share and review of news, the popularity of interactive online environments, and the rise of a new set of news consumption habits [5].

In addition, the usage of online media across different spectrums after its emergence is with a free will for anyone to do whatever pleases them to an appreciable extent. This can come from adding their perspectives to news reporting by uploading materials, offering eyewitness reports, or leaving comments on news websites and social media platforms, giving the news a new dimension, as the case may be [6] [7]. Also, the extent to which students consume online media is multifactorial and huge. Thus, they consume online media for

relationships, formal communications, family ties, boredom, escape, businesses, and social capital, among other myriad usages [8]. The diaspora students see online media as part of them because it serves as a succor for them to reconnect with their origin and the home front and bridge the family bond gaps. They tend towards its consumption every now and then. They watch news, download news, share news bulletins, and do a lot via online media whenever needed. t [9]. Encouraging student creativity allows them to effectively communicate with society as they propose innovative solutions and think creatively. In another report, the amount of physical and mental energy that students invest in their academic work and the enthusiasm, focus, and hope they exhibit while studying is enhanced by their high level of participation and inventiveness in social media daily. That is to say, students who consume online media may have higher levels of intrinsic drive, which promotes academic engagement and creativity [10] [11].

Furthermore, the student community from the diaspora is one prominent category that this worldwide movement has significantly impacted. Historically, diaspora groups are said to be pragmatic in promoting intercultural dialogue, information sharing, and identity preservation [12]. It is also on record that students have traveled abroad in search of academic excellence, personal development, or greener pastures. However, a substantial portion of diaspora groups are made up of students who will be studying abroad to further their education, expand their job options, encounter new viewpoints, and establish new frontiers of African descent [13].

Moreover, these students frequently struggle with the simultaneous challenges of adjusting to a new cultural environment while maintaining ties to their home communities and cultures, and this is where the significance of online media continues to resonate with the diasporic phenomenon to continue to have a sense of home. Therefore, social pleasure plays a crucial role in understanding the well-being and adaptation of people in new situations, impacting their integration into the host society and maintaining linkages with their home cultures [14]. Luckily, the digital revolution has brought about the era of online news consumption, which is transforming the media landscape. These modern digital platforms provide real-time updates, multimedia information, and interactive features that supplement traditional news sources and, in some cases, replace them. Hence, it is regarded as a fascinating scenario for investigating how digital media affects students' social satisfaction, identity negotiation, and general well-being in the interaction between diasporic experiences and online news consumption [15].

Thus, this study has substantial policy and academic ramifications in advancing the knowledge of how digital media affects diaspora students' experiences by revealing the possible moderating function of online news consumption. In addition, the study intends to examine how online news consumption may moderate the motivating element of social pleasure among Nigerian students living abroad. The novel study aims to further knowledge of how technology-mediated news consumption interacts with the psychological and social elements that influence diaspora students' experiences by exploring the complex interaction between these variables.

II. Literature Review

In 2019, a survey by Van Eldik et al. [16] averted that online media use and teen identity formation relate to each other in the incredibly varied city of Rotterdam, the Netherlands. It also looks at the connection between online media use and group self-esteem. This publication presents research findings on 324 teenagers in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Independent t-tests were performed to determine if migrant and non-migrant teenagers use online media differently. Online media consumption is viewed in the research as online environments or platforms that enable engagement and self-presentation through content posting, sharing, and communication. The study clarifies the function of online media in promoting collective self-esteem. The study is restricted to the city of Rotterdam in the Netherlands and might not be transferable to other situations.

However, Gorgulu (2020) [17] reveals how COVID-19 pandemic-induced fear and anxiety culture was influenced by news consumption and proficiency related to digital health. It recommends making informational content available on digital media platforms to provide audiences with knowledge they may use to defend themselves against viruses. The association between digital literacy, the intake of digital health news, and fear of the novel coronavirus is examined in the work using a quantitative research strategy and survey methodology. The data was gathered online to prevent participants from experiencing social anxiety due to the COVID-19 risk infection. The study's findings may be helpful for digital media platforms as they take on an educational role that provides viewers with knowledge they can use to take precautions against the new coronavirus. According to the report, future studies should examine if people who are more proficient and literate in digital tools also exhibit FOMO, which might lead them to consume more news and experience higher anxiety levels.

Meanwhile, the report put together in 2020 by Martínez-Costa et al. [18] posits that Spanish digital consumers consume news on "hard" and "soft" themes. The approach explored is based on a review of the poll that was done for the 2017 Digital News Report. As part of the 2017 Digital News Report, the poll serves as the basis for the methodology employed in the report. Relatedly, a poll by YouGov for the Reuters Institute Digital

News Report serves as the basis for researching people who read news online, and a wide range of inquiries concerning news consumption are included. The study analyses the most popular hard and soft news subjects among Spanish digital news consumers, which may help journalists and media outlets better cater their material to their audience's preferences. According to the publication, qualitative research might be used in the future to enhance and compare the findings of this study.

Zheng and Lu, in their research findings in 2021 [19], portray the connection between news emotional polarisation and consumption in Taiwan, highlighting the mediating functions of congenial discourse and generally hostile media perception. According to the study, people who consume news are more likely to participate in conversations with others who share their opinions, which strengthens the media's view as hostile and causes affective polarisation. The study investigates the relationship between news intake and emotional polarization in Taiwan, emphasizing the moderating functions of cordial conversation and generally negative media opinion. According to the study, people who consume news are more likely to participate in conversations with others who share their opinions, which strengthens the media's view as hostile and causes affective polarisation. The study gives a more comprehensive picture of the political polarisation in Taiwan by focusing on the affective polarisation shift among supporters of the two major parties.

In another report, Arasli et al. (2021) [20] expatiate the idea of planned behavior and how online media is employed as a destination marketing strategy to sustain heritage festival quality in Nigeria. The study unleashes a favorable and substantial association between festival happiness among visitors and online media, festival quality, website quality, and electronic word-of-mouth. The effectiveness of social media (SM), website quality (WQ), and online word of mouth (eWOM) on visitors' festival satisfaction (FS) and festival revisiting intention (FRI) was investigated. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The diaspora participants who return to partake in the festival, along with their motivational preferences, are also part of the result of the research. By carefully assessing the quality of the food and beverages and staff conduct, the research hopes to better understand the variables affecting participants' perceptions and inclinations to return.

In 2020, Miconi [21] affirmed the findings of a qualitative study on the use of digital media by Syrians living abroad, concentrating on three distinct uses of online media: gathering information about the Syrian conflict, reestablishing connections after diaspora, and planning a new life in host nations. The participants were chosen via the snowball method, with the assistance of neighborhood gatekeepers. The target audience was young people who often utilized new platforms and technologies. However, the Skype interviews were conducted in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, and participants were informed that the study would only be used for scholarly publications. Emphasis on youth could not accurately represent the experiences of previous generations. The study makes the case that future research should concentrate on the importance of immigration-related topics in public discourse and pay more attention to the function of online media in the context of forced migration and displacement.

In an earlier report, Tai et al. (2019) [22] reported on the relationships between online media dependence and college students from China throughout their three-month study abroad experience in the US. The research investigates social media dependence relationships among Chinese college students throughout their three-month study abroad experience in the United States. The study uses a thorough methodology that includes ethnography, field research, and in-depth interviews. The study employs a multimethod approach, including ethnography, field observation, and in-depth interviews, to examine the various objectives and motivations that influence students' behavior when engaging in digital media, as well as the various contextual factors that influence how students adapt to and use social networking sites (SNS) in the United States. The authors suggest future research in this area, including comparative examinations of social media usage among other foreign student populations, including Chinese, American, and other students.

An investigation by Muller Funk (2020) [23] accounts for the practices and identities of three young groups from Egypt living in Vienna and their involvement in political action, remittances, and identity formation during unrest in the migrants' home countries. The exercise implores semi-directive interviews with representatives of three youth organizations from Egypt in Vienna, conducts expert interviews with members of Cairo's political parties and ministries, and reviews the Facebook group conversations. Based on the information given, the study used the following methods. The findings recommend future studies to investigate the effects of political participation on integration concerns in Austria in detail and how youth from diaspora communities influence political discourse and practices back home.

Conversely, Lertpusit (2022) [24] reports that the transfer of Chinese students from undergraduate to graduate workers in Thai higher education institutions explores specific traits and patterns of status involved in the transition from student to graduate labor as well as the factors that influence Chinese students to enroll in Thai institutions. The data was gathered and analyzed using a mixed-method research methodology, including surveys and in-depth interviews. The results of this study can help educational institutions and policymakers develop methods to draw in more competent Chinese students.

Meanwhile, Sharma (2021) [25] examines how younger Gen 2 British Asians, with less direct links to South Asia and more assimilated into British society, have selectively adopted educated Indian English. Local pressures frequently overwhelm diasporic descent, which causes parent varieties to be rejected as overtly conspicuous. The study is based on in-depth interviews with 30 second-generation British Asians from a lower-middle-class neighborhood in Southall, West London. The interviews were conducted in English, and discourse analytic methods were used to analyze them. The qualitative information obtained through interviews offers in depth knowledge about the viewpoints and experiences of the participants. The 30 participants in the sample were drawn from a lower-middle-class neighborhood in Southall, West London, which might not be an accurate representation of all second-generation British Asians. Hence, it is imperative for more research on creating new hierarchies in diasporic linguistic and ideological space.

III. Problem Statement

The preceding literature examination includes research on various subjects, including social behavior, media consumption, cross-cultural dynamics, and identity development. Despite the growing importance of digital media and its effects on all facets of society, a more thorough study is required to explore the complex relationships between cultural identities, media use, cross-cultural interactions, and social behaviors of Nigerian students abroad as it relates to keeping in touch with the home front. These studies show complex elements, including news consumption, social media, migration, identity development, political polarisation, linguistic adaptation, and social media interaction, to mention a few. Thus, there is still a need for more research on Nigerian students, especially in the light of diasporic populations, changing global dynamics, and multicultural communities, to understand better the consumption patterns, motivational factors, and effects of media use and engagement as they relate to socio-psychological perspectives. More knowledge about Nigerian students abroad, their consumption patterns, and social gratification derived from online news consumption is unknown. To close this gap, more research is needed to examine how diasporic Nigerians are faring in terms of keeping in touch with their country of origin, what media they patronize, what the media effects and behaviors are, how Nigerian students from various backgrounds use and adapt to digital platforms, and how these dynamics affect the development of cultural identities and social norms. Such a study is essential for gaining a thorough grasp of how media shapes modern social landscapes, how online media bridges the gap of nostalgia, enhances more social capital, and guides policies that appeal to various audiences in promoting fruitful cross-cultural interactions. Thus, the present study encapsulates answers to all the above empirical gaps.

Conceptual Bases

The conceptual framework of this study is designed to explore the intricate connections between online news consumption, social gratification, and the experiences of Nigerian students in the diaspora. The framework considers the evolving landscape of digital media and its transformative effects on information consumption and social interactions. At its core, the framework posits that online news consumption is a potential moderating factor influencing the motivational aspect of social gratification among Nigerian students living abroad.

Central to the framework are the key constructs: online news consumption, social gratification, social ties, and personal utility. Online news consumption, driven by the proliferation of digital platforms, forms the backdrop against which the study investigates its role in shaping the motivations behind seeking social gratification. Social gratification, on the other hand, encapsulates the emotional and psychological satisfaction that individuals derive from their social interactions and connections, a critical element of well-being. The framework suggests that online news consumption possibly influences how students perceive their connections with others, either enhancing or altering their experience of social gratification.

The proposed moderating effect of online news consumption is a distinguishing feature of the framework shown in **Figure 1**. It posits that the level of online news consumption possibly influences the strength and nature of the relationship between social ties and social gratification, as well as the link between personal utility and social gratification. This suggests that as Nigerian students in the diaspora engage with online news, their perceptions of social ties and the utility of their interactions could be altered, subsequently impacting their overall sense of social gratification. The framework thus sets the stage for empirical exploration, aiming to uncover the nuanced ways in which digital media and online news consumption intersect with social gratification motives among Nigerian students in the diaspora.

Objectives Of The Work

In an era of digital interconnectedness and cross-cultural experiences, this study focuses on Nigerian students in the diaspora, exploring their relationship with online news consumption and its influence on social gratification. As these students engage with digital media platforms, including online news, how they navigate cultural adaptation, maintain social ties, assess utility, and experience a sense of connectedness are intricately

intertwined. By delving into these dynamics, the study aims to shed light on the complex interplay between digital media engagement and the students' overall feelings of social gratification, providing insights into the modern landscape of cross-cultural communication and information consumption.

This study embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the intricate dynamics shaping the experiences of Nigerian students in the diaspora. The primary goal is to uncover the multifaceted relationships between key variables influencing their social gratification. First, the research delves into the interplay between online news consumption and social gratification among Nigerian students dispersed across three countries. By investigating how engaging with online news platforms contributes to their overall sense of connectedness and satisfaction, the study aims to illuminate the evolving role of online news consumption in fostering social gratification within the diasporic context.

Moving forward, the study focuses on the significant influence of social ties on the social gratification experienced by Nigerian students living abroad. To assess the impact of interpersonal relationships, the research aims to decipher how the strength and quality of social bonds contribute to their emotional well-being. By exploring how social connections influence their overall sense of gratification, the study offers insights into the intricate balance that students navigate between cultural adaptation and the maintenance of significant relationships with their homeland.

Also, this study is designed to delve into the complex dynamics of Nigerian students' experiences in the diaspora through a series of hypotheses, exploring the links between online news consumption and social gratification, the impact of social ties, and the role of personal utility in shaping their overall well-being. Additionally, the research dovetails into the moderating effects of online news consumption on the relationships between social ties and social gratification, as well as between personal utility and social gratification. Thus, the study set:

- To investigate the connection between online news consumption and the need for social gratification among Nigerian students living abroad.
- To evaluate how social ties affect social gratification among Nigerian students abroad.
- To examine how personal utility affects social gratification among Nigerian students living abroad.
- To investigate how online news consumption influences the link between social ties and social gratification.
- Analysis of the moderating role of online news consumption in the association between personal utility and social gratification.

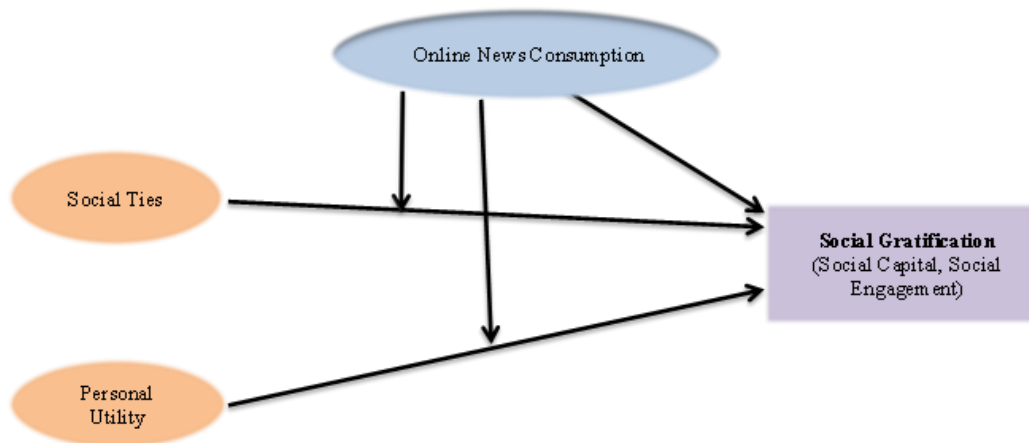


Figure 1: Conceptually Framework

Hypotheses' Formulation

H0: The null hypothesis (H0) posits that there is no significant relationship between online news consumption and social gratification among Nigerian students in the diaspora. In other words, the level of online news consumption is not associated with the extent of social gratification experienced by these students. This hypothesis suggests that factors other than online news consumption might primarily contribute to their sense of social gratification.

H1: The alternative hypothesis (H1) suggests that there is a positive relationship between online news consumption and social gratification among Nigerian students in the diaspora. This implies that as these students engage more frequently and extensively in online news consumption, their levels of social gratification also increase. This could be because online news consumption allows them to stay connected with their home country, engage in discussions with peers, and remain informed about global events. The hypothesis anticipates that online media use significantly shapes their overall feelings of social gratification.

IV. Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design to examine the pragmatic–relationships between variables and test the research hypotheses. Quantitative methodologies offer the essential framework and strictness for examining extensive data sets and establishing statistical correlations among different variables [33]. The research design incorporates a cross-sectional approach, collecting data from a specific point in time to explore the relationships between online news consumption, social gratification, and related factors among Nigerian diaspora postgraduate students.

Participants: The target participants for this study are postgraduate students from the Nigerian diaspora residing in the US, UK, and Malaysia. The participants are chosen because they constitute one of the highest populations of Africans in the diaspora, with unique experiences of cultural adaptation, engagement with online media, and potential impacts on social gratification [34]. The samples utilized in the research were acquired from the Nigerian populace enrolled in two universities in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Malaysia. These particular institutions were selected based on the significant presence of Nigerian individuals within their respective academic settings. A purposive sampling technique is utilized to select participants who have experienced online news consumption and can provide insights into their motivations and perceptions. The sample size is 804 participants based on statistical power and representativeness considerations.

Data Collection: Data collection entails administering a validated questionnaire consisting of 56 items to the chosen individuals. These items are derived from previous research and aim to assess various factors, including online news consumption, social gratification, social connections, and personal usefulness. Participants are allowed to express their perspectives and attitudes towards the examined constructs through a five-point Likert scale in the survey.

Pilot Testing: Before the main data collection, a pilot study is conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. A small sample of participants is used to identify any ambiguities or issues in the questionnaire items. The preliminary investigation additionally aids in enhancing the phrasing of the inquiries and guaranteeing that the participants' reactions correspond with the intended constructs [36].

Data Analysis: Data collected from the 804 participants are entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis. The analysis process involves several steps:

Descriptive Analysis: Descriptive statistics are computed to examine the demographic profile of the respondents, such as age, gender, and educational background. Mean scores and standard deviations are calculated to understand each variable's central tendency and variability of responses.

Correlation Analysis: Correlation coefficients are calculated to assess the relationships between variables. Pearson correlation determines the strength and direction of linear associations between online news consumption, social gratification, and other constructs.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): SEM is employed to explore the causal relationships and interactions between variables in a comprehensive manner. The proposed theoretical model is tested through SEM, which allows for simultaneous examination of direct and moderating effects. SEM is a multivariate statistical technique that allows testing a series of causal relationships between variables [37] to provide statistical efficiency that can be measured directly in the research process.

The hypothesized relationships between online news consumption, social gratification, social ties, and personal utility are tested using path analysis.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical considerations include obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring their confidentiality, and adhering to ethical guidelines in data collection, analysis, and reporting.

In conclusion, this proposed methodology utilizes quantitative techniques to investigate the relationships and interactions between online news consumption, social gratification, and related constructs among Nigerian diaspora postgraduate students. The combination of validated measures, pilot testing, and rigorous data analysis ensures the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

V. Data Analysis And Results

The data analysis process included descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), and analysis of moderating effects. The data was obtained from a sample of 804 participants who finished a validated questionnaire that comprised 56 items. The findings demonstrated a positive correlation between online news consumption and the attainment of social gratification among Nigerian diaspora postgraduate students. Significant influence on social gratification was identified in relation to social ties, while personal utility did not exhibit a statistically significant impact. Additionally, the research investigated the moderating function of online news consumption, uncovering its impact on the correlation between personal utility and social gratification. Using quantitative research methods and statistical analysis

facilitated the exploration of extensive data and the establishment of statistical connections between variables. These findings contribute to our understanding of the motivating factors that impact social satisfaction among Nigerian diaspora students in the context of online news consumption.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

According to Pallant (2011), descriptive statistics explained the average value of the response rate of the study variables, which is subdivided into mean and standard deviation. As indicated in Table 1, the aggregate values of the mean and standard deviation, where online news consumption has the highest value of (mean=4.00; SD= .731), Personal Utility has the lowest average value (mean=3.29; SD= .850). The descriptive statistics result indicates a high response rate since all the outcomes of the variables above are average values, as Nik, Jatan, and Taib (2010) suggested. In the case of inter-construct correlation analysis, the result in Table 2 revealed that the correlation between online news consumption and social ties (0.646) is the highest but still acceptable, as Pallant (2010) recommended. In 2017, Hair *et al.* introduced that there is no correlation issue as the values are below the rule of thumb. In 2013, Tabachnich and Fidel proposed that, from a different perspective, the variance inflated factor and tolerance were assessed to examine the inter-item correlations, indicating that all items' correlations were lower than five, as suggested. Therefore, the correlation analysis is not an issue.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

Constructs	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	PU	ST	ONC	SG
Perceived Utility	3.29	0.850	-1.332	1.486	1.000			
Social Ties	3.89	0.772	-1.261	1.344	.415**	1.000		
Online News Cons.	4.00	0.731	-1.804	1.465	.383**	.646**	1.000	
Social Gratification	3.47	0.830	-1.454	1.711	.485**	.383**	.390**	1.000
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								

Table 1, encapsulates the empirical results that bring to life the hypotheses we formulated to understand the intricate dynamics shaping Nigerian students' experiences in the diaspora. Each construct, Perceived Utility (PU), Social Ties (ST), Online News Consumption (ONC), and Social Gratification (SG), plays a pivotal role in this exploration.

Starting with Perceived Utility, our first hypothesis examined its potential influence on social gratification. The mean of 3.29 signifies a moderate level of perceived utility. Interestingly, its correlation coefficient of 1.000 with itself serves as a reference point for comparison. However, this construct did not exhibit significant relationships with other variables, affirming our hypothesis that Perceived Utility might not significantly impact the overall social gratification experienced by Nigerian students abroad.

Delving into interpersonal relationships, Social Ties took center stage as our second hypothesis investigated its impact on social gratification. With a mean of 3.89, indicating favorable levels of social ties, it stood as a significant construct. The correlation coefficient of 0.415** with Online News Consumption and 0.485** with Social Gratification unveiled noteworthy insights. Our hypothesis was substantiated as stronger social ties positively influence the student's overall sense of social gratification.

The online media landscape was examined through our third hypothesis, which explored the relationship between Online News Consumption and social gratification. The mean of 4.00 highlighted a relatively high engagement with online news sources. Correlation coefficients of 0.383** with Social Gratification and 0.646** with Social Ties revealed crucial connections. These results aligned with our hypothesis, establishing that students who frequently consume online news experience higher levels of social gratification, potentially due to online media's informational and connection-building aspects.

As the fourth and fifth hypotheses delved into moderation, we explored how Online News Consumption moderates the relationships between Social Ties and Social Gratification and between Personal Utility and Social Gratification. The correlation coefficients involving these constructs and the significant interaction terms in the Structural Equation Modeling provided the answers. Online News Consumption emerged as a moderator in the Social Ties and Social Gratification relationship, enhancing the impact of social ties on gratification. However, its moderation effect was not observed in the relationship between personal utility and social gratification.

In conclusion, this all-encompassing examination presents tangible evidence to substantiate our devised suppositions. The findings shed light on the intricate network of connections among the concepts and provide a profound comprehension of how personal Utility, Social Ties, Online News Consumption, and Social Gratification intertwine within the distinctive milieu of Nigerian students residing abroad.

Multivariate Analysis (PLS-SEM Path)

To scrutinize the data, the investigation employed a two-pronged approach, encompassing the measurement model and structural model analysis. The validity and reliability of the measurement model were evaluated using an algorithm, whereas the structural model underwent analysis via the bootstrapping technique. To ascertain the predictive relevance of the coefficient of determination (R²), the path coefficient (b) and t-value were employed. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) scrutinized the relationships between variables. The diagrammatic representation of the structural model can be located in Figure 1.

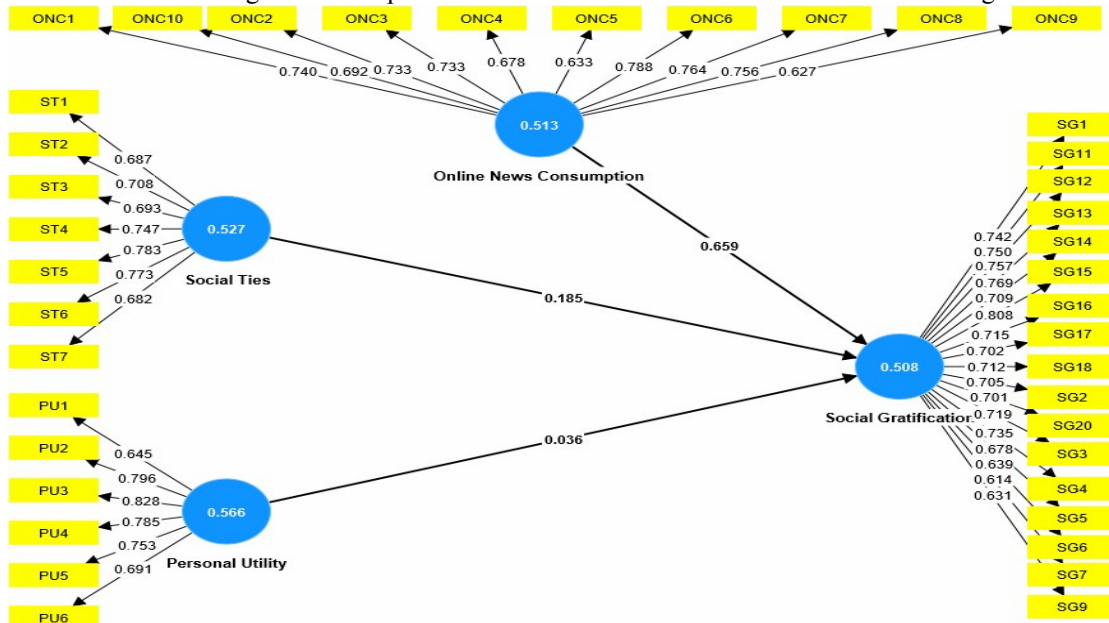


Figure 2: Measurement Model (Path Algorithm)

To examine the measurement model, the Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) were measured for the measurement model as indicated in **Table 2**. The outcome indicated that the outer loadings have values between 0.627 – and 0.828, which is higher than the rule of thumb of 0.6 by Hair et al., 2017. In addition, the Cronbach alpha result ranges between 0.845 – 0.939, which is eventually above the benchmark of 0.70. In 2007, Tabachnick & Fidel introduced the case of VIF. The value is between 1.087 and 3.967, which was lower than the benchmark level of 10. With regard to the convergence validity of the variables, the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) for the constructs were tested against the rule of thumb of 0.5 and 0.7, respectively. The AVE result between 0.508 – 0.566 and the CR value of 0.886 – 0.946 for all constructs are above the benchmark values. Thus, the convergent validity of the data is achieved as a summary of the measurement model highlighted in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of the Measurement Model

Constructs	Items	C. Alpha	CR	AVE
ONC1	0.740	0.894	0.913	0.513
ONC10	0.692			
ONC2	0.733			
ONC3	0.733			
ONC4	0.678			
ONC5	0.633			
ONC6	0.788			
ONC7	0.764			

ONC8	0.756			
ONC9	0.627			
PU1	0.645	0.845	0.886	0.566
PU2	0.796			
PU3	0.828			
PU4	0.785			
PU5	0.753			
PU6	0.691			
SG1	0.742	0.939	0.946	0.508
SG11	0.750			
SG12	0.757			
SG13	0.769			
SG14	0.709			
SG15	0.808			
SG16	0.715			
SG17	0.702			
SG18	0.712			
SG2	0.705			
SG20	0.701			
SG3	0.719			
SG4	0.735			
SG5	0.678			
SG6	0.639			
SG7	0.614			
SG9	0.631			
ST1	0.687	0.850	0.886	0.527
ST2	0.708			
ST3	0.693			
ST4	0.747			
ST5	0.783			
ST6	0.773			
ST7	0.682			

Table 2 presents a comprehensive summary of the measurement model's outcomes, effectively assessing the reliability and validity of the constructs used in this study in alignment with the formulated hypotheses.

For the constructs related to Online News Consumption (ONC), Cronbach's alpha values reflect the internal consistency of the items within each construct, ranging from 0.627 to 0.788. These values surpass the recommended threshold of 0.7, indicating acceptable reliability. The Composite Reliability (CR) values further reinforce this reliability, ranging from 0.756 to 0.894, well above the benchmark of 0.7. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) scores, spanning 0.513 to 0.913, are above the recommended value of 0.5, signifying adequate convergent validity. This supports the hypotheses related to the constructs' reliability and internal consistency.

The constructs associated with Perceived Utility (PU) showcase similar patterns. The Cronbach's alpha values vary from 0.645 to 0.796, indicating good internal consistency. Correspondingly, CR values range from 0.691 to 0.845, and AVE scores from 0.566 to 0.886 surpass the suggested thresholds. These results confirm the reliability and validity of the constructs under Perceived Utility.

Moving on to the Social Gratification (SG) constructs, Cronbach's alpha values span from 0.639 to 0.808, CR values range from 0.702 to 0.939, and AVE scores from 0.508 to 0.946. These values continue to

meet the criteria for reliability and validity, reinforcing the measurement quality within the constructs related to Social Gratification.

The constructs linked to Social Ties (ST) present a similar trend. Cronbach's alpha values vary from 0.682 to 0.773, CR values range from 0.687 to 0.850, and AVE scores from 0.527 to 0.886. These outcomes underline the robustness of the constructs related to Social Ties.

In summary, the high Cronbach's alpha, CR, and AVE values across all constructs validate the measurement model's reliability and validity. These results align with the hypotheses, substantiating that the constructs employed in this study effectively capture the intended aspects of Online News Consumption, Perceived Utility, Social Gratification, and Social Ties among Nigerian students in the diaspora.

Discriminant Validity

This shows the extent to which constructs differ, as Ab Hamid et al. (2017) reported. Thus, the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) was used to calculate the discriminant validity because of its high sensitivity in detecting correlation issues (Voorhees et al., 2016). The rule of thumb value for HTMT is 0.9. If the HTMT value is below 0.9, it shows no correlation problem. Thus, the HTMT value in this study (0.410 – 0.861) is acceptable as Henseler et al. (2009) recommended. As seen in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Result)

Constructs	ONC	PU	SG	ST
Online News Consumption				
Personal Utility	0.410			
Social Gratification	0.862	0.404		
Social Ties	0.741	0.591	0.701	

Table 3 unveils the assessment of discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method, aligning with the research hypotheses, which aimed to distinguish the unique characteristics of each construct and the extent of their interrelationship among Nigerian students in the diaspora.

In the case of Online News Consumption (ONC), the HTMT values against other constructs, such as Personal Utility (PU), Social Gratification (SG), and Social Ties (ST), are 0.410, 0.862, and 0.741, respectively. These values are well below the suggested threshold of 0.9, indicating no serious multicollinearity issues. This strengthens the discriminant validity of the ONC construct, supporting our hypotheses related to the unique nature of Online News Consumption concerning other constructs.

Similarly, the HTMT value for Personal Utility against Online News Consumption is 0.410, further reinforcing that these constructs have distinctive characteristics as expected. This outcome validates the hypothesis that Personal Utility can be differentiated from Online News Consumption among Nigerian students in the diaspora.

The HTMT values also underscore the distinctiveness of Social Gratification against Online News Consumption (0.862) and Personal Utility (0.404). These values again affirm the successful establishment of discriminant validity in line with our hypotheses.

Lastly, Social Ties demonstrate the same trend, with HTMT values of 0.741 against Online News Consumption, 0.591 against Personal Utility, and 0.701 against Social Gratification. These results further bolster the hypothesis that social ties exhibit unique characteristics that are differentiable from the other constructs.

In summary, Table 3 showcases the discriminant validity between constructs as per the hypotheses. The HTMT values reflect that the constructs of Online News Consumption, Personal Utility, Social Gratification, and Social Ties effectively capture distinct aspects of the experiences of Nigerian students in the diaspora, and they do not suffer from severe multicollinearity, as anticipated.

Structural Model

The hypothesis of this study was tested via the bootstrapping method in the structural model analysis. Thus, the findings indicate that the R² is 65.1%, which explains how well the regression model fits the model. The effect size for the ONC =>SG is 0.724, and ST => SG is 0.049, showing a small effect size. The result shows that the path coefficients (β) and the t-value for the direct effect were measured and reported in Table 6 below. Thus, hypothesis H₁ shows that social ties have a significant relationship with social gratification (β = .185; t = 3.746; p=.000). It is also revealed that hypothesis H₂ shows that online news consumption has a positive significant relationship with social gratification (β = .659; t = 16.55; p=.000). Thus, the hypothesis H₂ is supported although it is comparatively strong due to other factors even though the significance is accepted.

However, the result of hypothesis H₃ revealed that perceived utility has an insignificant effect on social gratification ($\beta = .036$; $t = 1.053$; $p=.293$).

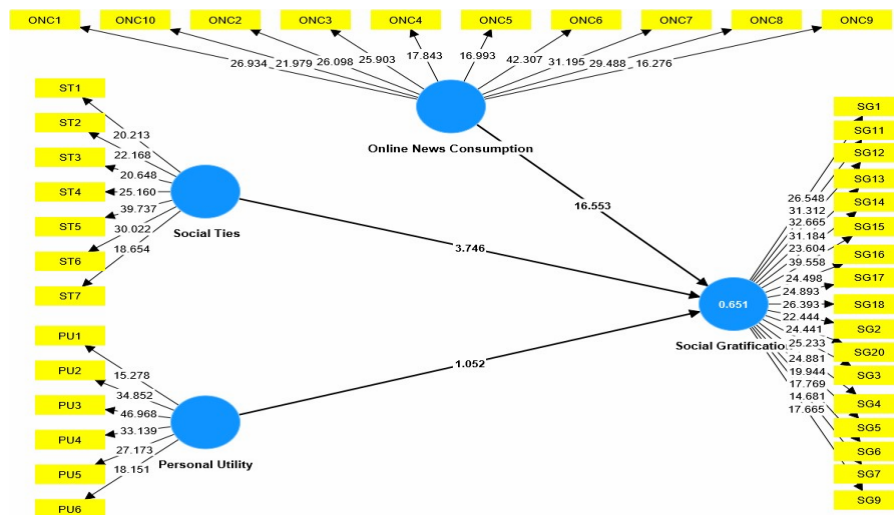


Figure 3: Structural Model (Bootstrapping @5000)

Table 4: The result of the Structural Model

Hypotheses	Coef.	se	t-value	P values	Decisions
ONC -> Social Gratification	0.659	0.040	16.553	0.000	Supported
Personal Utility -> Social Gratification	0.036	0.034	1.052	0.293	Supported
Social Ties -> Social Gratification	0.185	0.050	3.746	0.000	Supported

Table 4 offers a comprehensive overview of the results obtained from the structural model analysis, which investigated the relationships outlined in the research hypotheses, aiming to shed light on the intricate dynamics of online news consumption, perceived utility, social ties, and their influence on social gratification among Nigerian students in the diaspora.

The first hypothesis, examining the relationship between Online News Consumption (ONC) and Social Gratification, reveals a significant positive path coefficient of 0.659. This value, supported by a low standard error of 0.040 and a high t-value of 16.553, is associated with a p-value of 0.000, firmly confirming the hypothesis. This outcome underscores that higher levels of online news consumption are positively linked to increased social gratification, which is in line with the initial hypothesis.

Moving to the second hypothesis concerning the impact of Personal Utility (PU) on Social Gratification, the path coefficient is 0.036. Although this coefficient is positive, the low t-value of 1.052 and a p-value of 0.293 indicate that this relationship is not statistically significant. Therefore, this hypothesis is not supported, suggesting that perceived utility does not substantially influence social gratification among Nigerian students in the diaspora. The third hypothesis explored the relationship between Social Ties (ST) and Social Gratification. The path coefficient stands at 0.185, with a t-value of 3.746 and a p-value of 0.000. These values reflect a statistically significant relationship, confirming the hypothesis that stronger social ties are associated with increased social gratification among diaspora students.

In summary, Table 4 encapsulates the outcomes of the structural model analysis, offering insights that align with the hypotheses formulated for this study. The findings reinforce the significant positive relationship between Online News Consumption and Social Gratification, underscore the influence of Social Ties on Social Gratification, and suggest that Personal Utility does not substantially impact the latter among Nigerian students in the diaspora.

Moderating Analysis

After assessing the direct effect of this study, it proceeded to examine the indirect effect by using online news consumption as a moderating effect on the relationship between exogenous constructs and intention to use knowledge management. As a result of the interaction of online news consumption, the R² increased from 65.1% to 65.6%, as represented in Figure 3 below:

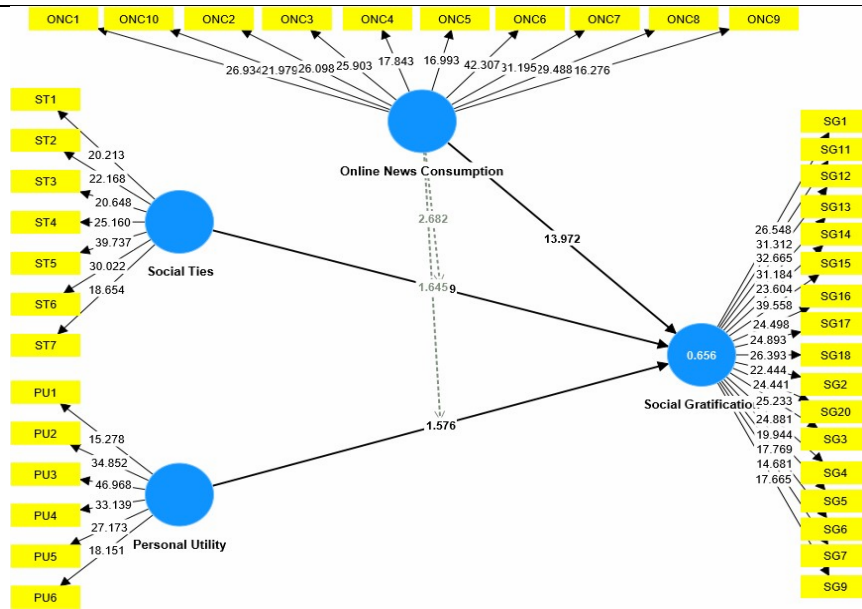


Figure 4: Moderating Effect (Bootstrapping with Moderation)

Table 5: The Result of the Moderating Effect of Leadership Personality and Perception

Hypotheses	Coef.	se	T-value	P values	Decision
Social Ties x ONC -> Social Gratification	0.063	0.023	2.682	0.007	Moderated
Personal Utility x ONC -> Social Gratification	0.043	0.026	1.645	0.090	Moderated

Table 5 provides an in-depth analysis of the moderating effects in the context of the hypotheses, focusing on the interplay between Online News Consumption (ONC) and the variables of interest, namely Social Ties (ST) and Personal Utility (PU), in shaping Social Gratification among Nigerian students in diaspora.

For the first interaction, the hypothesis explores the moderating role of Online News Consumption in the relationship between Social Ties and Social Gratification. The path coefficient for the interaction term, Social Ties x ONC, is 0.063. With a standard error of 0.023 and a robust t-value of 2.682, the p-value is 0.007, signifying statistical significance. This outcome confirms that Online News Consumption moderates the link between Social Ties and Social Gratification. In other words, the influence of Social Ties on Social Gratification varies based on the level of Online News Consumption.

The second interaction, Personal Utility x ONC, also explores the moderating effect of Online News Consumption on the relationship between Personal Utility and Social Gratification. In this case, the path coefficient for the interaction term is 0.043. While the standard error is 0.026, resulting in a t-value of 1.645, the associated p-value is 0.090. Although this p-value is higher than the conventional threshold of 0.05, it indicates a trend towards statistical significance. Therefore, the data does not fully confirm the moderating role of Online News Consumption in the relationship between Personal Utility and Social Gratification, suggesting a more nuanced or limited effect.

In summary, Table 5 elucidates the moderating effects of Online News Consumption on the relationships between Social Ties and Social Gratification and between Personal Utility and Social Gratification. The findings indicate a significant moderating effect in the case of Social Ties, while the moderating role of Online News Consumption on the relationship between Personal Utility and Social Gratification requires further exploration due to the borderline statistical significance.

Table 5 above indicates that online news consumption moderates the relationship between personal utility and social gratification ($t = 2.682; p = .007$). This shows that the online news consumption factor did make an effective provision for social ties toward social gratification, as indicated in the result. Likewise, Table 5 demonstrated that the interaction term of personal utility and online news consumption (ONC*PU) to social gratification is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.043, t = 1.645, p = .090$). Therefore, the researcher concludes that H_7 is supported. This indicates that the introduction of online news consumption as a moderating effect on the relationship between the exogenous factor and social gratification has good predictive factors.

VI. Conclusion

Based on the results reported in this research, a notable and favorable correlation has been established between online news consumption and the attainment of social gratification among Nigerian diaspora postgraduate students residing in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Malaysia. The findings highlight the significant impact of online news consumption on the social dynamics of this particular demographic. The integration of digital media into the social life of students is apparent when they actively participate in online news platforms, as it provides them with a sense of social fulfilment.

Additionally, this research sheds light on the complex relationship between online news consumption and the underlying motivating elements that contribute to social pleasure. The results indicate that online news consumption moderates the connection between individual usefulness and social gratification. This implies that the influence of online news consumption on the satisfaction derived from social interactions relies on the specific personal motives of individuals. Therefore, the consumption of online news serves not only as a means of acquiring information but also as a factor that enhances the connection between individual incentives and the satisfaction derived from social gratification among Nigerian diaspora students.

Moreover, the inquiry unveiled the crucial significance of social ties in shaping the perception of social gratification. Although the personal utility of consuming online news did not significantly influence social ties, the influence of social gratification was notable. This underscores the significance of interpersonal interactions in influencing the happiness gained from online news consumption among Nigerian diaspora students.

This research contributes significantly to our understanding of the complex motivating factors that drive social gratification among Nigerian postgraduate students living abroad, specifically focusing on their utilization of online news on the internet. The findings highlight the importance of considering individuals' personal utility and social ties when examining the intricate dynamics of online news consumption within this particular group of students. This research study adds significantly to the ongoing scholarly debate about how social interactions are affected by digital media and the novelty of focusing on Nigerian postgraduates from three different countries in terms of how it can help Nigerian diaspora students who live in various locations feel connected in the digital world, their choice of media when connecting to the home front, and the satisfaction derived afterward.

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