

Article

# Potentials for Digitized Visual Arts in Promoting Digital Culture in Nigeria and Other Developing Nations

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## Abstract

The study aimed to explore the potential of digitized visual arts in enhancing the digital culture in developing nations like Nigeria. The study adopted a qualitative research design that involved the collection and analysis of data from primary and secondary sources based on the descriptive survey method. The study collected primary data through interviews using a purposive sampling technique to select participants for the interviews. The sample of the population was made up of 134 participants comprised of 57 males and 77 females, from Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Cameroon, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom. The instrument for collecting data was an Android phone recorder as well as social media platforms like WhatsApp Calls and Messengers, Instagram, Telegram, and Facebook. The study also collected secondary data through a review of relevant literature, reports, and other documents from journals, books, and the Internet. The study found that digitized visual arts have the potential to generate economic opportunities, promote culture and identity, enhance education, and promote social cohesion in Nigeria. However, the study also identified several challenges that need to be addressed to fully realize the potential of visual arts in digitization, including inadequate infrastructure, limited access to technology, and a lack of digital skills. The study recommends that Nigeria should invest in infrastructure development, promote digital skills development, and support the growth of the visual arts industry to fully realize the potential of visual arts in digitization.

**Keywords:** Digital culture, developing nations, visual arts

## Introduction

Although it may seem that digitization is killing originality and conditioning, and restricting the human ability to create and reason without being restricted to programmed software or methods, there are different advantages of digitization in contemporary society. Digitized visual arts in the context of this study are the artistic works or practices that use digital technology for the production or exhibition process. This includes a variety of techniques such as digital drawings, printing, paintings, illustrations, photography, animation, movies, and sculptures, as long as they are made, improved, or displayed digitally. Digital culture, on the other hand, depicts the significant ways in which technology is transforming human culture and society. These aspects respectively create room for the emergence of new community, identity, privacy, and social life requirements of people in contemporary societies. As such, to succeed in the twenty-first century and manage social life, it is vital to have a solid understanding of digital culture. This means digital culture refers to the behaviours, beliefs, and life patterns that the age of digital technology and internet connectivity has introduced to society. It is a period that is commonly characterized by global connections through cell phones, the wireless internet, and other technological enhancements.

Digital culture has changed the perception of time and space. It has transformed the way people do work, communicate, and interact with each other. The system has



also transformed and streamlined many aspects of life, enabling people to more easily obtain fulfillment with less stress, in less time, and from anywhere. The system is characterized by the effectiveness of user-generated material and participatory culture, made possible by websites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and many more. Furthermore, it enhances and creates rooms for virtual communities and social networking through digital spaces like chat rooms, games, and social media to facilitate new forms of community with different identities and relationships. These platforms are also tools that diffuse cultural authority to create a more autonomous space for social engagement commonly called social media.

Based on these attributes, it is obvious that digital culture is globally taking over the workplace in all fields of human endeavour. It is completely changing the way we access information, work together, develop, and offer services. In terms of decision-making and execution, it has also produced varying degrees of agility, adaptability, and a data-driven attitude. It involves developing efficient methods for establishing the proper goals and objectives while utilizing more flexible necessary resources to foster accountability, impact, self-sufficiency, speed, and open values. In aggregate, therefore, the term "digital culture" refers to the material, social, and cultural statuesque of life that are intermediated by digital technologies. These aspects include attitudes toward time, space, and place, the creation of virtual communities, and the formation of personal identities which many scholars refer to as a form of social life that is centered around new media behaviours.

On the other hand, the advent of digital technology which can be regarded as the lubricant and driving force of digital culture and digitization is one of the major factors influencing the process of digitization. It is a triumph factor that showcases how people participate in society as well as how they consume information through interaction with digital technology, one another, the outside world, the environment, and themselves. In contemporary society, technology is gradually becoming a personal instrument that is influencing our self-perception in addition to being useful for work, study, and other aspects of life. Today, it is apparent that most aspects of the modern world will not function properly or totally without certain forms of technology. Nevertheless, many societies are reluctant to pick up the skills necessary to operate or learn how to use technology due to different reasons ranging from lack of digital facilities, a nonchalant attitude towards the need for technology, technological proficiency, as well as the decision about what kind of relationship they wish to have with technology.

Societies who hunger for a more active relationship with technology, and are interested in learning how to encrypt or use technology are significantly using digital tools and other aspects of technology to shape their experience, progress, and development. This is helping them to enjoy key opportunities that characterize the digital age. It is also creating avenues for the enhanced and more functional aspect of socialization and information to be able to solve sophisticated challenges through universal internet access to education, universal collaboration with the global society, and communication through digital platforms that are connecting people across geographies and cultures, economic growth through digital transformation that are driving entrepreneurship and other related fields in a more

convenient, time efficient, and with less stress. Most of these achievements are carried out through the automation of different programmed applications (Apps), innovation through networks, open-source tech and security, and empowerment of individuals to have a global voice through social media and digital engagement.

As it was in the prehistoric period, from the Stone Age to the Industrial Revolution. The digital culture has brought about the Digital Age which is frequently changing the ways things are done in society in the contemporary epochs. These changes are also coming with a lot of challenges as many societies do not have the prerequisites, adequate infrastructure, and facilities to adjust accordingly to the new age. Many studies on the digital age present it as the Information Age characterized by the transferal and advanced modifications from the traditional native industry that was projected by the Industrial Revolution and transformed through industrialization, to an economy with more sophisticated information technology (Adeyinka, et al., 2020). It has also been regarded as the time frame in history when the use of digital technology became predominant and common to supplement, fasten, and effectively carry out more technical processes in customer services and products throughout the world. The pinnacle of the digital age commenced solemnly with the introduction and widespread use of computerized or automated appliances and with the advent and utilization of the Internet in production and communication (Beck & Hughes, 2013).

Currently, the digital age has brought about a new wave of cultural changes and advancements in developed and developing nations. Credit to the internet which has transformed technology through computers, smartphones, and social media services. This has significantly shifted and redirected the way things are done in the present times. It has also created the foundation for the elements, and principles of cultural and creative industries to be considered an essential source of innovation and contributor to national wealth. Consequently, the cultural and creative industries are generating high consideration at the local and international levels, due to the interconnectivity of new media technologies (De-Miguel-Molina, et al., 2012). In developing countries, the rise of technology has seen an increase in access to information and communication that is leading these countries to modification of their traditional cultures to be able to gain more visibility. As such, it is important to understand how digital culture is impacting developing nations and what benefits this may have in the future using Nigeria as an example.

According to Babalola (2014), a country's economic status quo may be the factor that will boost its link with digital activities. Compared to low-income countries, high-income countries may see a higher rate of participation in digital activities. Investigating Nigeria's digital culture as a developing nation to elucidate the reasons behind the gaps between digital literacy and digital humanities activities, the author looked into the issues that internet users in the nation face and the reasons behind them. She discovered that, despite the volume of digital activity occurring in the nation, there doesn't seem to be any academic focus on digital humanities. In its conclusion, the study made recommendations for how digital humanities might be applied to Nigerian digital culture, particularly in the field of education.

Nigeria is greatly improving in the use and adoption of digitization to be able to meet up with the impact of digital culture in contemporary society. The country as a developing nation is faced with numerous challenges like corruption, inadequate infrastructure, poor maintenance culture, poor security network, poverty, and many more. Although, the Nigerian government is taking steps to address these issues through the implementation of policies that are geared towards the promotion of adequate security, economic growth, and poverty reduction with some level of involvement in the use of digital culture and technological patterns. There is, however, much work to be done for Nigeria to be compared with the developed nation in the aspects of digital culture because the country's digital culture development is slow and often met with nonchalant attitudes towards digitization.

Nigeria is commonly called the Giant of Africa with a vibrant future in human capacity, capital, and natural resources. The country is also known for its numerous art traditions and cultures. However, despite these qualities, the country lacks institutional backing and infrastructural constraints to function properly in contemporary society especially, as regards visual arts to be able to promote the rich art cultures in the country. This has hampered the influence and commercial sustainability of many aspects of the visual arts. Most artists struggle to get attention, attract sponsors, and make a solid income to progress beyond their current mode of local production. Most significant players in Nigeria's visual arts scene have likewise remained analog, missing out on the huge changes that technology offers in contemporary society. As a result, they are lagging in current global digitization. This study, therefore, argues that digitized visual arts might release Nigeria's tremendous creativity, empower artists, extend access locally and globally, and modernize and improve approaches to promoting and conserving Nigeria's cultural heritage.

Again, most existing research on Nigerian art focuses on documenting artistic practices or examining them from a historical, anthropological, or postcolonial perspective. There are limited empirical studies on the digitalization of visual art in enhancing digital culture and free access to Nigerian arts both locally and globally. Of course, Nigeria is comparatively growing in digital art by increasing access to technology. This is spouting out through the development of digital art groups/platforms, and interventions/support from local foundations/organizations who are inspired by the country's rich cultural past. These partners are aiding arts to appreciate the infusing their works with environmental influences obtained from the country's ancient art practices like *Uli*, *Nsibidi*, and so on, legends, tradition, and old wisdom. Per se, there is still a low level of attention viable to preserve and promote the rich traditional art forms, empower artists, and provide economic opportunities in Nigeria through digitized visual art.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the potential of digitized visual arts in promoting digital culture in Nigeria by identifying the role of visual arts in digitization, and its impacts on the digitization of Nigeria's digital culture. In line with Oladepo (2015) who carried out a similar study on the digital public sphere in developing a culture of democracy in contemporary Nigeria and found that a successful digital public sphere can only exist in situations where mass media

organizations are prepared to engage in more active online citizen collaboration to foster public affairs transparency, distribute important information, and promote widespread digital access. The significance of this study is a two-way factor that appraises the digitization of visual art in Nigeria to enable it to promote digital culture in Nigeria at a give-and-take value. The findings of the study are useful to artists, students in various institutions of learning, policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders who hope for the improvement of Nigeria's digital culture and economy.

Nigeria as a country is associated with a population of over 200 million people by numerous scholars. It is also regarded as the most populous country in Africa and has the largest economy on the continent. According to Worldometers (2023), The current population of Nigeria is estimated to be about 220,103,977 as of Wednesday, March 29, 2023, based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data. The report further presents that Nigeria's 2020 population is estimated at 206,139,589 people at mid-year according to UN data and that this population is equivalent to 2.64% of the total world population. This ranks Nigeria number 7 in the list of countries (and dependencies) by population and a population density of about 226 per Km<sup>2</sup> (586 people per mi<sup>2</sup>) in a total land area of 910,770 Km<sup>2</sup> (351,650 sq. miles), 52.0 % of the population is urban (107,112,526 people in 2020) and remarkably a median age of 18.1 years. A breakdown of this data is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1**

*The population of Nigeria (1955-2020 and historical)*

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Migrants (net)	Median Age	Fertility Rate	Density (P/Km <sup>2</sup> )	Urban Pop %	Urban Pop.	Country's Share of World Pop	World Pop.	Nigeria Global Rank
2020	206,139,589	2.58 %	5,175,990	-60,000	18.1	5.42	226	52.0 %	107,112,526	2.64 %	7,794,798,739	7
2019	200,963,599	2.60 %	5,088,916	-60,000	17.9	5.67	221	51.2 %	102,805,995	2.61 %	7,713,468,100	7
2018	195,874,683	2.62 %	5,001,439	-60,000	17.9	5.67	215	50.3 %	98,610,801	2.57 %	7,631,091,040	7
2017	190,873,244	2.64 %	4,913,003	-60,000	17.9	5.67	210	49.5 %	94,525,016	2.53 %	7,547,858,925	7
2016	185,960,241	2.66 %	4,822,793	-60,000	17.9	5.67	204	48.7 %	90,546,177	2.49 %	7,464,022,049	7
2015	181,137,448	2.71 %	4,526,850	-60,000	17.9	5.74	199	47.8 %	86,673,094	2.45 %	7,379,797,139	7
2010	158,503,197	2.68 %	3,927,636	-60,000	17.9	5.91	174	43.5 %	68,949,828	2.28 %	6,956,823,603	7
2005	138,865,016	2.58 %	3,316,233	-34,000	18.0	6.05	152	39.1 %	54,288,918	2.12 %	6,541,907,027	9
2000	122,283,850	2.53 %	2,867,103	-19,005	17.9	6.17	134	34.9 %	42,627,440	1.99 %	6,143,493,823	10
1995	107,948,335	2.54 %	2,547,177	-19,154	17.7	6.37	119	32.2 %	34,785,545	1.88 %	5,744,212,979	10
1990	95,212,450	2.64 %	2,329,933	-18,281	17.4	6.60	105	29.7 %	28,276,132	1.79 %	5,327,231,061	10
1985	83,562,785	2.62 %	2,027,830	-135,413	17.5	6.76	92	25.7 %	21,434,266	1.72 %	4,870,921,740	10

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Migrants (net)	Median Age	Fertility Rate	Density (P/Km <sup>2</sup> )	Urban Pop %	Urban Pop.	Country's Share of World Pop	World Pop.	Nigeria Global Rank
1980	73,423,633	2.99 %	2,009,867	164,143	18.0	6.76	81	22.0 %	16,139,321	1.65 %	4,458,003,514	11
1975	63,374,298	2.51 %	1,478,431	-7,705	18.3	6.61	70	19.8 %	12,535,584	1.55 %	4,079,480,606	11
1970	55,982,144	2.23 %	1,170,845	-8,669	18.7	6.35	61	17.8 %	9,942,297	1.51 %	3,700,437,046	11
1965	50,127,921	2.12 %	997,893	204	19.0	6.35	55	16.6 %	8,296,771	1.50 %	3,339,583,597	13
1960	45,138,458	1.90 %	810,472	541	19.1	6.35	50	15.4 %	6,955,737	1.49 %	3,034,949,748	13
1955	41,086,100	1.65 %	645,270	674	19.1	6.35	45	12.1 %	4,952,844	1.48 %	2,773,019,936	13

Note. Elaboration of data by United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. *World Population Prospects: The 2019 Revision. (Medium-fertility variant)*. From **Worldometer** (www.Worldometers.info)

**Table 2**  
**Nigeria Population Forecast**  
 -62,016

Year	Population	Yearly % Change	Yearly Change	Migrants (net)	Median Age	Fertility Rate	Density (P/Km <sup>2</sup> )	Urban Pop %	Urban Pop.	Country's Share of World Pop	World Pop.	Nigeria Global Rank
2020	206,139,589	2.62 %	5,000,428	-60,000	18.1	5.42	226	52.0 %	107,112,526	2.64 %	7,794,798,739	7
2025	233,343,112	2.51 %	5,440,705	-60,000	18.5	5.42	256	55.8 %	130,312,056	2.85 %	8,184,437,460	6
2030	262,977,337	2.42 %	5,926,845	-60,000	19.1	5.42	289	59.4 %	156,299,881	3.08 %	8,548,487,400	6
2035	294,986,051	2.32 %	6,401,743	-62,360	19.9	5.42	324	62.7 %	184,887,647	3.32 %	8,887,524,213	5
2040	329,066,615	2.21 %	6,816,113	-62,360	20.7	5.42	361	65.7 %	216,083,536	3.58 %	9,198,847,240	4
2045	364,711,807	2.08 %	7,129,038	-62,216	21.5	5.42	400	68.6 %	250,285,391	3.85 %	9,481,803,274	4
2050	401,315,000	1.93 %	7,320,639		22.4	5.42	441	71.5 %	287,130,349	4.12 %	9,735,033,990	3

Note. Elaboration of data by United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. *World Population Prospects: The 2019 Revision. (Medium-fertility variant)*. From **Worldometer** (www.Worldometers.info)

According to Idoko (2023), Nigeria is a country with a rich cultural heritage that has a long history of traditional art forms that are made from bronze casting, pottery, woodcarving, metalsmithing, sculpture, textile designs, ceramics, painting, architecture, and weaving. These art forms have played significant roles in Nigerian culture for centuries. Traditional Nigerian art is known for its vibrant colours, intricate patterns, and symbolism. Many of these art forms were influenced by the various ethnic groups that make up the Nigerian population, each with their unique artistic traditions. From the Nok terracotta sculptures dating back to 500 BC to the Benin bronze sculptures of the 16th century, Nigerian artists have long been using visual communication to express their cultural identities and convey messages. The traditional art of Nigeria includes Nok, Benin, Ife, Igbo Ukwu, Tsoede, Ibibio, Mbari, Owo, Ikom monolith, Esie, and other monuments (Joyogueh, 2020). These art forms are used for historical, domestic, religious, ritualistic, and social purposes

and are a means of livelihood for the craftsmen. Nigeria has over 250 ethnic tribes, and the three largest and most dominant ethnic groups are the Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo. The country has 527 languages, seven of which are extinct, and over 1150 dialects and ethnic groups (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria, 2024).

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, digitization was regarded as one of the most influential megatrends (Yadav, Alexander, & Shenoy, 2021). Digital culture and its impact on society have transformed the way people live, work, and communicate. It has created new opportunities and challenges for individuals, businesses, and governments. However, the impact of digital culture on most developing nations is not well understood. Consequently, visual arts play a vital role in digitization as it helps to create engaging digital content that is accessible to a wider audience (Janssen & Kuhn, 2018). Most developing countries like Nigeria are however faced with several challenges, like limited access to technology, inadequate infrastructure, maintenance culture, and a lack of digital skills and it seems no tangible efforts or seriousness is keenly attached to overcoming these challenges in the nearest future.

Looking at the education sector it is supposed to be one of the driving factors of a digitized nation. It is a common belief that a country cannot advance beyond the degree of its education. Nigeria has not been able to focus on its educational system or meet the basic requirements. The sector receives a very small allocation from the annual budget. As a result, the educational sectors have not seen a revitalization in a long time. There are so many children in the nation who are not in school that it is impossible to estimate the exact number because the dropout rate is nearly happening every minute of every day. When digital culture is embraced with open minds, it has the potential to revolutionize how people acquire knowledge and learn, as well as open up new avenues for learning such as digital libraries and online courses.

Another aspect that is also important in the digitization of cultures that has gained much attention in developed nations but is often neglected in Nigeria is the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). According to Warschauer & Matuchniak (2010)

There is broad consensus among educators, communication scholars, sociologists, and economists that the development and diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICT) are having a profound effect on modern life. This is due to the affordances of new digital media, which bridge the interactive features of speech and the archival characteristics of writing; and allow many-to-many communication among people without regard to time and space, including mass collaborative editing of texts ... (p.179).

The value we enjoy from ICT is similar to what digitized visual art and visual art, in general, could offer a country. Developed countries are already enjoying these potentials and making reasonable efforts to sustain the value they appreciate from these opportunities to enhance their digital cultures.

This instance is also reflected in the study on the emergence of digital media in Nigerian public life, according to Oladepo (2015), who expressed that it is also

noticeable in several contexts from how mainstream journalists obtain news and information to how young people voice their disapproval of the government on important issues, like the 276 kidnapped Chibok Girls case in April 2014. Examining the increasing usage of digital media in Nigeria and recognizing noteworthy advancements in Nigerian democracy via the expansion of the "digital public sphere", the study discovered that people who use digital media in an improvised and frequently creative way are developing new communication skills such as dialogue and deliberation and that people who are active online are purposefully creating social, political, and cultural consciousness.

## **Gap In Knowledge**

Despite the abundance of literature on various aspects of digitization, research is scarce on the potential of digitizing visual arts in developing nations like Nigeria. This lack of research hinders the understanding of how the digitization of visual arts can contribute to improving Nigeria's digital culture as well as how the country can fully benefit from the potential of visual arts in a digitized society. Therefore, there is a need to investigate how the digitization of visual arts can enhance Nigeria's digital culture and contribute to the way people use digital technology for communication, creation, and consumption of content. This research aims to fill the existing gap in knowledge and provide insights into the potential impact of digitizing visual arts in developing nations.

Digitization has had a significant impact on modern society, including changes in the way people work, access information, and interact with each other. Digital culture has also led to the development of new industries and business models. Visual arts, in the form of graphics, photography, animation, and video, play a significant role in digitization. They help to make digital content more practical, engaging, informative, and entertaining. Visual arts have also been used to create user-friendly interfaces to convey complex information in a simple and easy-to-understand manner through cartoons, billboards, art shows, art exhibitions, and many more.

However, in Nigeria, digital culture is still in its embryonic stage, and the country faces several challenges ranging from inadequate infrastructure, limited access to technology, and a lack of digital skills. The country's digital economy is also underdeveloped, and there is limited investment in the sector. As such this study sees visual arts to have the potential to contribute significantly to the digitization of Nigeria. They can be used to create engaging digital content that is accessible to a wider audience. Visual arts can also be used to enhance the user experience, making digital products more user-friendly and accessible. This can better be achieved if the rich art culture in Nigeria is hinged towards modernization, and utilization of the digital culture rather than mere art display and cultural shows in festivals and ceremonies. The data collected through primary and secondary sources provided insights into the effects and potential of visual arts in digitizing Nigeria. The study found that visual arts have the potential to contribute significantly to Nigeria's digital culture, but several challenges need to be addressed.



## Method

This study found it important to engage and bring to light the numerous effects and potential of digitized Visual Arts in enhancing the digital culture in developing nations like Nigeria. A qualitative research design that involved the collection and analysis of data from primary and secondary sources based on the descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. Primary data was collected through interviews using a purposive sampling technique to select participants for the interviews. The participants were experts in the field of digital culture, visual arts, and digital economy in Nigeria. The sample of the population was made up of 134 participants which included 57 males and 77 females. This sample was made up of 13 respondents from the United States of America and 9 respondents from the United Kingdom to represent developed countries. 98 participants from Nigeria, 12 from Ghana, 7 from Togo, and 3 from Cameroon to represent developing nations. The instrument for collecting data was an Android phone recorder as well as social media platforms like WhatsApp calls and messengers as well as WhatsApp group chats, Instagram, Telegram, and Facebook. These platforms helped in collecting primary data using oral interviews using unstructured questions. The secondary data was collected through a review of relevant literature, reports, and other documents from journals, books, and the Internet.

## Nigerian Digitization: The Significance of Visual Arts Digitization

This study found that digitizing the visual arts will be important for Nigeria's digitization process and have many benefits, such as increasing the accessibility of artworks to a larger audience. Visual arts digitization can contribute to the creation of digital art, which can be utilized to convey concepts and feelings in fresh and creative ways. It can be employed as a tool to facilitate the discovery and experience of art by promoting and disseminating pictorial information online. Additionally, by using this to engage and educate the public about art, history, and culture, social cohesion and understanding of Nigeria will be fostered.

The study also found that visual arts and digitization are closely interwoven. Digital technologies are progressively being used to create, share, and understand art. They are also being used to conserve and preserve art. Visual art is also doing the same as it is playing a great role in creating content like animation, graphic illustrations, and many more that are relevant in creating interfaces for the digitization of different cultures. As digitization continues to evolve, the visual arts will likely continue to aid in transforming the aesthetics of the new technologies playing the roles in digitization that involve the production of aspects of traditional art such as paintings, sculptures, drawings, and other breakthroughs that are thereafter, converted into a digital format that creates pictorial historical backing of the art of a people. This can be done using a variety of artistic methods, such as scanning, photography, 2D formatting, and 3D modelling. Digitized artworks can be stored and accessed more easily than physical artworks. In the same vein, they also share and create opportunities for those far away to view the contents of different art cultures online by a wider audience.

The trend of digital art that is created using digital tools and technologies is making the digital culture take many different forms, including computer graphics,

animatronics, and interactive art. Digital art has become increasingly popular in recent years, and it is now a major part of the visual arts landscape that is creating jobs, aiding in education and information dissemination, creating content for different end uses like security reporting and illustrations, map construction, and many more.

Again, the application of digital technologies in art education is enhancing the educational sector in several ways. For instance, visual art is helping students to use digital tools to create and share their imaginative skills and to communicate through their artworks as an idiolect, research art histories, and theories, as well as collaborate with other artists outside their localities. Visual art is also helping digital technologies to create virtual art experiences, such as virtual museums and galleries. This in return is bringing all the advantages of these facilities to our doorsteps with a small amount of money and internet access. It is also creating room for more value for the museums and galleries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which showcases the artistic experiences of different countries through their art.

Visual art is also making room for sustainable virtual art exhibitions which are a new way of experiencing art that has become increasingly popular in recent years. These exhibitions allow people to view artworks online without having to travel to a physical gallery or museum. Virtual art exhibitions have made it possible for people to access art from all over the world, and they have also helped to break down barriers between art and the public. These are good attributes of a digitized culture that should be upheld in Nigeria to create prospects for Nigerian artists to leverage and utilize the importance of digital technology to broaden their skill sets, reach a wider audience, and gain international recognition. The rise of digital art in Nigeria has implications for the Nigerian creative industry, offering new opportunities for self-expression and economic empowerment (Idoko, 2023).

### **Nigeria's Digital Culture and the Effects of Digitized Visual Arts**

This study found that digitized visual arts can help to;

- i. Spread awareness of Nigerian identity and culture among a wider range of people.
- ii. Preserve and record the rich cultural legacy of Nigeria.
- iii. Improve learning and education in Nigeria.
- iv. Encourage travel to Nigeria.
- v. Promote social cohesion and understanding in Nigeria.

The above findings show that digitized visual arts can have a significant impact on Nigeria's digital culture. It can create room for Nigerians to use digital technologies to express themselves in new and innovative ways. It can also help to connect Nigeria with a wider audience. As digital technologies continue to evolve, visual arts will likely continue to play a more important role in Nigeria's digital culture because it is a cheap and simpler way to communicate. Because of digitized visual art, one of the aspects of digital culture that is gaining recognition in Nigeria is digital art. Digital art is a relatively new art form that has been gaining popularity

in Nigeria in recent years. This is due to the increasing availability of digital tools and technologies, as well as the growing internet penetration in the country. Digital art has allowed Nigerian artists to express themselves in new and innovative ways, and it has also helped to connect them with a wider audience which is one of the steps toward the actualization of a digitized society. Digital art in Nigeria is bridging technology and creativity in different forms. According to CGAfrica, (2023)

Digital art in Nigeria has its roots in the latter half of the twentieth century when the arrival of personal computers and digital photography equipment sparked a creative spark among Nigerian artists. These early pioneers explored the promise of digital technologies by experimenting with graphic design, digital painting, and 3D modelling. Their pioneering efforts established the groundwork for Nigeria's developing digital art sector (para. 1).

Digital art offers several advantages, such as the ability to make mistakes and correct them easily, a wider range of aesthetic opportunities, and the potential to reach a larger audience through digital platforms. As digital technology continues to evolve, digital art is expected to grow and expand, offering artists more creative possibilities and new ways to engage with their audiences.

Imagine the social media platforms without pictures. The social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook are like a planet of its own. Visual arts have played a major role in the promotion and dissemination of digital interest in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Artists have used these platforms to share artworks with global audiences. In return, the presence of art on these platforms has made it more interesting to visit and connect with art enthusiasts in the world regardless of their location.

### **The Potential of Digitized Visual Arts in Digitizing Nigeria**

This study also found that the potential of digitized visual arts in digitizing Nigeria is significant. This is because digital visual art has the potential to boost Nigeria's economy by generating jobs in industries like marketing, conservation, and art education. By conserving and recording Nigeria's rich cultural legacy, it can also help to promote Nigeria's culture and identity to a worldwide audience. By encouraging critical thinking and creative abilities, digital visual arts can improve learning and education in Nigeria. Furthermore, tackling social issues like discrimination and poverty can foster understanding and social cohesion in Nigeria.

The visual arts industry can facilitate economic growth, cultural promotion, improved education, increased tourism, and social cohesion by adopting digital technologies. Engaging content that informs and educates citizens about the advantages of digitization can be produced using visual arts. Visual arts can also be a tool for social change by raising awareness of significant problems like corruption, inequality, and poverty. There are many opportunities to create and share visual artworks with people worldwide thanks to the digital revolution. In this way, visual art is being influenced by digital technology more and more, and it is important to preserve it to support digital culture in developing countries.

## Summary of Findings and Results

The findings of this study have significant implications for Nigeria's digital economy (Aduloju, 2022). The study highlights the potential of visual arts in generating economic opportunities, promoting culture and identity, enhancing education, and promoting social cohesion. However, the study also identifies several challenges that need to be addressed to fully realize the potential of visual arts in digitization, including inadequate infrastructure, limited access to technology, and a lack of digital skills and technological know-how to fully benefit from the potential of visual arts in digitization. As such, Nigeria needs to invest in infrastructural development, promote digital skills development, and support the growth of the visual arts industry. These actions will help to improve Nigeria's digital culture and enable the country to fully benefit from the potential of visual arts in digitization.

According to The Nigeria Digital Economy Diagnostic (2019), there is a need for a digital-led economy and the importance of digital connectivity, digital skills, digital financial services, and other core areas of digital development. The report notes that Nigeria is well-positioned to develop a strong digital economy, which would have a transformational impact on the country. Through innovations and investments, the Nigerian economy can harness digital data and new technologies, generate new content, link individuals with markets and government services, and roll out new, sustainable business models. The Nigerian government has introduced policies and initiatives to promote digitalization, such as the Digital Nigeria program, which aims to create a digitally literate society, promote digital entrepreneurship, and provide digital skills training (Fadi, 2023). This is intended to galvanize Nigeria's economic growth and diversification. While challenges remain, the strategy has already unleashed some of the country's potential.

## Conclusion and Recommendation for Further Studies

In conclusion, digitalized visual arts have enormous potential to digitize Nigeria because they can create jobs, support culture and identity, improve education, and foster social cohesion all of which have a big impact on the country's digital economy. Nigeria needs to solve the issues of poor infrastructure, restricted access to technology, and a dearth of digital skills in order to fully realize the potential of visual arts in digitization. The government must also support the expansion of the visual arts sector, foster the development of digital skills, and invest in infrastructure. By taking these measures, Nigeria will be able to take full advantage of the digitization potential of the visual arts and enhance its digital culture.

For the country to fully realize the potential of visual arts in digitization, Nigeria appears to be facing issues like poor infrastructure, restricted access to technology, and a lack of digital skills. These issues must be resolved. This study therefore recommends that policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders in Nigeria's digital economy should:

1. Invest in infrastructure development to improve the digital culture and enable the country to fully benefit from the potential of visual arts in digitization.

2. Encourage the development of digital skills to improve Nigerians' ability to produce and consume digital content.
3. Encourage cooperation with international partners and advance digital literacy to boost the expansion of the visual arts sector.

This study also recommends that further research could explore the potential of other creative industries, such as music and film, in digitizing Nigeria. Future studies may also concentrate on how digital culture can enhance other facets of Nigerian society, like healthcare and education. Additionally, future studies might focus on how the visual arts affect particular industries, like publicity or e-commerce.

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