

CITIZEN JOURNALISM PRACTICE AND SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE DURING SOCIAL DARWINISM (#EndSARS) PROTEST AMONG YOUTHS IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated social media usage for the popular #EndSARS protest that changed and shook the nation's landscape. Social Darwinist ideas was used to rationalize the marginalization of certain groups who may be seen as less capable or inferior. It explored the usage of social media that allowed the effective sharing of audio-visual messages by the #EndSARS protesters, especially the youths in Ikeja. 400 copies of questionnaire data were tested using simple percentages and presented in frequency distribution tables, the study concluded that youths use the media peculiar to them like social media for protest activities. The traditional media sought more objective ways to improve the reportage of events especially of national importance and concern to youths.

Keywords: *Citizen Journalism, Social Media, Social Darwinis, #EndSARS.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki penggunaan media sosial untuk protes populer #EndSARS yang mengubah lanskap negara. Menggunakan gagasan Darwinis Sosial untuk marjinalisasi kelompok tertentu yang mungkin dianggap kurang mampu atau lebih rendah. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi penggunaan media sosial yang memungkinkan penyebaran pesan audio-visual yang efektif oleh para pengunjuk rasa #EndSARS, terutama para pemuda di Ikeja. 400 kuesioner diuji menggunakan persentase dan disajikan dalam tabel distribusi frekuensi, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa kaum muda menggunakan media yang khas bagi mereka seperti media sosial untuk kegiatan protes. Media tradisional mencari cara yang lebih obyektif untuk meningkatkan reportase peristiwa-peristiwa yang penting secara nasional dan menjadi perhatian kaum muda.

Kata Kunci: *Jurnalisme Warga, Media Sosial, Darwinis Sosial, #EndSARS.*



Lisensi

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A. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Nigerian youths are actively involved in the politics of their country through the use of social media. Nigerians use social network sites, especially Twitter, to engage with government agencies as well as question government policies, programmes and decisions. With the use of social media, activists are not only communicating with fellow citizens but also with policy makers. This is why McQuail (2010) argued that public agenda is highly being influenced by public issues communicated through social media.

Abimbola outlined popular online social movements that reflected how social media was used as a tool for activism and also as a galvanizing force for political change.¹ This led to both online participation and physical walks to protest the Abia State University Rape incident. *#OccupyNigeria* was a socio-political protest movement that began in Nigeria on Monday, 2 January 2012 in response to the fuel subsidy removal by the Federal Government of President Goodluck on Sunday, 1st of January 2012. *#Citizens Solution ToEnd Terrorism* started on the 14th of April 2014 when people took to Twitter and other social media to proffer solutions on how to end terrorism in Nigeria after the news of a bomb explosion in Nyanya Motor Park which killed over 70 people and injured 100 people. That same night, over 200 school girls were abducted in Chibok, Borno State. *#Bringbackourgirls* which erupted as a result of the abduction of 114 female secondary school students in Chibok, Borno on the 14th of April 2014. *#Bringbackourgirls* went from a hashtag to a social movement.

The movement received support from both local and international celebrities and newsmakers. *#StopBokoHaram* movement started on the 3rd of January, 2015 as a result of the Boko Haram terrorist attacks on a daily basis. Social media was used to mobilize citizens against these activities and persuading them to show their solidarity with the victims of the barbarity of Boko

¹ Abimbola, S. Making Social Media-Driven Activism Work. Retrieved July 21, 2021, from The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News website: <https://guardian.ng/features/making-social-media-driven-activism-work/>. 2017.

Haram by signing the Stop Boko Haram petition. *#BeingFemaleInNigeria* was created by a reading group in Abuja in July, 2015.

Therefore, the social media and, by extension, the internet, allows for instantaneous dissemination of news. These narratives on Twitter became major headlines on the mainstream media especially newspapers, radio and television with hashtag *#EndSARS* used provided insight into how social media, especially Twitter serves as a coordinating platform for oppositional discourse and activist campaigns in Nigeria. During the protests, Twitter was used in at least three ways: to co-ordinate protests, to amplify the voice of the campaign globally, and to berate brands and public figures deemed to be opposed to the movement. It is this phenomenon that explains the way in which activist tags *#EndSARS* have been deployed on all social media platforms to create social movements.²

It also explains why Twitter has been used to shape other campaigns mentioned earlier. Social media concept involves the use of internet-based applications and services for communication, collaboration, creation and exchange of contents by individuals and groups. The main focus of social media is the communication that takes place, how the communication takes place and the relationships that develop based on these communications. Social media allows individuals and groups to develop, maintain and stay connected to a network of other individuals and people with common interests.³

Social Darwinism offers a framework to understand some of the underlying issues that drive youth protests. Young activists often challenge the inequalities and injustices perpetuated by these ideologies, advocating for a society that values equity, inclusivity, and collective progress rather than competition and exclusion. *#EndSARS* protests arose in response to perceived injustices and inequalities in Nigerian society. Because social Darwinist ideas was used to rationalize the marginalization of certain groups, including young

² Kazeem, Yahyah. How a youth-led digital movement is driving Nigeria's largest protests in a decade. Retrieved, from Quartz Africa website: <https://qz.com/africa/1916319/how-nigerians-use-social-media-to-organize-endsars-protests/> 2020.

³ Ayankoya, K., Calitz, A. P., & Cullen, M. D. M. A. Framework For The Use Of Social Media For Political Marketing: An Exploratory Study. Retrieved December 17, 2020.

people, who may be seen as less capable or inferior. This creates a sense of urgency among youth to challenge these notions and advocate for equality, favourable economic policy and better life.

Many modern youth protests are driven by a desire for social change, often opposing systems that reflect Social Darwinist ideology, such as systemic racism, economic inequality, and environmental degradation. Protests emphasize the need to enfranchise all individuals, regardless of their socio-economic status, challenging the “survival of the fittest” mindset. In Nigeria society, young people face significant economic challenges, including high unemployment rates and rising education costs. The application of Social Darwinism can further justify neglecting these challenges, placing the burden on youth to “succeed” in a system that is rigged against them. This inequality may motivate protests that is advocating for economic reforms and better opportunities. #EndSARS protest focus on broader social justice issues, fighting against the ideologies that underpin Social Darwinism. Protests led by youths often highlight the gap between generations, particularly in issues like high rate of unemployment, social injustice, collapse of the economy. They argue that older generations, who may have benefited from certain economic and social policies, are leaving untenable conditions for future generations. This intergenerational conflict speaks to the failures of a system that may be seen as upholding “survival of the fittest” without regard for collective well-being.

The most recent of these social movements is #EndSARS in 2020 which is the focus of this research study. The #EndSARS movement dates back to 2017, when Nigerian youths used the hashtag to share their experiences on violence and assault perpetrated by the dysfunctional Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) However, the movement only revived in early October, after a video emerged of police officers thought to be members of the SARS unit, allegedly killing an unarmed young man.⁴

⁴ Fasunwon, A., F. Social Media and Political Mobilisation in Nigeria. In *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*. Vol. 3 No12, 2019.

These aforementioned hashtags and movements considered social media, most especially Twitter as an important component of their overall media strategies. The #Endsars campaign gathered increasing attention on Twitter with over 2,000 tweets daily, detailing incidences of police brutality.

Statement of the Problem: Citizen journalism through social media is undoubtedly ubiquitous among Nigerian youths. Access to social media is important in supporting modern day democracy as well as how youths are facing the reality of exerting positive change through online mobilization and peaceful protest, against police harassment and brutality with the #EndSARS protests in Lagos State (Folorunsho, 2019). Citizen journalism through Social media served as the major source of information of the #EndSARS protest. It also encouraged Citizens' journalism and this is possible because the internet and social media are easily accessible to the citizens and also served as a platform for people to communicate and organize protests, social media enabled users to live stream and share media contents about a protest as it happened.

However, in a bid to spread information about protest came the lack of verifying facts, figures and also inaccuracies in information. This came with drawbacks, as most of the stories from the protest that trended globally, with thousands of posts and repost on social media, turned out not to be all factual. This showed that the use of social media for social reform movements such as #EndSARS despite having its pros and cons is indispensable in this age.⁵

In the light of the foregoing therefore, the research seeks to determine the extent to which unverified facts, figures and inaccuracies in information sharing on the various social media platforms affected the activities of Ikeja youths for the #EndSARS protest. Also, to determine the extent to which youths used the various social media platforms for the #EndSARS protest in Ikeja, Lagos. Objectives of the study: To investigate the reasons social media was chosen over the mainstream media for #EndSARS protests by Ikeja youths. Research

⁵ Oloyede, Elega,. "Exploring Hashtags Activism in Nigeria: A case of #EndSARS Campaign". 5th Conference Proceeding in Communication and Media Studies Famagusta, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. 2019

Questions: Why social media was chosen over the mainstream media for #EndSARS protests by Ikeja youths? Theoretical Review: Media Ecology Theory was adopted for this study. The theoretical concept was proposed by Marshall McLuhan in 1964, while the term 'media ecology' was first formally introduced by Neil Postman in 1968. Media Ecology looks into the matter of how media communication affects human perception, understanding, feeling and value; and how our interaction with media facilitates or impedes our chances of survival. The word ecology implies the study of environments: their structure, content and impact on people. An environment is after all, a complex message system which imposes on human beings certain ways of thinking, feeling and behaving.⁶ The influence of media technology on society is the main concept of MET, upheld by three assumptions: Media is infused into every act and action in society, media fixes our perceptions and organizes our experiences, we cannot escape the media presence in our lives as it is ubiquitous in our realities of day-to-day life.⁷

Media Ecology Theory in this study showed that media acts directly to shape and organize culture. Media ecology studied of how media and communication process influence human perception, feeling, understanding and value. In this study, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, played a vital role in shaping the attitudes of youths in Ikeja in protest involvements and influences positive protest behaviour. Also, social media served as a veritable tool in the mobilization of Ikeja youths to participate in peaceful protest activities McLuhan understood the influence of technologies on members of a specific culture.⁸ He noted that media have revolutionized society and how society quickly becomes reliant on these communication technologies. McLuhan felt that it was almost impossible to find a society

⁶ Strate, L. *Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture A Media Ecology Review a quarterly review of communication research journal*. Vol. 14, No 3. 2014.

⁷ Salman, Saad, *Online Political Participation: A Study of Youths Usage of New Media*. Rome-Italy: MCSER Publishing. Vol.4. No.3 2015.

⁸ Valenzuela, Areal. *Unpacking the Use of Social Media for Protest Behavior*. *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 57, No.7, 2013.

unaffected by media. Media Ecology Theory (MET) aims to understand the social impact of technology and communication.⁹

Review of related Empirical studies: Social media have become essential tools for 21st-century social movements. Accordingly, the use of social media for social protest like #Endsars# is a thriving research area, with studies applying both qualitative and quantitative methods to understand the nature and magnitude of the phenomenon. Most researchers in this area agree that social media can be consequential for social movements and their protests.

Bruns & Burgess in the research work "The Use of Twitter Hashtags in the Formation of Ad Hoc Publics" demonstrated Twitter's ability to respond rapidly to breaking news – an ability which builds not least on the fact that new hashtags can be created ad hoc, by users themselves, without any need to seek approval from Twitter administrators.¹⁰ As argued in this paper, this ability enables hashtags to be used for the rapid formation of ad hoc issue publics, gathering to discuss breaking news and other acute Twitter users often work to resolve such conflicts quickly as soon as they have been identified – and such efforts also demonstrate the importance of hashtags as coordinating mechanisms: users will actively work to keep 'their' hashtag free of unwanted or irrelevant distractions, and to maximise the reach of the preferred hashtag to all users.

The researchers further observed the dynamic nature of conversations within hashtag communities which provided fascinating insights into the inner workings of ad hoc issue publics: it enabled researchers to trace the various roles played by individual participants (information sources, community leaders, commenters, conversationalists, or lurkers), and to study how the community reacts to new stimuli (breaking news and new contributors). Such observations also offered perspectives on the interconnection of the community with other

⁹ Islas, Bernal. Media Ecology: A Complex and Systemic Meta discipline. *Philosophies*, Vol. 1. issue.3, 2016

¹⁰ Bruns, A., & Burgess, J. The Use of Twitter Hashtags In The Formation Of Ad Hoc Publics (A. Bruns & P. De Wilde, Eds.). Retrieved May 16, 2020, from eprints.qut.edu.au website: <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/46515/>. 2011.

communicative spaces beyond Twitter itself, and on the relative importance of such spaces.

Therefore, "Hashtag Activism as a Form of Political Action: A Qualitative Analysis of the #BringBackOurGirls Campaign in Nigeria", Ofori-Parku and Moscato examined how news media in Nigeria, the United Kingdom, and the United States remediated and framed the 2014 #BringBackOurGirls (#BBOG) activism campaign that was launched when the Nigerian militant group Boko Haram abducted 276 schoolgirls in Chibok, Nigeria and how digital platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube increasingly became avenues for social mobilization and protest. The research showed that News coverage of the 2014 #BBOG campaign globally indicated that the traditional and new media existed in a symbiotic relationship.¹¹ The Media professionals scouted Twitter for news, used it to engage their audiences, and provided timely news. After investigating into the coverage of media in Nigeria, UK and USA, during the #BBOG movement, the researchers supported Twitter's function as an interaction enabler with cascading effects on elites, media organizations, political actors, and the mass public.

Nigeria's #EndSARS movement and its implication on online protests in Africa's most populous country by Dambo (2020) waded into this popular discourse by looking at the claims of police abuse by Nigerian youths on social media. For decades, police abuse of powers has remained a subject of interest in academic and human rights circles. This interest has perhaps been amplified by online social movements. In Nigeria, this abuse is well documented in the #EndSARS campaign, which has lasted for three years with little success. This study critically inspected the limitation of the #EndSARS campaign by assessing how Nigeria's political environment served as a possible hindrance to successful movements. This research therefore answered two questions: What are the dominant themes in Nigeria's #EndSARS campaign? What are the limitations to

¹¹ Ofori-Parku, Sanda, Moscato, Dokia. Hashtag Activism as a Form of Political Action: A Qualitative Analysis of the #BringBackOurGirls Campaign in Nigerian, UK, and U.S. Press. *International Journal of Communication*, Vol. 12 No.1, 2018.

activism in Nigeria? The data source for this research was Twitter. Twitter became the obvious choice for data because the #EndSARS movement started on Twitter. The tweets analysed in this research provided overwhelming evidence that police abuse is high in Nigeria.

Social Media and Slacktivism in Young People's Life by Yessenbekova examined issues as social media in personality development and their influence on the development of public activism among young people.¹² The paper also estimated the efficiency that various forms of information exchange have (shared or anonymous). The empirical base of the research includes sociological surveys held in Kazakhstan. An experiment was carried out, it covered 291 bachelor and master students. The experiment aimed at the identification of the influence that various public events make on activism among young people. Participants in the experiment were supposed to choose the unique public events and specify which form of engagement they prefer to support them.

They analysed the most frequently visited profile pages of prominent politicians, public figures, businesspersons, and culture representatives on the Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. The study found that the people who openly share on social media are more inclined to real-life engagement in public campaigns. In conclusion, the authors believed that the social activism of young people should not only be targeted at an individual but must also serve the interests of governments and those of society. Based on findings from the experimental survey, they also concluded that the online calls that are well-thought-out in terms of their content and form might be an efficient way to involve young people in public campaigns.

It is therefore observed that, existing studies have suggested several means by which social media can influence collective action, such as providing mobilizing information and news not available in other media, facilitating the coordination of demonstrations, allowing users to join political causes, and

¹² Yessenbekova, U. M. (2020). Social Media and Slacktivism in Young People's Life. *Media Watch*, Vol. 3. No 6.

creating opportunities to exchange opinions with other people.¹³ However, relatively few studies have tested empirically these mechanisms of social media influence, and most have sampled particular subgroups (e.g., participants in street demonstrations) instead of the general adult population, young people or concentrated on one platform exclusively (e.g., Valenzuela et al., 2012). To fill in these gaps, this article examined how using social media, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Google Plus, translated into increased protest activity among the young population, using Ikeja, Lagos as a sample.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The study adopted descriptive survey method for collecting and analysing data. The youths of Ikeja, both residents and workers, constituted the population of the study. Youths in Ikeja represented all the ethnics groups in Nigeria. Ikeja is the heart of Lagos with headquarter of State Government and where Phone and Computer villages are located that contributed to the large economic impact and the GDP of the country. The area is populated by youths that are engaging in mobile phone and computer related businesses. The researcher made use of the 18-35 brackets to consist the youths in this study. According to the data obtained from the National Population Commission using figures from the population census of 2006, youths in Ikeja are 317,614. The sample size of the study was derived using Taro Yamane formulae give below:
$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$
 , n=Sample size, N= Population size (317,614), E=Margin Error (0.05).The sample size was calculated thus: $n = \frac{317,614}{1 + 317,614(0.05)^2}$ and $n = 400$ (approximately) Therefore, the derived sample size was 400. This is meant that 400 youths (workers and residents) of Ikeja made up the study sample. The sampling technique the researcher adopted was Systematic Random Sampling Technique which is a Non-Probability Sampling Method. The researcher selected a sample at every 5th interval. This was done by counting every 5th, 10th, 15th until the

¹³ Bennett, L., and Sergerberg. A. "The Logic Of Connective Action: Digital Media And The Personalization Of Contentious Politics". UK: Routledge. 2012. See also; Valenzuela, Areal. Unpacking the Use of Social Media for Protest Behavior. *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 57, No.7, 2013.

desired sample size was obtained (...400th person) during a monthly market meeting through face-to-face method of data collection. This allowed every member of the population equal chance of inclusion. Close-Ended Questionnaire was chosen as the main data collection instrument. Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 was used to analysed the data through frequency table counts.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data were analysed using frequency tables and percentages. They were built in tables for easy understanding and presented according to each questionnaire item. A total number of four hundred (400) copies of questionnaires were administered on selected 400 youth in Ikeja, Lagos. The researcher administered questionnaire face-to-face on the respondents. Only three hundred and sixty-five (365) copies were retrieved respondents and accurately filled and returned by the respondents, thus 91% return rate. This implies that there was a high response rate on the part of the respondents.

This section presents the responses of the respondents on the variables used to address the research objectives. *What were the reasons social media was chosen over the mainstream media for #EndSARS protest by Ikeja youths?. Frequency distribution on of why social media was chosen over mainstream media for #EndSARS.*

Variable	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
<i>Social media networks were actively used for #EndSARS protest</i>	117 (32.1%)	154 (42.2%)	15 (4.1 %)	70 (19.2%)	9 (2.5%)	2.17
<i>Social media networks were used more than the traditional media (e.g., TV, radio) during #EndSars protest</i>	82 (22.5%)	106 (29.0%)	75 (20.5%)	75 (20.5%)	7 (7.4%)	2.42
<i>Social media networks were used to pass information about the</i>	150 (41.1%)	138 (37.8%)	69 (18.9%)	8 (2.2%)	0 (0.0%)	2.14

<i>protest more than the traditional media</i>						
<i>Social media had an advantage over traditional media in news reportage of #EndSars protest</i>	178 (48.8%)	76 (20.8%)	15 (4.1%)	38 (10.4%)	52 (15.9%)	2.24
<i>Social media has been a veritable tool in the mobilization of people to participate in peaceful protest activities than the traditional media</i>	150 (41.1%)	82 (22.7%)	22 (6.0%)	72 (19.7%)	38 (10.4%)	2.36

Table 1: Presents Respondents Responses¹⁴

Table presents respondents responses to the reasons why social media was chosen over mainstream media for #EndSARS. To establish these reasons, 74.3% of respondents representing the majority agreed that social media networks were actively used for #EndSARS protests. This reveals that social media was indeed the main channel used to propagate the #EndSARS protests. A total of 49.5% agreed that social media networks were used more than the traditional media during #EndSars protest while about 27.9% disagreed, the large percentage of respondent who were undecided in their response accounted for the seemingly low percentage of respondents who agreed. None of the respondents strongly disagreed that social media networks were actively used for #EndSARS protests. A total of 78.9% agreed that social media was actively used for the #EndSARS protest. Most respondents, (69.6%) also viewed social media networks as a more effective platform for sharing protest information, in contrast to the traditional media. Majority of the respondents (63.8%) strongly agreed that social media has been a veritable tool in the mobilization of people to participate in peaceful protest activities than the traditional media.

¹⁴ Author's Field Survey, 2021.

The research elicited information regarding the problem associated with the use of social media for the #EndSars protest. Even though social media caused majority of participants to be informed about the current trend of events during the #EndSars protest, however, social media ability to spread information is a double-edged sword: misinformation can also spread equally as quickly, which can fuel flames of division. Majority of the respondents (59.2%) reported that there was presence of fake news during the protest which was propagated by social media and of these WhatsApp and Twitter were the platforms by which this fake news was spread. This agrees with Oz (2016) that emphasized that citizens' rejection of mainstream media coverage in favour of Twitter raises credibility questions because rumours and disinformation can be quickly spread on Twitter. About 61% of the respondents said they were actually misinformed by social media and 62.7% even shared this fake news.

The respondents gave their view on the reasons social media was chosen over mainstream media for #EndSARS protest. Most of the respondents, (74.3%) indicated that social media had an advantage over traditional media in news reportage of #EndSars protest. These responses agree with Bruns and Burgess (2011) as they demonstrated social media's ability to respond rapidly to breaking news – an ability which builds not least on the fact that new hashtags can be created by users themselves, without any need to seek approval from social media administrators. Respondents noted that through social media they learn about issues and events more rapidly, that they get information and news primarily through social media, and that they make decisions about support based on how others respond (the power of social media in altering neutrality). Social media networks were used to pass information about the protest more than the media. Ojoye (2018) social media provides an accessible platform for the birth of citizen journalism. However, he also noted that the use of social media platforms side-tracks the regulated mainstream media and offers the opportunity of direct communication with the target audience. His study, therefore agrees with the responses of the 51.1% respondents.

Social media has been a veritable tool in the mobilization of people to participate in peaceful protest activities than the traditional media as 78.9% representing the majority agreed that. In relation to this, Salman and Saad (2015) posited that most youth have social media accounts and social media has the potential to galvanise the youth for meaningful protest participation. Also, their study showed that youth preferred online media to express their opinions about contemporary issues through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs. A total of 63.8% of the respondents indicated that Social media networks were used more than the traditional media (e.g., TV, radio) during #EndSars protest this agrees with Oz (2016) that because of the mainstream media's partisan tendencies, social media coverage became an alternative way for citizens and for international media outlets to gain information.

It was therefore noted that, Twitter's character limit encourages concise, immediate updates, making it ideal for real-time reporting during protests. Youths shared live updates, mobilize support, and spread awareness quickly. All three platforms utilized algorithms that promoted viral content. When a post resonates with users, it can be shared widely, reaching a broader audience beyond the initial followers of the poster. This rapid sharing amplified protest messages and increase visibility. Instagram and TikTok are visual platforms where images and videos powerfully convey emotions and messages. Captivating visuals can attract attention and encouraged people to engage with protest-related content, helping to humanize the issues at stake. These platforms allow users to form communities around shared causes. Hashtags, challenges, and specific accounts united people with similar interests, making it easier to organize and mobilize collective actions.

Social media platforms are generally accessible to a vast audience, enabling individuals from diverse backgrounds to participate in and share their experiences related to protests. This inclusivity can help marginalized voices be heard. Protesters gained international attention through these platforms. Youths shared their experiences, drawing global support and highlighting issues that

may otherwise be overlooked by mainstream media. Many posts related to protests are created by individuals rather than traditional media outlets. This democratization of content creation allows for a wider range of perspectives and a diversity of voices within the discourse surrounding protests. It was therefore noted that Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok have become essential tools for activism, enabling rapid communication, fostering community, and amplifying voices in ways that traditional media may struggle to match.

Information is necessary for people to be liberated from the shackles of ignorance, misconceptions, economic stagnation, social unrest, and political instability and this cannot be achieved without timely, accurate, and relevant information. The study has further validated the fact that citizen journalism through social media in this era of globalisation plays a vital role in shaping political attitudes, promoting political involvements and influences social change among Ikeja youths. The use of social media for the mobilization of youths of Ikeja for protests activities has been found to be caused by social media's persuasive and influential nature. From the survey carried out on the 365 respondents in Ikeja, it accentuated that in this age and time youths use the media peculiar to them i.e., social media for protest activities rather than the traditional media. With the rise of social media and other digital media we are seeing increased activity in movements or protests through the unrestricted platform created by social media. Past generations were moved to organize protests in person, through physical gathering and decide to make their cause known through flyers, pamphlets, or word of mouth. Now, through social media, the present generations and even beyond can organize protest or movements through the comfort of their homes and then decide to take it offline.

D. CONCLUSION

Citizen journalists shared news and information rapidly on social media platforms, often before traditional news outlets. This quick distribution can shape public opinion by setting the initial narrative on an issue. Citizen journalists gave a platform to marginalized or underrepresented voices, bringing attention to

issues that may not have been covered by mainstream media. By amplifying these voices, they influenced public opinion and force authorities to address concerns. Citizen journalists used social media during the #EndSars to expose wrongdoing or hold authorities accountable for their actions. By documenting and sharing evidence of misconduct, they pressured authorities to take action and address issues that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. Social media content created by citizen journalists mobilized like-minded individuals and create grassroots movements around specific issues. These movements can put pressure on authorities to enact change in response to public opinion. Citizen journalists often crowdsource information from their followers to gather more details about a particular event or issue. By involving the public in the reporting process, they created a more comprehensive picture of an issue and influence public opinion. Citizen journalists offered alternative perspectives to mainstream media narratives, providing a more diverse range of viewpoints for the public to consider. By challenging the status quo, they shaped public opinion and push authorities to respond to new ideas and critiques. Inevitably citizen journalism users have a powerful influence on public opinions and exerted pressure on authorities through their social media content by providing diverse perspectives, holding authorities accountable, and mobilizing grassroots movements.

Recommendation

First, the media landscape is ever changing and the traditional media needs to seek more objective ways in improving the reportage of events especially of national importance and concern to youths. **Second**, The government rather than seeking ways to strip youths off their rights to freedom of speech and information through banning of social media platforms e.g The Social Media Bill, should embrace social media as part and parcel of this new age. Also, Governments and political parties, in turn, must take into account the discussions, information and other types of content that is publicly available in social media, and use them as additional sources of knowledge about public opinion sentiment. **Third**, The administration of WhatsApp and Twitter should put measures in place in order to limit “fake news” shared on the platform that would causes thousands

of inaccurate posts and reposts of misleading information. **Fourth**, Traditional businesses can embrace the digital-first generation by investing in online platforms for seamless targeted publics experiences, leveraging social media for engagement, adopting mobile-friendly interfaces, and incorporating data analytics for personalized services. Traditional media should prioritize agility, innovation, and adaptability to meet changing customer needs swiftly. Providing omni-channel experiences and enhancing digital marketing efforts can also help bridge the gap with the digital-first generation, improving brand relevance and customer satisfaction.

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