SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN NIGERIA: AN APPRAISAL OF FACEBOOK USERS IN EKITI STATE

By

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Abstract

This study examined social media as an Advocate for Social Justice in Nigeria: An Appraisal of Facebook Users in Ekiti State. However, it also ascertained the level at which the Facebook Users in Ekiti state make use of social media for social justice. This paper employed Media Dependency Theory (MDT). Moreover, this study adopted survey design method and three local government areas each from the three senatorial districts in Ekiti state was stratified, and were randomly selected. The population for the selected local government is 894,254. However, the study considered 400 participants which make up the sample size and this was arrived at through Taro Yamane's formula. The findings of this study revealed that, social media serve as advocate for social justice in Nigeria, also, social media played major role as it serves as platform for the campaign against injustice in Nigeria. It also concludes that, social media influencer project issues related to social justice advocacy campaign, social issue and comic skit. Finally, the study recommends that, the general public should give much preference to social media advocacy campaign on injustice as it helps them to share their opinions on such issues in the society. It also recommends that government agency in-charge of social media regulation should regulate social media in order to curb deception in the social media report on issues related to injustice in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Media Advocacy, Social Justice, Social Media.*

Introduction

In this 21st century, social media has become tools for several advocacy campaign especially in Nigeria where the ownership influence as contributed to the dysfunctional of media content. Base on it powerful effect to serve large number of audience without any fear of ownership control, the general public found more confidence in adopting social media as a medium through which they express their opinions, perspective or idea concerning salient issues in the society. However, this make social media become the most powerful avenues for helping people especially the less privilege or minorities who advocate for their right whenever it's being violated. Hitherto, the mainstream media seem not to have been successful in evolving any new and ready platform that encourage most people to participate in advocating for social justice base on ownership control or government policies or influence (Dhaha, 2013).

The use of social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Blogs and others as a new means to disseminate messages and engage the audience in participatory communication has created a new dimension in advocating for social justice in Nigeria especially in Ekiti state, making it easier to organize and disseminate ideas, opinions and perception in order to achieve certain goal in the society. It has been

suggested that using social media tools in recent times, has become an effective way to expand reach, foster engagement and increase access to credible messages on issues related to social justice (Dunu & Uzochukwu, 2011).

Historically, in Nigeria society there has always being reports on violation of human right base on the level of corruption and not adhering to the principle of rules of law base on the fact that, some certain class especially those classified to be the first class citizen in Nigeria proof to be above the law as a result of influence of power (Timiun, G. 2005).However, there has being several protest for justice against the violation of human right in Nigeria, especially in early 70s and 80s where several group defending human right stage protest either against government abuse of power or violation of citizen right to health, education, safety and denial of other social amenities. Perhaps, most of the protest back in the days were subjected to victimization base on the fact that, government always deployed the media especially government owned media which happened to be the only source of media then to twistthe course of the protest.

However, the advent of social media in the late 19s and in this 21st century has reshaped and restructured the narrative base on the fact thatthe citizens now have access to media at the finger tips and this enable them to form platform for the discourse of society issues, especially those related to injustice in the society(Garba, 2015). However, it could be noted that, social media especially Facebookhas helped to report several act of injustice especially during 2020 EndSars protest in Nigeria whereby the youths seeked for justice against SARS brutality. The protest was accustomed with the strength of social media in advocating for cancellation of a particular sector of Nigeria Police Force knows as SARS. The co-convener of the protest make use of social media especially Twitter to discuss, share, unveil their perception towards SARS and the general public to be fully aware of their grieviances. Apart from the EndSars social media advocacy for justice, there are order social media campaign especially on issues related to child molestation, it could be recalled that November 2022, a case of a man accused 13 years old in Ado Ekiti went viral through the social media, and this generate several reaction as people called for justice for the victims. The case through social media captured the global attention and justice was achieved as the man was sentenced to 40 years of imprisonment.

Indeed, social media has become the most essential medium for people across most countries to make their opinions known through reaction. Particularly, as Nigerian are seizing the social media to

advocate for social justice each time the need arises (Omenugha, Ndolo & Uzuegbunam, 2012; Obijiofor, 2009).

Advocacy efforts usually require an action of some sort, be it charitable contribution, raising awareness or mobilisation on the streets. As a result of their remarkable growth rate, social media could be used to tackle a problem as part of community initiatives. Social media also allow audiences to discuss causes that might be ignored or downplayed by the traditional media. Social media ensure a wide reach which allows two-way communication and enables participation in advocacy efforts. The popularity of social media also shows that they are increasingly necessary to reach demographics who are rapidly transforming their manner of interaction. Since social media thrive on interactivity, users that realise that their contributions can have swift effects are more likely to participate in the advocacy because these collaborative efforts will encourage even more participation; making collaborative solutions possible (Obar, 2014).

Social justice is a major driver of equity of human rights which is important for any society that is concerned about development. Social justice advocacy "works for structural and enduring changes that increase the power of those who are most disadvantaged politically, economically, and socially" (Klugman, 2010). In a country like Nigeria where a lot of the social systems are ineffective (Dike, 2010), this is important as social justice system deals with discriminations and injustice especially for people that are underprivileged because of religion, gender, age, disability, gender expression, nationality, economic status, or 'sexual orientation'(LaMarche, 2009). Therefore, conversations focusing on social justice could ensure that awareness is brought on those pressing concerns (Torres-Harding, Steele, Schulz, Taha and Pico, 2014). Critical discussions around social justice concerns also could help promote awareness of social justice issues.

As a global medium, social media have proved vital in creating awareness for causes; for instance, the Arab Springs, *#BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, #Endsars* campaigns. In July 2016, Mayowa Ahmed, a young lady suffering from ovarian cancer used social media to solicit financial support. She was able to raise 32 million Naira in three days for her treatment. There have been several other campaigns such as *#OccupyNigeria* in 2012 for the removal of fuel subsidy;*#SaveDebbie*2012, Debbie Osarere a lady who had breast cancer;*#SaveOke* 2012, Ighiwoto Okeghene John, who battled diabetes;*#SaveFunmi* 2013, Funmi Lawal a young law graduate with cancer;*#BringBackOurGirls* 2014, the Chibok girls that were kidnapped by Boko Haram terrorists and *#SaveMirabel*2015, a rape victim. Social

media have certainly added crucial elements, such as virility to how people communicate about life-changing topics. Hence, this study investigatedsocial media advocacy role for social justice in Nigeria with a study of Facebook users in Ekiti State.

Literature Review

A crucial role of the mass media in facilitating relative justice in Nigeria lies in advocacy journalism, which is the use of journalism techniques to promote a specific political or social cause. Jernigan and Wright (2016) advocacy journalism, also called media advocacy, as the strategic use of the mass media as a resource to advance a social or public policy initiative.

These definitions and many others suggest that advocacy journalism implies four assumptions: (1) it applies journalism techniques, (2) it is evidence-based reporting, (3) it has a stand point, and (4) it promotes a specific cause. Along the premises of these four assumptions, advocacy journalism could be employed to make a strong case for transitional justice in Nigeria. First, it would confer on media the crucial responsibility of articulating a justification for transitional justice, and not only disseminating this articulation, but also mobilizing the public to support and clamour for the institutionalisation of transitional justice. Secondly, by the principles of advocacy journalism, journalists and media workers in conjunction with other stakeholders constitute themselves into a civil society, which has the primary responsibility of highlighting and advocating against issues of injustice and inequalities (Olorunnisola, A. A. and Martin, B. L. 2012). By advocacy journalism, media workers would also have a greater opportunity to partner more effectively with government institutions such as the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary in pursuing the cause of transitional justice. The multimedia approach, as explained by (McKay, L. 2015), involves the use of different forms of media available in the urban, rural, and semi-urban areas separately and simultaneously. The different media forms include the traditional media (radio, television, newspapers and magazines), new media (internet and social media), indigenous media, and community media.

Another critical role of the mass media in the search for transitional justice lies in the agenda setting function. This function presupposes the impact of the media on cognitive changes in the audience, with the main idea being that the media indicate to the public what the main issues of the day are, and the public perceives these issues as important to actively respond to (McQuail, 2005). Through agenda setting, the media would not only raise awareness of the need for transitional

justice, but would also instill in the public ideas to work with towards the realization of transitional justice. This is what is referred to as framing, an aspect of agenda setting theory, which is today treated as a separate theory because of its importance in explaining the process of mass media effect. Framing is the process of centrally organizing ideas for news content that supplies a context and suggest what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration (Griffin, 2000). Explaining framing further, McQuail (2005) maintains that "frames define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments and suggest remedies." The mass media could therefore frame the need for transitional justice in such a way as to attract overwhelming support and instigate action.

The community broadcasting projectas a form of mass media practice, is an excellent tool in facilitating the establishment and sustenance of an effective system of transitional justice.Community broadcasting stands for democratic, participatory and horizontal communicationas against the existing public and commercial broadcasting forms, which are largely vertical or one way kind of communication that excludes many people (mostly the rural dwellers and urban peasants) from active communication. Community broadcasting thus becomes a good vehicle that can drive messages of mobilization and agitation for transitional justice. Nigeria is the only country in the West African sub-region that is yet to commence the community broadcasting project. The delay in the commencement of the issuance of licenses for community broadcasting is an indication that the government is reluctant in implementing this project, which can facilitate all round development, as it is "the oil which helps the community development machine to keep running without breaking down" (Alumuku, 2006). There is every need for all stakeholders not only in the mass media industry, but in the Nigerian project, to continue to agitate and mount pressure on the government to approve the immediate take off of community broadcasting.

In the present era of information societywith many people in Nigeria having access to different forms of digital communication, the use of new media are very influential in a campaign for social justice in Nigeria. New media are understood as the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in their associated contexts, to include the juxtaposition of three elements: technological artifacts and devices; activities, practices and uses; and social arrangements and organizations that form around the devices and practices (Lovejoy, K. *et al*. 2012). Accessibility to individual users as senders and/or receivers, interactivity, multiplicity of use and open-ended character, ubiquity and

delocatedness, and convergence are some important characteristics of the new media that give them an edge over the traditional mass media. Thus, the new media are hugely advantageous in a campaign for social justice in the sense that they have the potential to enable: (1) many-to-many conversation; (2) simultaneous reception, alteration and redistribution of cultural objects; (3) the dislocation of communicative action from the posts of the nation, from the territorialized spatial relations of modernity; (4) the provision of instantaneous global contact; (5) the insertion of the modern subject into a machine apparatus that is not networked (Poster, cited in McQuail, 2015).

The effectiveness of new media in a campaign of this nature is seen in the example of the Arab Spring. The new media, particularly the social media, have been acknowledged as one of the strongest factors that contributed to the success of the revolutionary wave that swept across some countries in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011, leading to leadership change in those countries. As the sit-tight former leaders of Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Bahrain, and Yemen exercised firm governmental control over the traditional media in these countries, the people resorted to the use of the social media as an alternative voice that agitated loudly and clearly for leadership change. This voice was actively heard and received widely, attracting national and international support, which contributed to the leadership change in these countries. The social media could do same in championing the cause of transitional justice in Nigeria.

Uses of Social Media

Since the rise of the Internet in the early 1990s, the world's Internet population has immensely grown into billions (Shirky, 2011). Previous constraints of distance and time allowed some individuals brief connections with friends and family during holidays or the periodic phone call. However, the advent of social media has changed things. Social media are used in disseminating information. They provide current information about climate, activities of the government or disasters. They are also usually the first source for breaking news, celebrity gossip or acts of revolutions. Formal government responses to crisis are now seen on social media because officials tweet them, instead of relying on just the traditional media (Hariss, 2016). Social media also unite people with shared interests through groups because of their widespread reach (Aaker and Smith, 2010).

As a public relations (PR) tool, social media have provedtheirimportance, it is well channeled and can makeor mar brands based on how well or terribly they respond to a crisis (Hariss, 2016). On 11th of July , O2 a leading telecommunications

companyexperienced network problem affecting its customers, displeased customers immediately started venting their frustrations on Twitter. Some went as far as aggressively requesting to end their subscriptions and port to other providers. This was a PR nightmare for O2. Thus, instead of replying with the usual “please bear with us”O2 surprised the world by replying everyone in a truthful, candid, authentic and compassionate way. The triumph based on O2's unexpected reply was obvious by how most of the ensuing dialog moved from overwhelming rage to almost disbelief and an appreciation of the different but fantastic way the company was handling the crisis via its @O2 Twitter handle. The positive reaction effectively turned around people’s outrage towards the network outage to its refreshing approach to crisis management (Lyon and Georgiou, 2012).

Social media has also changed the communication and collaborative methods that audiences employ in teaching and research. They ensure that users are updated with subjects of their interests, involved in activities that are out-of-reach and cannot be attended in person, and to grow international connections (Hariss, 2016). The speed with which news can now be obtained around the world has removed barriers to information control and dissemination. Therefore, social media has become impressive for social change. Barack Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign has been dubbed the first campaign to successfully utilise social media in a political setting. The president's political team were able to mobilise support and generate over three-quarters of a billion dollars. Today, social media are an integral part of grassroots campaigns (Lovejoy and Saxton, 2012; Douai, Wedlock, Auter and Rudyk, 2013; Saxton and Wang, 2014). Social media platforms are also empowering people around the world to demand basic human rights. Social movements of today employ the use of social media to raise awareness about issues such as police brutality, which seems to be on the increase. Hashtags are essentially changing the way an audience can view and control information especially harnessing support for a cause.

Nigerians also used social media for political communication during the 2011 and 2015 general elections (Ojo, 2014). Political parties and their affiliates reached out to the voters on social media to seek support while the voters also employed social media to report their experiences and receive election-related information (Chukwuebuka, 2013).

Social media has also been used to challenge stereotypes and educate people. For instance, No-Holds-Barred-interactive (*#NHBI*) is an online interactive chat on Twitter about various controversial relationship topics. It is a platform for discussions of adult-sensitive issues. It holds

every Thursday, 9pm Nigerian Time on Twitter. The aim of the show is to break the culture of silence and encourage audiences to discuss issues that the society generally tends to shy away from. Issues that have been discussed include relationship body count, domestic abuse, rape, abortion, protection during sex and social media relationships. The programme stopped at Season Five and is currently on hiatus. Social media also expose societal ills, for instanceon October 62013, the killing of some students of the University of Port Harcourt, Aluu, was exposed. Essentially, social media platforms have demonstrated their current value in today's world.

Social Justice Advocacy and Social Media

Social justice emphasises the empowerment of vulnerable and/or oppressed population. Social media have been said to empower organisations to engage with their current and potential stakeholders by mobilising collective action with immediacy. Social media also offer cheap approaches to mobilising supporters, encouraging communication with large and diverse audiences, while focusing on causes that are getting downplayed by the traditional media (Greenberg *et al.*2013). The successes of social media could show netizens that there are many other ways to join social movements. Advocates can encourage others by showing actual videos of events on sites such as YouTube; while creating websites focusing solely on their advocacy campaigns such as the Bring Back Our Girls website. Social media could also challenge excuses by individuals against participating in the campaigns because of lack of information; thus making supporting an advocacy campaign as easy as clicking the mouse or pressing the "Send/Retweet/Like/Share" button (Mansfield, 2011; Obar, Zube and Lampe, 2012; Guo and Saxton, 2013).

Internationally, social media have proved their significance in fighting social justice. For instance on March 5, the Invisible Children Organisation, a San Diego-based non-profit advocacy organisation, founded by Jason Russell and dedicated to exposing the actions of Joseph Kony, an indicted Ugandan war criminal, uploaded the "Kony 2012" audio-visual to YouTube. The goal was to make Joseph Kony internationally known to make his arrest faster. Within a week, the organisation had generated about 5 million USD to back the cause. The posted audio-visual of Kony was watched over 70million times and the Invisible Children Organisation had received global media consideration. Within three days, the *#Kony2012* campaign became one of the greatest viral successes in the history of social media so far. Within a month, the campaign prompted action by the United States Congress where over one third of U.S. senators supported a bilateral

resolution condemning Kony and his troops for "unconscionable crimes against humanity" (McCarthy, 2012; Guo and Saxton, 2013).

A Canadian advocacy organisation (Openmedia.ca) in 2012, started a campaign to "Stop Online Spying" which was in opposition to the Canadian government's Bill C-30. The idea of the bill was to extend the Canadian government's online surveillance. Openmedia used social media campaigns and an online petition that was able to garner over 150,000 signatures. By February 2013, the Justice Minister Rob Nicholson announced the government's decision to terminate the bill (Obar, 2014).

In 2012, after the fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin, people started using the *#BlackLivesMatter* hashtag to speak out against indiscriminate killings of Black Americans and numerous groups have used it to press for change on social media. There have been many other shootings such as Michael Brownan African-American teen who was fatally shot by Darren Wilsona 28-year old white Ferguson police officer; Eric Garner, who died in New York Cityafter a police officer put him in "chokehold" during an arrest, Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old African American from Cleveland in November 2014 who was holding a pellet gun in a park; Walter Scott of South Carolinawho was shot in the back multiple times in April 2015. In June 2015, the Texas pool party did not result in any deaths or serious injuries, but it nonetheless shocked a lot of people because of the extreme employed aggression by the police when the videos emerged. In the case of the Trayvon Martin killing, the traditional media coverage of the event was almost non-existent before it went viral on social media because of the constant debate.

Police violence against African Americans came to light through online videos that went viral fast, as a result of an online network of activists that sprung up. For example, the *Ferguson Action network* was among the first to help spread news and video of the shooting of Tyrone Harris Jr. which disputed the official version of Tyrone Harris Jr.'s arrest provided by the St. Louis County Police. In 2014, following several social movements in support of the black lives matter and other hashtags, the United Nations Committee against Torture condemned police brutality and extreme use of force by law enforcement in the United States, and emphasised the disheartening frequency of police shootings or fatal pursuits of unarmed black individuals (Nebehay, 2014). After deadly Boko Haram radicals kidnapped hundreds of girls from a Nigerian boarding school on April 14th, 2014 around 11:45pm, an international campaign was started to pressure the Nigerian government to *#BringBackOurGirls*. The abduction took place at

Government Secondary School, Chibok, in the Chibok Local Government area of Borno State, Nigeria. Several gunmen stormed the school on the pretence that they had information that the school was going to be attacked by insurgents. They claimed to be there to provide help by taking the students to a safe location. Some of the insurgents were reportedly in army camouflage which made it easy to get the girls into the vehicles they came in. The school buildings were razed afterwards, and a video reportedly made available by the Boko Haram terrorist group on 5th May 2014, had its leader, Abubakar Shekau claiming responsibility for the abduction of the girls with threats to marry them off. The Police and SSS finally put the total figure of the abducted girls at 276.

The *#SaveMirabel* campaign started in 2015 after the Mirabel Sexual Assault Referral Centre that was formally funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), feared that it would no longer be able to cater for people, based on lack of funds. The campaign aim was to keep the centre open until a more permanent funding could be secured. The target of $5,000 was expected to sustain 100 patients. The centrebased in Lagos State Teaching Hospital with its small but dedicated staff, started in 2013 by Partnership for Justice, It was one of the few crises centres in Lagos that catered to rape survivors. It has helped many rape victims, including minors, adjust physically and mentally to the aftermath of assault. A group of social media influencers set up a *GoFundMe* page to help raise funds to keep the Mirabel Rape Crisis Centre open. Nigerian media personality Wana Udobang also did a feature story for Aljazeera. The centre stated in its crowdfunding plea that securing financial backing had been unsuccessful as many corporate funders shied away from getting involved with a rape centre. Thanks to the viral social media campaign especially on Twitter, the centre was able to generate slightly above $4,000 in less than 18 hours to help sustain its operations and many more offered to help in several capacities such as working as unpaid volunteers (Aljazeera, 2015).

The ability of social media to endorse and connect individuals as well as groups has been acclaimed particularly as it emphasises how these technologies contribute to the ease and speed with which groups are mobilised, and how people are remarkably able to increase their information sharing capability. Hashtags might not necessarily lead to social change on their own; butwhen enough people speak passionately about the same issue, the world and the government listen and act accordingly (Shirky, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

Media Dependency Theory (MDT)

Melvin DeFleur and Sandra Ball-Rokeach introduced the Media Dependency Theory (MDT) in 1976. The MDT, also known as the Media System Dependency theoryis an addition to or an extension ofthe Uses and Gratifications Theory. MDT is one of the first theories that recognises that the audience is an active part of the communication process. At the core of this theory, the basic assumption is that if a person relies on specific media to meet certain needs (such as information, education, and entertainment), the media will be more significant in the life of such a personand consequently that media will have more effects on the said person. Littlejohn (2002:325) explains that "If a person finds a medium that provides them with several functions that are central to their desires, they will be more inclined to continue to use that medium in the future".

Media dependency theory mentions some situations where people's media needs, and their dependency on media and the potential for greater media effectsare increased. The first one is when the number of media and centrality of media functions in a society is high. For instance, the media in Nigeria act as a fourth branch of government, a gatekeeper especially during crises, and tool for entertainment. So, the media have a better chance to serve the needs and affect their consumers. The second condition happens when a society is undergoing social change and conflict. For instance, when there is a public protest, crisis, a natural disaster, or during elections, people turn to the media to help them make sense of these events. Thus, the media have a greater opportunity to exert effects during these times of social change and conflict (Ball-Rokeach and Jung, 2009).

Media dependency theory is useful for analysing social media as it provides a framework for the many relationships through which information can flow in a social media environment. Understanding MDT is important because social networking sites have become an integral part of daily life. In a study by Thadani and Cheung (2011), they anchored their study on the MDT and investigated the structure and dimensionality of the social network sites. They also evaluated the extent to which students are dependent on the online social network. Lee (2012) investigated the role of social networking sites in facilitating emotional expressions. Using MDT, he performed a qualitative content analysis of comments generated by users of YouTube. Brough and Li (2013) also used MDT to analyse how global human rights advocates leverage web 2.0 video networks.

Social media are currently being used for information, entertainment, and social relationships and at the core of the MDT are the needs to explain how individuals use the media to satisfy their needs, discover underlying motives for individuals' media use and identify the positive and the negative consequences of media use. This study finds the above-mentioned theoretical assumptions in MDT particularly relevant since it would capture the motivations for the use of social media, social media practices, frequency of use, and charitable contributions, from the perspectives of advocacy groups and the intended audience of advocacy efforts.

Since the theory concurs with the notion that audiences rely on the media for information determining their decisions, the media should help individuals develop certain attitudes regarding issues such as advocacy on social media. Hence, it is worth investigating if the assumptions of MDT are consistent with the perceptions of social media users, social media influencers and advocacy groups towards social justice advocacy in Nigeria. This theory does not touch on the characteristics/features of the social media, which is why the theory of media richness was additionally considered in this study.

Methodology

The research design for this study is survey method. Survey method was used in order to ensure proper data gathering base on the fact that, the study was opinionated, however, the area of the study consists of the three selected local government areas each from the three senatorial districts of Ekiti State and this include: Ado Local Government in Ekiti Central Senatorial District, Ikole Local Government in Ekiti North Senatorial District and Ikere Local Government in Ekiti South Senatorial District.The numerical population for the three adopted local government is 894,254the breakdown is stated below:

Ikole:	255, 200
Ikere:	103, 054
Ado:	536, 000
Total:	**894, 254**

A stratified random sampling approach was considered appropriate for this study, the local government were picked randomly and the respondents were selected based on availability.Sample was arrived at through the use of Taro Yamane formula. The sample size is 400.

Out of 400 questionnaire distributed only 365 were correctly filled and returned which were used for the analysis.

Data Presentation and Analysis of Variable Sampled Index: Personal Data Distribution

S/NVariables	No of Respondents	Percentage
1. Gender	Male 257	70%
	Female 108	30%
	Total 365	**100%**
2.Marital Status	Married 269	74%
	Single 96	26%
	Total 365	**100%**
3. Age Distribution	25 – 30 9	2%
	31 – 35 108	30%
	36 – 40 162	44%
	40 – 45 50	14%
	46 and Above 36	10%
	Total 365	**100%**

From the above table, item (1) attest to the fact that257 respondents representing 70% are male while the remaining 108 respondents representing 30% are female. Also in the same table, item (2) with 269 respondents representing 74% are married while the remaining 96 respondents representing 26% are single. Finally, in item (3)9 respondents representing 2% were between 25 – 30years, 108 respondents representing 30% were between 31 – 35years, 162 respondents representing 44% were between 36 – 40 and 50 respondents representing 14% were 40 – 45years while the remaining 36 respondents representing 10% were 46 and above.

Table 1: What role does social media play as an advocate for social justice in Nigeria?

Variable	No of respondents	Percentage
Do you have access to social media?	Yes 361	99%
	No 4	1%
	Total 365	**100%**
Does social media serve as advocate for social justice in Nigeria?	Yes 345	95%
	No 20	5%
	Total 365	**100%**
What role does social media play as an advocate for social justice in Nigeria?	Fight against injustice 21	6% 14%
	Projecting information 51 related to injustice	76%
	Platform for the 278 campaing against injustice	4% **100%**
	None of the Above 15 **Total 365**	

From the above table, item (1)361 respondents representing 99% admit thatthey have access to social media while the remaining 4 respondents representing 1% have contrary opinion. Moreover, item (2) in the above table revealed that345 respondents representing 95% admit thatsocial media serve as advocate for social justice in Nigeria while the remaining 20 respondents representing 5% have contrary opinion. Finally, in item (3)21 respondents representing 6% admit that fighting against injustice is the major role played by social media as advocate for social justice in Nigeria, 51 respondents representing 14% admit that projecting information related to injustice is the major role played by social media as advocate for social justice in Nigeria, 278 respondents representing 76% admit that social media played major role as its serve as platform for the campaignagainst injustice, while the remaining 15 respondents representing 4% have others opinion not stated in the study.

Table 2: How social media influencer project issues related to social justice advocacy on Fasebook and the current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria

Variable	No of respondents		Percentage
Do you make use of Facebook to project social justice?	Yes	297	81%
	No	68	19%
	Total	**365**	**100%**
Do you consider Facebook as a functional platform for the campaign against injustice in Nigeria?	Yes	304	83%
	No	61	17%
	Total	**365**	**100%**
In which manner does social media influencer project issues related to social justice	As advocacy campaign	35	15%
	As social issue	56	10%
	As comic skit	37	65%
	All of the Above	**237**	**100%**
	Total	**365**	
Does social media through it advocacy campaigns add value to social justice in Nigeria?	Yes	297	81%
	No	68	19%
	Total	**365**	**100%**
What is the current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria?	Very high	287	79%
	High	15	4%
	Very low	33	9%
	Low	30	8%
	Total	**365**	**100%**

From the above table, item (1) 297 respondents representing 81% admit that they make use of Facebook to project social justice while the remaining 68 respondents representing 19% have contrary opinion.

Moreover, item (2) in the above table revealed that304 respondents representing 18% admit thatthey consider Facebook as a functional platform for the campaign against injustice in Nigeria while the remaining 61 respondents representing 17% have contrary opinion. In item (3), 35 respondents representing 10% admit thatsocial media influencer project issues related to social justice as an advocacy campaign, 56 respondents representing 15% admit that social media influencer project issues related to social justice as social issue, 37 respondents representing 10% admit that social media influencer project issues related to social justice as comic skit while the remaining 237 respondents representing 65% admit social media influencer project issues related to social justice as advocacy campaign, social issue and comic skit. Moreover, in item (4) of the above table, 297 respondents representing 81% admit that social media through it advocacy campaigns add value to social justice in Nigeria while the remaining 68 respondents representing 19% have contrary opinion. Finally, in item (5)287 respondents representing 79% admit thatthe current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is very high, 15 respondents representing 4% admit that the current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is high,33 respondents representing 9% admit that the current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is very lowwhile the remaining 30 respondents representing 8% admit that current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is low.

Discussion of Findings

This paper examined social media as an advocate for social justice in Nigeria: An appraisal of Facebook Users in Ekiti State.

Research question 1 investigate the role thatsocial media play as an advocate for social justice in Nigeria, however, item (2) revealed that social media serve as advocate for social justice in Nigeria with the highest number of 345 respondents representing 95%. Moreover, it was discovered in table 2 item (3) where the majority number of 278 respondents representing 76% admitted to the fact that social media played major role as itserves as platform for the campaign against injustice in Nigeria. From the above attestation, it was deduced thatsocial media serves as advocate for social justice in Nigeria and also that, social media played major role as itserves as platform for the campaign against injustice in Nigeria.

Question 2 was examined how social media influencer project issues related to social justice advocacy. However, it was discovered in table 3

item (3) where the total highest number of 237 respondents representing 65% admitted thatsocial media influencer project issues related to social justice advocacy as advocacy campaign, social issue and comic skit. The above deduced that, social media influencer project issues related to social justice advocacy campaign, social issue and comic skit as attested by the highest number of respondents.

Finally, **question 3** investigates the current status of social media use for social justice advocacy in Nigeria. It was revealed in table 3 item (5) that, the current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is very high as attested by the highest number of 287 respondents representing 79%. Therefore, it can be deduced from the above attestation that, the current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is very high as attested by the highest number of respondents.

Summary of Findings

The advent of social media especially Facebook has enhanced free flow of effective communication especially on issues related to social justice in Nigeria. This study examined social media as an advocate for social justice in Nigeria: an appraisal of facebook users in Ekiti State, however, it also ascertained the level at which the Facebook users in Ekiti state make use of social media for social justice. This paper employed Media Dependency Theory (MDT) to support the conceptual review in order to aid proper understanding of the research proposition. Moreover, this paper adopted survey design method and three local government areas each from the three senatorial district in Ekiti state was stratified and randomly selected, the study considered 400 participants which make up the sampling size and this was derived from 894,254entire population of the selected local government areas through Taro Yamane formula. The findings of this report revealed the personal data of the respondentsinitem (1) that the total highest number of 257 respondents representing 70% are male, moreover, it was revealed in item (2) of the same table thatthe total highest number of 269 respondents representing 74% are married, also item (3) revealed thatthe highest number of 162 respondents representing 44% were between 36 – 40. However, through the above findings, this study revealed that social media serve as advocate for social justice in Nigeria and also that, social media played major role as its serve as platform for the campaign against injustice in Nigeria. It also revealed that, social media influencer project issues related to social justice advocacy campaign, social issue and comic skit. Finally, the findings revealed

thatthe current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is very high.

Conclusion

Following the above findings, this paper concludes thatsocial media greatly serve as advocate for social justice in Nigeria, as it serves as platform for the campaign against injustice in Nigeria. The study also concludes that, social media influencer project issues related to social justice advocacy campaign, social issue and comic skit and also that the current status of social media usage for social justice advocacy in Nigeria is very high. Therefore, this study established the fact that social media has serve majorly as an advocate of social justice in the time, especially during EndSars protest and some other human right campaign against violation of human right in Nigeria.

Recommendations

In view of the above conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

- The general public should give much preference to social media advocacy campaign on injustice as it helps them to share their opinions on such issues in the society.
- Government agency in-charge of social media regulation should see to regulate social media in order to curb deception in the social media report on issues related to injustice in Nigeria.
- Members of the public should always endeavour to make use of social media effectively to share any form of injustice in their environment.
- Social media influencers should be more objective in reporting issues related to social injustice in Nigeria in order to curb misconception and mix reaction among member of the public.

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