

ASSESSING POLICE BRUTALITY AND PERCEPTION OF YOUTHS' USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA (THE END SARS PROTEST EXPERIENCE IN NIGERIA)

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Abstract

In light of the ENDSARS protest movement that occurred in 2020, there is a clear distinction between the duties of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the actions in which they execute. For a very long time, the NPF has had its powers unchecked, as police brutality has become one of the main social issues in the country over the years. This has caused an outcry and revolution by the citizens. Still, in more recent times, social media has become the primary communication tool to spearhead the campaign against police brutality in Nigeria. Based on this, the research study employed a descriptive survey research design and adopted a purposive non-probability sampling technique. The Taro Yamane formula was used to arrive at a sample size of 253. The research instrument used is a self-developed structured questionnaire. It was developed in line with the research objectives and is based on a 5-Likert-type scale questionnaire structure. The finding showed that social media is a very effective communication tool being used in the fight against police brutality. The study recommended that the Police Force should be adequately trained in relation to civilians, on how to handle criminality without necessarily engaging in brutality. The study also concluded that social media is a veritable tool in exposing and combating police atrocities, including brutality. Hence, the use of social media uncovered and exposed this ugly trend of police brutality, as well as the role social media played in creating awareness and inspiring a campaign against all forms of police brutality.

Keywords: Nigerian Police Force (NPF), ENDSARS, Police Brutality, and Social Media.

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Introduction

The police are an instrument whose objective is the prevention and detection of crime. Police is said to be the function of that branch of the administrative machinery of government which is charged with the preservation of public order and tranquillity, the promotion of the public health, safety, and morals, and the prevention, detection, and punishment of crimes. Nigerian police is empowered to uphold and enforce the law impartially, and to protect life, liberty, property, human rights, and dignity of the members of the public; to promote and preserve public order; to protect internal security, to prevent and control terrorist activities, breaches of communal harmony,

militant activities and other situations affecting Internal Security; to protect public properties including roads, railways, bridges, vital installations and establishments etc. against acts of vandalism, Violence or any attack, etc. (Section 57 of Model Police Act, 2006).

The term "police brutality" is commonly used to refer to various human rights violations by police. This includes beatings, racial abuse, unlawful killings, torture, or indiscriminate use of riot control agents at protests (Amnesty International, 2017). It refers to the unwarranted use of force by members of the police force against civilians. Thus, police brutality has been described as a conscious and deliberate action which a police officer undertakes

towards suspects who are usually members of a 'powerless' social group, such as members of a minority race. Essentially, police brutality extends but is not limited to any act of the officers, which goes against the postulations in their code and system of conduct. Though the government had thought it wise to hand over arms and ammunition to help them better protect the citizens, it quickly backfired and opened an avenue for all sorts of atrocities within the force. According to Dalberg (1887), power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. In many ways, it is evident how this statement has come to apply in Nigeria. From the grassroots level of community affairs to the highest level, that is the Federal Government, there are reports of abuse and misuse of power, of office and position over time in Nigeria that can be seen clearly now.

Common examples of police brutality include Violence or physical attack, shootings, strip search, usage of Tasers or stun guns, and restraints (Hupy & Abraham, 2020). Aside from physical brutality, which is one of the most common forms of police brutality, it also covers physical or verbal assault during police procedures, such as apprehending or interrogating a suspect, which is done in such a way that it exceeds the amount of force necessary to create a safe environment, whilst respecting the rights of a suspect. Hence, it covers the usage of language which is degrading and insulting to an individual.

By virtue of law, for instance, the **1960 Criminal Procedure Code** in Nigeria contains provisions relating to the use of force by police officers. Police officers are permitted to employ an amount of force which is legitimate and appropriate in a given situation. A longstanding Police Force Order 237, titled Rules of Guidance in the Use of Firearms by the Police, previously stipulated as follows: A police officer may use firearms under the following circumstances: When attacked and his life is in danger and there is no other way of saving his life; When defending a person who is attacked and he believes on reasonable grounds that he cannot otherwise protect that person attacked from death, and so on.

The activities of police officers, hence, amount to police brutality when such activity or response to a situation is. This, however, may create problems in interpretation where one is to determine just what amount of force is considered appropriate in a given situation. The distinction between reasonable and excessive force is often drawn by case-by-case examination. In other words, each event is examined by its unique circumstances. For example, the way that a police officer will apprehend two unarmed people who are caught shoplifting is not the same way that a person

brandishing a loaded rifle will be treated. Other factors, such as whether the police officer believed himself to be in danger, whether the suspect was unarmed, and lastly, what a reasonable police officer would have done in similar circumstances, are also considered.

Hupy & Abraham (2020) opine that the #EndSars protest was led purely by youths, fuelled by social media, and organised without a formal leadership structure. In the previous years of Nigeria's political history, the ongoing protests created an environment that would have inspired a military coup. The #5for5 demands of the #EndSars protest resulted in an immediate concession from the government; however, the implementation of their demands remains to be seen. The style of the #EndSars protest may inspire copycat youth-led, social media-fuelled and leaderless protests across West Africa, ushering in a new type of protest in the region.

Adebayo Afolaranmi (2024) conducted a study to investigate the critical role of social media in the #EndSARS movement in Southwest Nigeria, specifically, in 2020. Providing insights into the complex interplay between social media, political activism, and governance in Nigeria, the Findings reveal that social media was instrumental in mobilising and organising the movement, enabling activists to disseminate information, coordinate protests, and build a sense of collective identity. Participants who actively used social media reported significantly higher levels of involvement in mobilisation efforts. While social media played a crucial role in shaping public opinion, the study also highlighted challenges such as government censorship, misinformation, and online harassment. This research contributes to understanding social media's potential for promoting democratic governance and social justice in Nigeria. The study underscores the importance of addressing the challenges and limitations associated with social media use in political mobilisation, including the need for effective counter-narratives to combat misinformation.

Adamu & Sunday (2025) carried out a study titled: EndSARS Protests: Social Media's Role in Youth Mobilisation and Peace Advocacy in Nigeria, 2025. The study examines the role of social media in conflict mobilisation and peace advocacy in Nigeria, focusing on protests in Television Community, Kaduna South Local Government Area. The study is guided by the Frustration-Aggression theory; the research explores how youth-led movements utilise social media for advocacy, the associated risks, and

strategies for enhancing their effectiveness in fostering peaceful advocacy. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through interviews with key stakeholders, including activists, community leaders, and local government officials, complemented by a review of secondary literature. Findings reveal that social media platforms served as critical tools for mobilisation, amplifying youth voices and drawing global attention to the movement. Despite these challenges, strategic interventions such as digital literacy programs, robust fact-checking initiatives, and inclusive access can enhance the impact of peaceful advocacy. The study concludes that while social media is indispensable in modern advocacy, its effectiveness depends on mitigating inherent risks and fostering collaboration among stakeholders. Practical recommendations include governmental support for digital education that protects freedom of expression.

Fabiyi & Oluwasegu (2023): *Understanding Social Media and Belongingness among Nigerian Youths: The Case of #EndSARS Movement, 2023*. The October 2020 #EndSARS protest in Nigeria was initiated and led by young people, calling for the disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a Nigerian Police Force unit known for its human rights abuses and brutality. The catalyst for the protest was a viral video on Twitter showing SARS officers killing a young man. This study employs Jurgen Habermas' Public Sphere model to analyse the underlying dynamics of the #EndSARS protest, which represents the "second face" of social media, characterised by collective action and social mobilisation. The research argues that social media facilitated solidarity and organisation among young Nigerians, leading to the emergence of new forms of political participation. Social media played a crucial role in amplifying the voices of young online users and raising awareness for organising the protests. Through a primary qualitative research approach that includes tweets, social media findings, and literature on social media, the research concludes that social media was instrumental in mobilising and fostering a sense of belonging among young people, leading to the #EndSARS protest in Nigeria.

Asemah, S. E., and Emeke Nwaoboli (2022): *Influence of Folarin Falana's Twitter campaigns on the participation of Lagos youth in the 2020 EndSARS protest*. The rationale behind the study was to investigate how celebrity social media campaigns, specifically Twitter, influenced the involvement of Lagos youth in the #EndSARS protest. The findings showed that although exposure to celebrity social media campaigns has the capacity to influence the mobilisation and participation of people in

demonstrations, other factors also contribute to their involvement in protest movements. It was, however, recommended among others that since no one, including celebrities is safe in terms of corrupt or evil governance and abuse, rather than keeping quite as though celebrities are not affected by these menaces, seeing that they have a better platform to shed light on these issues and play the role of advocacy and solidarity with the masses, showing the world that everyone is susceptible, celebrities should be a part of these conversations on social media to help give the voiceless a sense of belonging.

Due to the internet's impenetrable nature, individual accountability remains a challenge, thereby paving the way for the proliferation of virtually any content that provides an avenue for numerous propaganda formulators. This also leads to the prevalence of a plethora of false information on the internet, which inevitably makes it difficult to separate the grain from the chaff (truth from falsehood). To add fuel to the fire, this is the era of virtual reality and image manipulation, which does nothing other than to give even more reason to question what is truly real. It is against this backdrop that this study is framed.

Even more so, police brutality is tied to bad governance; this is why the fight against police brutality more often than not goes hand in hand with protests against bad governance. Such demonstrations have been seen to occur frequently (as the fight for a better Nigeria is one that precedes for many years). After all, it is constitutionally provided that in a democratic system, citizens can rise to criticise the actions and inactions of those they appointed to stand as their representatives. However, with the recent developments, the fight has taken a different toll. As a result of the government's increasingly capricious acts, affairs have been taken almost entirely to social media. However, before this, protesting on the internet (via social platforms) has always complemented live action. This is because social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram make it very easy and fast to post videos showcasing brutality and/or assault in real time, as they are happening. In turn, the availability of this video evidence has helped to checkmate police denial whenever they are investigated or prosecuted for their misdeeds.

A notable example of social media's pivotal role is seen in the events that unfolded in October 2020. Nigerians who had had enough came together to fight for the disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a subdivision of the Department of Criminal Investigation (DCI), which is known for the use of guns to intimidate and reduce the courage of Nigerian youths. Not only does this body physically abuse, assault, and extort

unsuspecting youths, but it also illegally detains some and kills others in the process. The use of social media was a key driver in sustaining the protest, which lasted twelve days. Twitter and Instagram served as primary reference points for disseminating information about protest updates and for those seeking to understand the reasons behind the widespread online trends, such as #ENDSARSNOW and #ENDPOLICEBRUTALITY. To some, the news obtained from these applications formed the totality of their knowledge of the situation. Additionally, the platforms served as an avenue for solicitations as well as advocacy, to such an extent that the attention of international bodies and Nigerians in Diaspora was caught and sustained.

Theoretical Review

In this study, the hypodermic needle theory is used to shed more light on the subject of discussion.

Hypodermic Needle theory

The basis of this theory (also known as the magic bullet theory and hypodermic syringe model) is that the mass media is viewed as having a direct, consequential, and immediate effect on its audiences, and an intended message is directly received and wholly accepted by the audience (Nwabueze, 2020). It is also one of the earliest theories in mass communication. While this theory has gained a considerable degree of acceptance, there have been counterarguments to its postulations, perhaps the most famous of which is that by Lazarsfeld, who argued that media did not act totally as a 'magic bullet' and that the audience had the power to make decisions for themselves (Lazarsfeld, 1944). Also, they had the power to decide how content would be utilised. This theory is relevant to the study because, firstly, a key objective of this research work is to discover how youths react to news about police brutality, which is shared via social media, and the extent to which they utilise the information.

The theory's key postulation is that the media have a powerful and direct effect on the audience. Hence, this can be linked to this work in the sense that the perception of youths is central. In other words, if the theory states that media directly

and immediately influence the perception of an audience, what are the ways through which youths receive this information? Could it be said to be directly and immediately? And if so, what action is taken once this information is obtained? Will the information be shared any further or disregarded by the target youths in question? Summarily, the theory aims to address the way in which these messages are sent and received by youths on both sides.

Empirical Review

Many of the studies used in this study are often recent, given that these events have developed in recent times. In their research on *How Social Media Challenges Governance*, Ruppel and Arowobusoye (2020) made it known that the EndSARS movement, which had gained global momentum, was in no way related to the coronavirus-related Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). They speak of it as it rightfully was and still is a protest against the excesses of the government, a stand against police brutality. The movement started as a Security Sector Reform movement but organically morphed into a cry for good governance in Nigeria. The study also took into account the position social media held as a tool for advocacy by those who were also actively and physically involved, those who could not tender physical help and those who chose the World Wide Web as their own personal platform for data circulation.

Adebayo (2018), in her study on *How a Social Media Movement Against Police Brutality Prompted Nigerian Government to Act*, attributed the reason for the overhaul of SARS to the months-long social media campaign known as #EndSARS by activists protesting alleged human rights abuses by the squad. Interestingly, this is in reference to the protest held in 2018. Okunola (2020), in his study titled *Nigerians Are Turning to Social Media to Condemn Widespread Sexual Violence, Inequality, and Police Brutality* stated that online protests have become a veritable tool for Nigerians to demand accountability from leaders. He touched on the protests that ensued in October 2020 by tracing them to the report that went viral, regarding a 16-year-old girl, Tina Ezekwe, who was killed when police opened fire on a bus stop in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital. To add even more salt to the injury, the incident happened during a COVID-19 nighttime curfew. The article is predicated mainly on acts of violence against women that garnered

widespread terror, which in turn aided the protests against police brutality, bad governance and the state of the country's criminality.

Obia (2020), in his research, '#EndSARS, a Unique Twittersphere and Social Media Regulation in Nigeria', looked at the role that Twitter played in the protests and the implications for social media regulation. He began by giving a historical preview of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad from the year of its initiation, till the commencement of the very first set of protests against the body in 2016. The study affirmed that the #EndSARS movement actually began on Twitter in this same year. Vincent Obia also identified the genesis of the more recent protests, which started on 3 October 2020 after a video was shared on Twitter purportedly showing SARS officials killing a man and fleeing with his vehicle in the Delta region, Southern Nigeria. This is what yielded the decentralised and youth-led protests against police brutality that broke out within and outside Nigeria.

Conkling (2019) published a research work on 'How Social Media Effects (sic) College Students' Perceptions of Police Brutality', which aimed to study how social media affects the perception of police by college students. In the work, students' opinion on social and traditional media portrayals of police brutality was examined, as well as their views on the use of force. The study involved a convenience sample of about 40 students of the SUNY College at Brockport through a survey, which was distributed via email. One of the hypotheses was that college students spent more time on social media than on other forms of traditional media, which was proved to be true. The study found that an increase in the number of hours spent on social media was associated with a higher likelihood of respondents disagreeing with the use of force against a citizen.

Ülgen (2013), in his study titled 'Social Media vs Police Brutality', which was carried out in 2013, acknowledged the role which social media is increasingly playing in public discourse by holding public office holders and the government in general accountable. It was also noted that social media has an edge over traditional media in that it provides news in real time. However, the researcher concludes that while social media has proved effective in documenting police brutality in various countries, it is not the sole practical way of attaining justice for aggrieved victims.

Mhaka (2020) published an article titled 'How Social Media Regulations Are Silencing Dissent in Africa' on the relationship between social media opposition to governance and the response in various African governments to these developments, especially from the perspective of those who have viewed the widespread sentiments

as a threat to governmental stability. The #EndSARS protests of October 2020 in Nigeria were adopted as a case study of the pertinent issues, in which the armed forces opened fire on unarmed protesters, killing 12 of them. Through social media, various people called for the perpetrators to be held accountable, while others, notably government officials and public officers, sought the regulation of social media. The Northern Governors Forum had, for example, called for support for a social media bill which would curb 'subversive actions' and 'prevent the spread of fake news'. In this study, various countries' laws, such as those of Lesotho, Angola, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and Zambia, are discussed and examined as they have already put in place various mechanisms to guard against social media abuse.

Specially, the study investigates

- 1) Examine the perception of Youths in Badore Eti-Osa Ajah L.G.A. in Lagos State towards police brutality in Nigeria.
- 2) Examine the perception of youths on the use of social media against police brutality in Nigeria.
- 3) Examine the role social media plays in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adapted to explore Nigerian youths' general perspective on using social media in the fight against police brutality. While the study was limited to Badore Eti-Osa Ajah L.G.A. in the Lagos state, the Badore Eti-Osa Ajah L.G.A. in the Lagos state comprises nine (9) "Wards" that are made of: Victoria Island Ward H1 and H2, Ikoyi West Ward L1, Ikoyi East Ward L2, Obalande Wards M, Eti-Osa North East, Eti Osa South West, Eti Osa North East, Ward K1. The total population in the figure is 283,791, sourced from Wikipedia based on (2006 censorship). The sample size was obtained through the Taro Yamane (1967) formula. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select a total of four hundred 400 respondents from each of the wards. Each of the wards forms a stratum from which the respondents were randomly selected. The research instrument utilised was a self-developed structured questionnaire. It was developed in line with the research objectives and based on a 5-point Likert-type scale questionnaire structure (SA Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree). The face validity technique was adopted for this study to ensure that the instrument provides sufficient data to meet the study's objectives. The research instrument was proven to be reliable through results obtained from the SPSS Cronbach Alpha Reliability test, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.7.

Analysis of Data

The analysis and interpretation of data gathered from the administration of four hundred (400) copies of the research instrument. Two hundred and fifty-three (253) were retrieved and validated for analysis. The analysis, presentation and interpretation of quantitative data collected were done using the Statistical Product and Services Solutions (SPSS) variations in responses of the participants in the research work using tools such as frequencies and percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation, to give the intended audience and future researchers a modus operandi of arriving at results and making generalisations.

Discussion of the Findings

Research Objective One: Perception of Nigerian Youths towards Police Brutality: Knowledge of respondents on social media creates awareness about police brutality in Nigeria.

Social media creates awareness about police brutality in Nigeria.	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	140	55.3
Agree	109	43
Neutral		
Disagree	1	0.4
Strongly Disagree	3	1.2
Total	253	100%

The findings indicate respondents' knowledge of social media awareness campaigns regarding police brutality in Nigeria. 55.3% strongly agreed that social media creates awareness about police brutality in Nigeria, 43% agreed that social media creates awareness about police brutality in Nigeria. In comparison, 1.2% strongly disagreed that social media creates awareness about police brutality in Nigeria. This is in line with the Campbell and Valera (2019) study titled 'The Only Thing New is the Cameras' The findings of the study proved that social media is a key medium for learning about police brutality through the viewing of the videos, which affects perception of police and creates anxiety and fear ahead of future police encounters. It is also supported by Perrin (2020), who stated that there is a direct relationship between social media usage and information regarding police brutality. Ulgen (2013) also noted that social media has an edge over traditional media in that it provides news in real time. However, the researcher concludes that while social media has proved effective in documenting police brutality in various countries, it is not the sole practical way of attaining justice for aggrieved victims.

Police brutality is rampant in Nigeria especially towards the youths	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	142	56.1
Agree	109	43
Neutral	1	0.4
Disagree	1	0.4
Strongly Disagree	-	-

The findings show the knowledge of respondents on police brutality been rampant in Nigeria especially towards the youths. The 56.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that police brutality is rampant in Nigeria especially towards the youths, 43% of the respondents agreed that police brutality is rampant in Nigeria especially among the youths, while 0.4% of the respondents disagreed that police brutality is rampant in Nigeria towards the Nigerian youths. Therefore, the study authenticated that police brutality is rampant in Nigeria. Vincent Obia (2020) also identified the genesis of the more recent protests which began on 3 October 2020 after a video was shared on Twitter purportedly showing SARS officials killing a man and fleeing with his vehicle in the Delta region, Southern Nigeria. This is what yielded the decentralised and youth-led protests against police brutality that broke out within and outside Nigeria. Siggworth (2019) report concluded that social media was a powerful and potent tool in discourse relating to police brutality and that it could foster accountability by the police to members of the public. In the study, possible risks and benefits of police interaction with the public were also identified.

Social media is a tool for exposing the actions that constitute police brutality in Nigeria.	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	112	44.2
Agree	138	54.5
Neutral		
Disagree	3	1.2
Strongly Disagree	-	
Total	253	100%

The finding shows the knowledge of the respondents on social media as a vital tool for exposing the actions that constitute police brutality in Nigeria. Point 44.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that social media was an essential tool in exposing the actions that constitute police brutality in Nigeria, 54.5% agreed that social media is a tool for exposing the actions that constitute police brutality in Nigeria. In comparison, 1.2% disagreed that social media is not a tool for exposing the actions that constitute police brutality in Nigeria. Therefore, that proves that social media is indeed a vital tool for the youths to expose police brutality in Nigeria. Mhaka (2020) examined various countries'

laws, including those of Lesotho, Angola, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and Zambia, which have implemented mechanisms to combat social media abuse.

Research Objective 2: Perception of Youths on the Use of Social Media against Police Brutality in Nigeria

Social media makes it easier to participate in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria.	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	135	53.3
Agree	118	46.4
Neutral		
Disagree		
Strongly Disagree		
Total	253	100%

The finding shows the knowledge of respondents on how social media makes it easier for the youths to participate in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria. 53.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that social media makes it easier for the youths to join in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria. In comparison, 46.4% agreed that social media makes it easier to participate in the battle against police brutality in Nigeria. Therefore, based on the evidence, social media is a vital means of communication in creating awareness, exposing and fighting against police brutality in Nigeria. As well as serving as a Source of information on police brutality. The Northern Governors Forum had, for example, called for support for a social media bill which would curb 'subversive actions' and 'prevent the spread of fake news'. Mbaka, in this study, discusses and examines various countries' laws, such as those of Lesotho, Angola, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, and Zambia, which have already put in place various mechanisms to guard against social media abuse.

Social media inspired the fight against police brutality in Nigeria	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	129	50.9
Agree	109	43
Neutral	6	2.4
Disagree	4	1.6
Strongly Disagree	5	2
Total	253	100%

The finding showing the knowledge of respondents on how social media inspired the fight against police brutality in Nigeria, 50.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that social media inspired the fight against police brutality in Nigeria, 43% agreed that social media inspired the fight against police brutality in Nigeria, 2.4% are neutral, 2% of the respondents strongly disagreed that social media inspired the fight against police brutality in Nigeria.

Research Objective 3: The Role Social Media Plays Against Police Brutality in Nigeria

Social media serves as a platform that unifies the voice of the people in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	109	43
Agree	134	53
Neutral	4	1.6
Disagree	3	1.2
Strongly Disagree	3	1.2
Total	253	100%

This result demonstrates respondents' understanding of social media as a platform that unifies the voice of the people in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria. 43% of the respondents strongly agreed that social media inspired the fight against police brutality in Nigeria, 53% of the respondents agree that social media serves as a platform that unifies the voice of the people in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria, 1.6% of the respondents are neutral. In comparison, 1.2% strongly disagreed that social media serves as a platform that unifies the voice of the people in the fight against police brutality in Nigeria.

I share/ have shared content regarding police brutality in Nigeria	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	103	40.7
Agree	141	55.7
Neutral	2	1.3
Disagree	3	1.2
Strongly Disagree	-	
Total	253	100%

Regarding police brutality in Nigeria, 40.7% of respondents strongly agreed that social media enables them to share content, while 55.7% agreed that it has helped them do so. 1.3% of respondents remained neutral. In comparison, 1.2% disagreed that they have shared content regarding police brutality in Nigeria. Therefore, based on the neutral respondents and those who disagreed on the issues, this could be attributed to their lack of knowledge on the issue or due to their lackadaisical attitudes towards the questions being asked.

I use social media to contribute my voice in the fight against police brutality.	Frequency	Frequency%
Strongly Agree	88	35
Agree	154	60.8
Neutral	8	3.1
Disagree	2	1.3
Strongly Disagree	1	0.4
Total	253	100%

The knowledge of respondents on how the use of social media contributes to my voice in the fight against police brutality. 35% of the respondents strongly agreed that use of social media enables

them to contribute their voices on the fight against police brutality, 60.8% of the respondents agreed that use of social media empowered them contribute their voices on the fight against police brutality, 3.1% are neutral, 1.3% disagreed that use of social media enabled them contribute their voices on the fight against police brutality. In comparison, 0.4% strongly disagreed that social media use helped them contribute their voices to the fight against police brutality. Therefore, the study findings also reiterated that the use of social media allows people to contribute their voices in the fight against police brutality.

Conclusion

Traditionally, the police controlled the facts and narrative provided to the public around their ability to protect public safety and their behaviour in doing so. However, the nature of the relationship between the public and the police has been irrevocably altered, as the public now can document and disseminate information on police activities, ranging from mundane to abusive. The study has shown clearly that there is the existence of police brutality, especially against the Nigerian youths; however, this trend has been unaccounted for over the years. Hence, the use of social media uncovered and exposed this ugly trend of police brutality, as well as the role social media played in creating awareness and inspiring a campaign against all forms of police brutality. The often inhuman, negative and unbecoming attitude of the police to civilian matters has made the police almost the most hated public institution in Nigeria. Many Nigerians have concluded that the Police Force is not only wicked, but also corrupt and insensitive to the affairs and feelings of the ordinary citizens whose interests they are supposed to protect. The study concluded that social media is a veritable tool in exposing and combating police atrocities, including brutality.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. The government should ensure proper monitoring of police officers and sanction officers engaged in any form of brutality.
2. The Police Force should be adequately trained on relations with civilians and how to handle criminality without necessarily engaging in brutality.
3. Social media should be engaged in productive activities, just as it was used to uncover and combat police brutality.

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