Psychological Perception on the Role of Facebook Users in Reporting Human Rights Abuses: A Study of Endsars Protest

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ABSTRACT	[*]Published Online: 05 January 2022

With the success and the user base of Social Networking Sites as tools for digital communication and exchange of information and its advancement in industrialization, science, technology, and various environmental issues taking place locally and globally, this social media can be utilized as a tool to promote awareness regarding various current environmental issues. This study aims to investigate the psychological perception on the role of Facebook users in reporting human rights abuses: A study of Endsars Protest and also how Nigerians use social networking sites such as Facebook as a platform to reach out to the world and Nigeria government to create a perceptual awareness on police brutality in Nigeria which started with their request to End SARS (Special Anti-robbery Squad) department. This study aimed at to find out the psychological perception on audience exposure to Human Right Abuses on Facebook Awareness and to find out the significant gender difference on the psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating Awareness on Human Right abuses on Endsars protest. Survey research method was adopted coupled with 100 copies of questionnaires that were administered to 100 respondents that were drawn among the selected areas in Keffi Local Government using a simple random sampling technique. However, the data collected were analysed and interpreted using simple statistics (using tables) as a descriptive statistics; were hypothesis one stated that: There will be a significant relationship on psychological perception on audience exposure and human rights abuses on facebook awareness (M=40.07; SD=5.61), (M=31.16, SD=6.07) and hypothesis two stated that: There will be a significant gender difference on the psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating Awareness on Human Right abuses on Endsars protest. It is recommended that, The online media must serve essential functions by accepting and fulfilling certain obligations to the nations; Social media users (Facebook Users) should be enlighten on how protesters and Facebook users uses social media handles to influence others and Read and gain knowledge of many national activities, what they believe and stand for will immensely help in reshaping the thought those being or on the cause of being influence.

Keywords: Psychological Perception, Facebook and Human Rights Abuses

INTRODUCTION

The study of behavior in the context of Facebook is important for three reasons: (a) the massive popularity of Facebook is changing the way millions of individuals interact, (b) the use of Facebook affords observable data that were previously difficult for scientists to gather (e.g., friend networks, self-presentation, and communication), and (c) the potential benefits (e.g., facilitation of social interaction) and potential costs (e.g., privacy violations) of Facebook use should be considered (Wilson., 2011). The fast growth of Facebook research has yielded an extensive and varied literature field, and the number of Facebook users and the number of published articles about Facebook have grown at about same rate (see Wilson et al., 2011, for a complete review of peer-reviewed Facebook literature).

One commonly revealed motivation to use Facebook is gaining information about other individuals (Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009). Dunbar (1998) postulated that language evolved to allow humans to gossip, and that gossip allows individuals to know more information about more individuals

than is possible by direct observation. Dunbar stated that monkeys and apes groom each other to build trust and knowledge and to reinforce social bonds (i.e., social grooming) and it seems that human animals perform social grooming by gossiping. Thus, individuals may be motivated to interact on Facebook for the purpose of social grooming, consequently facilitating the increase of knowledge available about a large social group and the increase of social bonding (Gosling, 2009; Tufekci, 2008). Supporting the social grooming hypothesis, Facebook users report that a common motivation to use Facebook is to connect with Facebook friends (Sheldon, 2008). Research indicates that individuals use Facebook to gather information about others (i.e., bridging social capital) and to connect interpersonally (i.e., bonding social capital). But a larger question remains: What is motivating individuals to seek information about others and connect with others on Facebook? That is, what are the underlying psychological and social needs that predict Facebook use? Given the potential bias (e.g., response; systematic) involved with self-reports of affect, cognition, or behavior (Groth-Marnat, 2006) and given that there is no consensus about the use of bias indicators (McGrath& Kim, 2010), one large concern regarding Facebook studies is that most of them use self-reports for measurement. However, Burke, Marlow, and Lento (2010) used behavioral measures of Facebook use as well as self-reports of loneliness to determine that: (a) increased direct communications on Facebook are related to increased bonding social capital and decreased loneliness, and (b) increased consummation of information about others on Facebook is related to decreased bonding and bridging social capital and increased loneliness. It is possible that loneliness motivates Facebook use, but the relationship between loneliness and Facebook use requires further study. In another behavioral study, physiological measures (i.e., skin conductance and facial electromyography [EMG]) and a behavioral measure (i.e., time spent looking at a Facebook page) were recorded from 36 undergraduates that participated in a study investigating the emotional responses to Facebook use (WiseAlhabash, 2010). Participants navigated (i.e., looked at; read) Facebook profiles and the navigating behaviors were coded for social browsing (e.g., passive social information-seeking; looking at features such as newsfeeds) or social searching (e.g., extractive social information-seeking; looking at features such as friends' profiles). Participants spent more time social searching than social browsing (a result that Lampe et al., 2006, also found with self-report). Furthermore, facial EMG differences revealed that participants experienced more pleasantness when social searching than when social browsing. It seems that extractive social information-seeking (i.e., looking at profiles) on Facebook is more appetitive than passive social information-seeking (i.e., looking at newsfeeds). Relatedness need-satisfaction on Facebook is a dynamic process (Sheldon, Abad, &Hinsch, 2011).

For many years, police misconduct characterized by brutality, corruption, and human rights abuses has generated strong criticisms from the populace with many calling for police reform. While this problem persists, policymakers and subsequent governments ignored several calls for police reform. That is, the issue consistently failed to move from systemic agenda to institutional agenda until it did after the first major ENDSARS public protests calling for an end to police brutality (SARS- Special Anti-Robbery Squad is the popular Nigerian police unit most notorious for brutality; but the protests and mass movement were generally targeted against all forms of police brutality). In October, which marked the sixtieth anniversary of Nigerian independence, tens of thousands gathered in protest against the country's corruption and police brutality. With young people at the helm, they called for the abolition of Nigeria's Special Anti-Robbery Squad, known as sars, which they accused of making unlawful arrests and engaging in harassment, theft, extortion, rape, torture, and murder (Cobb and Elder, 1971). What began as peaceful demonstrations turned fatal on October 20, when the Nigerian military opened fire at the Lekki tollgate plaza, in Lagos. According to Amnesty International, officers killed thirty-eight protesters, in what was soon called "the Lekki Massacre." The same day, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Nigeria's media regulator, released a set of guidelines, stipulating that outlets—which "have a duty to promote the corporate existence of Nigeria"—should not "embarrass individuals, organizations, government, or cause disaffection, incite to panic or rift in the society at large." All the while, the government was suppressing vital information and obscuring tragic details about attacks on citizens. The death toll rose. After days of silence, MuhammaduBuhari, Nigeria's president, gave a televised address to the nation, demanding a stop to #EndSARS protests and criticizing activists and their international allies for spreading "deliberate falsehood and misinformation through the social media." Later, he said that, during the protests, fifty-one civilians had been killed and thirty-seven injured; he blamed the violence on "hooliganism" and said that officers were fatally targeted by "rioters." Amnesty International counted fifty-six total deaths. Buhari's administration imposed a curfew, which brought the demonstrations to a halt. The NBC then penalized Africa Independent Television (AIT), Arise, and Channels TV for "unethical infractions" in their #EndSARS coverage; at a press conference in Abuja, Armstrong Idachaba, the acting director-general of the NBC, said that those networks had been fined three million nairas each. OsobaOlaniyi, a spokesperson for the military, denied that troops shot at protesters (Magdalene Larnyoh, 2020).

Given the restrictions on reporting the story, traditional media didn't suffice. Live TV broadcasts were hampered by fears of security agents and individual disruptors; Television Continental went off air after a reported intrusion at its

headquarters, in Lagos. Social media became the main source of updates and information. On Twitter and Instagram, citizen journalists provided grim, graphic accounts of the demonstrations. Some of their posts came from the front lines: on Instagram Live, DJ Switch, a musician, showed protesters getting shot and wounded by Nigerian military officials, which brought global attention to the crisis; lesser-known eyewitnesses reported on officials removing CCTV cameras at tollbooths, streetlights being turned off at dusk, and the army firing shots and removing dead bodies from Lekki plaza. Others joined the effort online, sharing news as it emerged in real time.

For weeks, young people in Nigeria expressed suspicion that the government could shut down internet access. "There has never been a widespread national government-mandated internet shutdown in Nigeria," YomiKazeem and YinkaAdegoke wrote recently for Quartz, but Africa "has seen a spike in internet shutdowns in response to sustained anti-government protests," as political officials aim to control information disseminated by traditional media sources, which are more likely to air state-sanctioned messages unchallenged. EndSARS protesters and organizers, online and off-, have used social media to counter misinformation and report what's been missing from major news outlets, at home and abroad (Jacob Olatunji, 2020).Human rights are generally moral rights claimed by everyone and held against everyone, especially against those who run social institutions (Orend, 2002). With the advent of the United Nations (UN) and the subsequent adoption of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, the concept of human rights has turned out to be one of the most contemporary issues across the globe. The UN Charter, which was adopted in 1945, was the first international document to recognize the protection and promotion of human rights as an obligation to be carried out by individual, as well as collective states (Langley, 1999). The main reason behind the adoption of the charter was, according to Smith (2007) to forestall the reoccurrence of the horrible events caused by two devastating world wars which were caused by massive violations of human rights and unbridled breach of territorial integrity.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid growth of social media networking sites (facebook) and other genres of social media among its users is driven by the way and manner in which these tools provide the users with a powerful space and environment for participating in public life, learning new things and socializing with other people around the globe. Some people feel comfortable with these newer forms of social media sites because they believe they have a positive influence; whereas many other have grave concerns about the dangers posed by these social media sites on its users or wards, as the case may be. As such, what are the role of facebook in reporting human rights abuses?

The rate of human right abuses in the society is gradually increasing and the mass media is putting more effort in playing a role in addressing the issue. Most often the mass media does not publicize cases of human right abuses and this make it unknown to the society that the issue is actually on the increase. Journalists often fail to adopt a comprehensive approach in reporting human rights abuses most especially in the cases of the ENDSARS protest. Even in the absence of such abuses, the media often fail to formulate their broadcast policy to incorporate human rights programmes. The prioritization of profit-making over societal wellbeing dominates media agenda. For instance, Lustgarten and Debix (2005) assert that the medias preference for flashy audience grabbing and ratings-soaring image or story" makes them to be nonchalant in matters which are of interest to the public, owing to their inability to pursue events in detail.

Many studies conducted on media and human rights mostly dwell on analyzing the frequency of human rights terms, especially in the print media such as newspapers and magazines. None or few of them centre on an in-depth analysis of television broadcast programmes to find out the possibility of such programmes having an implicit or in-depth treatment of human rights issues. These problems make it obvious that there is a need to carry out a study on the impact of mass media on the management of the human rights abuses in Nigeria.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to examine the psychological perception on the role of facebook users in reporting human rights abuses in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are:

i.   To find out the psychological perception on audience exposure to Human Right Abuses on Facebook Awareness.

ii.   To find out the significant gender difference on the psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating Awareness on Human Right abuses on Endsars protest.

Research Questions: The relevant research questions related to this topic are:

i.   What is rate of audience exposure to Human Right Abuses on Facebook Awareness?

ii.   What is the significant gender difference on the psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating Awareness on Human Right abuses on Endsarsprotest.theEndsars Protest.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A lot of controversies exist over the psychological perception on the Role of facebook in Reporting Human Right Abuses, particularly on facebook. However, related literatures were

reviewed in this chapter to have a better understanding of the subject matter.

REVIEW OF CONCEPTS
Facebook
Facebook was created in 2004, Facebook is currently the biggest social networking service based on global reach. Launched by Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes, the service was initially only available to Harvard students but later expanded to regional universities. Currently, the Facebook usage penetration among internet users in leading markets is above 80 percent. It later becomes the most popular and visited sites with 34 million unique visitors by January 2008, and as the 13th most popular website worldwide (comScore, 2008), with 98 million unique visitors by December 2007. As of March 2008, Facebook reported having 867 million active users (those who have returned to the site in the last 30 days), with more than half of them returning daily and spending an average of 20 minutes per day on the site (Facebook, 2015).

Human Rights Abuses by SARS
This section attempts to explain the general idea of human rights by identifying four defining features. The goal is to answer the question of what human rights are with a description of the core concept rather than a list of specific rights. Two people can have the same general idea of human rights even though they disagree about which rights belong on a list of such rights and even about whether universal moral rights exist. The four-part explanation below attempts to cover all kinds of human rights including both moral and legal human rights and both old and new human rights (e.g., both Lockean natural rights and contemporary human rights). The explanation anticipates, however, that particular kinds of human rights will have additional features. Starting with this general concept does not commit us to treating all kinds of human rights in a single unified theory (see Buchanan 2013 for an argument that we should not attempt to theorize together universal moral rights and international legal human rights).

THEORETICAL REVIEW
Theory of False identity and the Facebook-self
Winnicott's (1960) theory posits that one's ego can split to "true self" and "false self." These terms describe two types of experiences: one is more spontaneous, authentic and real and the other is more defensive and protective, trying to hide the "true self." Similarly, Rogers' (1959) theory defined the real self as the underlying organismic self. The ideal self often deviates from the real-self, and this can be a result of the lack of positive regard during childhood. It represents who one would like to be, as a result of the feedback he or she received during their developmental period. The gap between the real self and the ideal self is called incongruity. Both theories also suggest that large gaps or incongruence between the true and protective self can lead to various psychological problems. Behaving according to one's "true self," as well as having clear and explicit identity, tends to have positive consequences. This idea extends to online environments. People who present their "true selves" and are authentic on online media, tend to create honest, healthier and longer relationships with their online friends. These relationships, in many cases, are also translated into the offline world (McKenna et al., 2002).

Uses and gratifications theory (UGT) is an approach to understanding why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs. UGT is an audience-centered approach to understanding mass communication. Diverging from other media effect theories that question "what does media do to people?", UGT focuses on "what do people do with media?" It postulates that media is a highly available product and the audiences are the consumers of the same product.

This theory is positivistic in its approach, based in the socio-psychological communication tradition, and focuses on communication at the mass media scale. The driving question of UGT is: Why do people use media and what do they use them for? UGT discusses how users deliberately choose media that will satisfy given needs and allow one to enhance knowledge, relaxation, social interactions/companionship, diversion, or escape.

Empirical Literature
Different researchers have conducted research to ascertain the influence of social media on users; for example, Abraham A., (2019) in a study on "impact of facebook on psychological performance", averred that social media have negative impact on it's user. According to the result, the more you use facebook, the more it affects your psychological performance. Similarly, Anato G.S., (2008) notes that most of the consumers of social networking sites mainly for socializing activities, rather than for academic purpose. He further observed that most of the students do feel that social networking sites have more positive impact on their academic performance. In another study conducted by Black J. and Champion D., (1976), it was revealed that people use social network mainly for making friends and chatting. The result showed that only 26 percent of the consumers (respondents) indicated that they use social media for positive purpose.

Chris Olaoluwa (2020) in a study titled "the effect of internet use and social capital on the academic performance of students" observed that the internet expands its reach to teenagers' school life. Chris O. noted that students are more reliant on the internet to access information that is involved in school life as well as entertainment. The researcher further added that internet, though consumes time, and has less effect on studies. Enola Akinkuotu (2020) notes the effect of social media depends large on the degree of usage.

Funke, F., (2020) observed that the type of social media or network subscribed to by a teenager exerts influence on him or her to visit the internet. Jacob Olatunji, (2020) noted that internet addiction is significantly and negatively related to students' academic performance, as well as emotional attributes. Magalene L., (2020) corroborates Olatunji (2020) assertion when he opined that the negative influence of internet is only on excessive users and not on all users. Peace Hyde (2020) avers that:

> "The Social networking sites and blogs which are being used today with tremendous passion and zeal have transformed the way of using internet in recent years by describing online tools and utilities which allow users for communication, participation and collaboration of information online".

Today's young generation, especially teens and youth are using technology through innovative ways due to which they are referred to as Millennial and have changed the ways we think, work and communicate even though they are in formative years of their life. Today's youth because of these social networking sites have become technology addicts and are quite introverted".

Hypothesis

In line with the research objectives and research questions, the following hypotheses were raised and tested:

H_1: There will be a significant relationship on psychological perception on audience exposure and human rights abuses on facebook awareness.

H_2: There will be a significant gender difference on the psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating Awareness on Human Right abuses on Endsars protest.

METHOD

Research Design: Survey research technique was used in this study. This technique has proved to be very efficient for this study, in view of the wealth of data and interpretation it can provide for this study.

Participants: The population of the study comprises the facebook users within Keffi area. The population of Keffi Local Government according to National Bureau of statistic (2010) is projected to be 193,392,500. For effective analysis, the researcher make used of 100 participants to anchored the research upon the population given by the National Bureau of Statistics as the study because of their recognition in population record. Therefore, the population stands as the major target of the psychological perception on the role of facebook in reporting human rights abuses.

Sampling Technique: Therefore, simple random sampling technique will be employed by the researcher for this research work. Respondents will be chosen at random from the facebook users across the Keffi Local Government. The division was done equality as follows: DadinKowa =20, UngwanLambu =20, AngwanKwara =20, AngwanMada =10, AngwanTiv=15, and AngwanKokara =15 bringing the total to 100. The researcher however will attempted to ascertain competence of the respondents to understand the issues raised and hence provide credible answers to the questions raised.

To determine the sample size, Yaro Yemen's formulae will be used.

Formula- SN/I+N (e)2. Where S= sample size, N= given population, e= Margin of error, I=constant.

Results and discussion: To achieve this, one hundred (100) copies of questionnaire were administered respectively in the area as mention above. One hundred (100) copies were retrieved and were found to be valid.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis One: There will be a significant relationship on psychological perception on audience exposure and human rights abuses on facebook awareness.

Table 1: shows the psychological perception on audience exposure and human rights abuses on facebook awareness

Variable	Mean	SD	r	df	P
Psychological perception	40.07	5.61			
			0.22	98	<.05
Human Rights Abuses	31.16	6.07			

As shown on Table 1, there exists a significant relationship between psychological perception on audience exposure and human rights abuses on facebook awareness. The result further shows a similarities in mean score of the two variable; psychological perception (M = 40.07; SD = 5.61) and human rights abuses (M = 31.16; SD = 6.07). This confirms the stated hypothesis, as such retained in this study.

Hypothesis Two: There will be a significant gender difference on the psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating Awareness on Human Right abuses on Endsars protest.

Table 2: shows gender difference on psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating awareness on Human rights abuses on Endsars protest.

Dependent	Gender	N	Mean	SD	T	df	P
	Male	50	46.35	6.12			
Human Rights Abuses					.22	98	<.05
	Female	50	42.02	5.23			

Table 2, presents results on gender difference on psychological perception on the role of facebook users in creating awareness on human rights abuses on Endsars protest. It is shown on Table 2 that there exists a significant gender difference on psychological perception [t (.22) = df (98); P<.05]. This confirm the stated hypothesis, hence was accepted in this study.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Challenges will never take place unless person whom you want to change is ready to accept the changes. Julius Nyerere (the former Tanzaniana president) Once Said that "people cannot be developed; they only develop themselves, for it is not possible for an outsider to give man pride and self-confidence except by himself or his own action. A man can better develop himself by acquiring independent knowledge and skill by his participation as an equal citizen in the activities of his community." That is to say, man should always be involved in any development programmes that may affect him, but, positively because it is through participating in the work and his willingness to accept changes that will make him and the society he lives into, to develop. This research work affirms that there is a role social media (facebook) in reporting human rights abuses most especially in the case of Endsars Protest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the findings of this research work, the research arrived at the following recommendations:

  i. The online media must serve essential functions by accepting and fulfilling certain obligations to the nations psychologically.
  ii. Social media users (Facebook Users) should be enlighten on how protesters and facebook users uses social media handles to influence and perceived others.
  iii. Read and gain knowledge of many national activities, what they believe and stand for will immensely help in reshaping the thought those being or on the cause of being influence.
  iv. Social media users should be caution who they accept as friends and what they read online.

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