

**SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG
YOUNG ADULTS IN AKOKO EDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF
EDO STATE**

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OCTOBER, 2025.

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**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ADULT
AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS OF BACHELOR DEGREE (B.ED.) IN ADULT
EDUCATION (POLITICAL SCIENCE), FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY.**

OCTOBER, 2025

APPROVAL PAGE

The undersigned, certify that this project was carried out by Grace Mifue LAWAL with the matriculation number EDU2101986 and approve of it adequate in scope and quality in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree in Adult Education (Political Science),

PROF. GANIYU ADEKOLA
Project Supervisor

DATE

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project was carried out by **Lawal Grace Mifue** with the matriculation number EDU2101986 in the Department of Adult and Non formal Education, University of Benin, Benin City in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science. Degree in Education (B.Sc.Ed) in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City

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Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty for His grace and unending love that kept me throughout my stay in UNIBEN and also to my supportive parents Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lawal.

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I acknowledge and express my gratitude to all those who contributed immensely, in one way or the other to bring about the fulfillment of this research work. First and foremost, my unfailing gratitude goes to God Almighty, the sole owner of my life who never failed me and will never fail, for His grace, wisdom, understanding and strength, to him be all Glory.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

	PAG ES
TITLE	i
APPROVAL PAGE	ii
CERTIFICATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Research Questions	4
Research Objectives	5
Significance of the Study	6
Scope/Delimitation of the Study	8
Definition of Terms	9

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

PAGES

Understanding Civic Engagement	11
Youth Civic Engagement in Nigeria	13
The Rise of Social Media in Nigeria	13
Social Media and the Transformation of Civic Participation	14
Benefits of Using Social Media for Civic Engagement	16
Theories Supporting Social Media Engagement	17
What Past Studies Say	19
Challenges and Limitations	20

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design	22
Population of the Study	23
Sample and Sampling Technique	25
Research Instrument	25
Validity of the Instrument	26
Reliability of the Instrument	26
Method of Data Collection	26
Method of Data Analysis	27

**CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Data Analysis	28
Discussion of Findings	42

**CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Summary	51
Conclusion	59
Recommendations	59
REFERENCES	61
APPENDICES	64

ABSTRACT

This study examined the function of social media as a tool for civic engagement among young adults in the Akoko-Edo Local Government Area of Edo State, filling a research void in this rural demographic. Data were collected using a descriptive survey method through a structured questionnaire administered to a target population of young adults aged 18–35 years, yielding 138 analyzed responses from a total of 150 distributed. The data revealed two significant findings: firstly, platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook are crucial, utilized daily by the majority of respondents for information sharing, awareness dissemination, and communication with government officials. Second, social media makes people much more aware of politics and gets people involved in their communities, but it is not very effective because of problems like slow internet speeds and the spread of false information. The study suggests that better internet infrastructure and media literacy training for young adults should be put in place to promote responsible and effective political participation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

The concept "civic engagement" defines the numerous ways that people actively participate in their communities' political, social, and economic life in order to influence decision-making, hold leaders responsible, and improve conditions (Putnam, 2000). Voting, community service, lobbying efforts, public discourse, and engagement in governance processes are all examples of such activities. Because it encourages the formation of political awareness, a sense of social responsibility, leadership abilities, and democratic institutions, civic engagement is especially crucial for young adults (Loader, Vromen, & Xenos, 2014). Throughout history, youth have been vital to social and political movements throughout. Young people' active civic activity is vital for encouraging social change, boosting community development, and furthering political reform in developing nations like Nigeria, where they make up a substantial majority of the population (National Population Commission, 2020). But in Nigeria, youth civic involvement is still quite low, despite their promise. Widespread political indifference, unemployment, weak governance, misinformation, lack of faith in political institutions, limited access to accurate civic education, and

socioeconomic inequities are some of the numerous reasons that contribute to this trend (Ojebuyi & Ojebode, 2017). These issues are made worse in rural and semi-urban areas like Edo State's Akoko Edo Local Government Area by a lack of infrastructure, restricted access to digital resources, and sociocultural impediments that may preclude effective involvement.

The media has garnered recognized as a formidable vehicle for boosting civic participation during the previous 20 years. Newspapers, radio, and television are examples of traditional media that still have a large effect on public opinion and citizen education. In the meantime, the landscape of civic involvement has changed radically with the arrival of new media technologies, especially social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter (McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999). Young people now find it easy to get information, partake in political discourse, organize for causes, fight for their rights, and unite with greater movements across national and regional borders owing to these platforms.

Mobile phones and radio continue to have a big impact on reaching young people in Nigeria, especially in rural regions, despite the country's infrastructure and digital divides (Okoro & Nwafor, 2013). Recent civic mobilizations, like the #EndSARS protests, have prominently included social media, emphasizing the capacity of digital platforms to elevate the opinions of young people. However,

little is known about how well media might assist long-term civic participation among young adults in less urbanized places like Akoko Edo. In light of this backdrop, the purpose of this study is to find out how young adults in the Akoko Edo Local Government Area use the media as a form of civic involvement. By looking at these difficulties, the project intends to expand knowledge of how media may be utilized more successfully to inspire young people in rural and semi-urban areas to be active citizens, so bolstering democratic culture and supporting sustainable development at the local level.

Problem Statement

Both digital and traditional media have received international reputation as effective tools that can motivate young people to get involved in politics and develop civic consciousness. There is proof that having access to social media and information technology has helped young people in Nigerian cities to take an active role in public affairs. It is uncertain, therefore, how well media works to foster civic activity among young adults in rural and semi-urban places like as Akoko Edo Local Government Area.

With its mix of semi-urban and rural communities, Akoko Edo has technology and infrastructural challenges that could hinder young people's access to a variety of media channels. Furthermore, how young people interact with media content about

civic problems may be influenced by socioeconomic limits and varied degrees of media literacy. Although communication in these places has risen due to the expansion of mobile technology and radio access, little empirical investigation has been done to investigate the genuine effects of these media platforms on grassroots political activity.

Efforts to foster active citizenship and strengthen democratic government in the area may fail if it is unclear how the media influences civic engagement among Akoko Edo's young adults. Therefore, by investigating social media's importance as a tool for civic activity among young adults in Akoko Edo, this study intends to bridge this gap.

Questions for Research

To direct the investigation, the following research questions were posed.

1. What sorts of media do young adults in Akoko Edo LGA most regularly utilize for social engagement?
2. How does Akoko Edo LGA's media aid to civic engagement?
3. What factors affect Akoko Edo LGA's young adults' usage of media for civic engagement?
4. How well do media initiatives inspire young adults in Akoko Edo LGA to take part in civic engagement?

5. What difficulties do young people in Akoko Edo LGA experience when utilizing media for civic engagement?
6. What techniques may be employed to help young adults in Akoko Edo LGA to use media for civic engagement?

Goals of the Research

This study's major purpose is to analyze the role of media as a medium for young adults' civic engagement. The study's declared goals are to:

1. Determine the media outlets that young adults in Akoko Edo LGA most regularly use for civic involvement.
2. Analyze how social media can boost civic activity among Akoko Edo LGA's young adults.
3. Identify the elements affecting Akoko Edo LGA's young adults' usage of media for civic involvement.
4. Evaluate how well media campaigns organize Akoko Edo LGA's young people to pursue civic action.
5. Examine the obstacles young adults in Akoko Edo LGA encounter when utilizing media for civic activity.
6. Make suggestions for how to improve young adults in Akoko Edo LGA's employment of media as a tool for civic action.

The study's importance

There are different reasons why this study is relevant. First of all, by concentrating on the rural and semi-urban environment of Akoko Edo Local Government Area in Edo State, Nigeria, it adds to the burgeoning corpus of study on civic involvement and media studies. The majority of prior studies on media and political activity have concentrated on metropolitan populations, frequently missing the specific opportunities and issues present in less urbanized areas. This study bridges a key gap and offers a more comprehensive knowledge of youth civic activity across diverse socioeconomic circumstances by exploring the experiences of young adults in Akoko Edo.

Second, politicians, development experts, and civic groups who favor young involvement in community development and governance will find value in the study's conclusions. Designing more focused and successful civic education programs, media interventions, and youth empowerment projects will be made possible by an understanding of how young people in semi-urban and rural communities use media for civic aims. This is particularly vital for fulfilling more broad national goals pertaining to social inclusion, democratic consolidation, and sustainable development.

Additionally, the study has uses for content creators and media corporations. The study can help media professionals generate material that is more entertaining, approachable, and pertinent to rural youth audiences by offering light on the media choices and civic interests of young people in Akoko Edo. As a result, the media's ability to assist informed and engaged citizenship may be strengthened.

Lastly, because it offers a framework for future research on media and civic activity in different rural and semi-urban areas of Nigeria and abroad, the study is relevant to scholars and future researchers. It can also be used as a baseline for study on how different youth populations' civic involvement is changed by traditional and digital media.

In conclusion, by presenting insights into the relationship between media and civic activity among young adults in rural Nigeria, this study has the potential to alter academic research, practice, and policy. This could help to improve democratic culture and participatory governance at the local level.

Study Scope and Delimitations

This study focuses on how young adults in Edo State, Nigeria's Akoko Edo Local Government Area use social media as a tool for civic involvement. It especially looks at how young people utilize and access different social media platforms to engage in civic involvement. The study also looks into the kinds of civic engagements—like voting, community labor, public advocacy, political discourse, and involvement in governance processes—that young people engaged in as a result of media influence.

Young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 make up the study's target audience as they are an important demographic inside Nigeria and are considered to be vital in nation-building and democratic activity. In order to capture a diversity of experiences and social media usage trends, the study looks at a few locales within the Akoko Edo Local Government Area, taking into consideration both rural and semi-urban areas.

The study is limited to young adults' perspectives, attitudes, and actions concerning using media for civic involvement in the Akoko Edo area. It precludes civic activity by youth outside of the authorized age group and by elderly adults. In a similar spirit, the study concentrated largely on the effect of the media and did

not extensively evaluate other aspects like family history, educational attainment, or economic standing unless they were pertinent during analysis.

The accessibility of participants, the availability of trustworthy data, and the research area's real infrastructure—such as spotty internet connectivity in some locations—were further restrictions. Nonetheless, every endeavor will be made to guarantee that the sample is representative and that the outcomes offer important new knowledge regarding the study subject.

Definitions of Terms

To avoid any confusion or misconceptions, the terminology are clarified in the context in which they are used in this study.

Media: All communication means used to distribute information to the general public are covered in this study's definition of media. It covers both new and conventional media, including social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp, as well as media like radio, television, and newspapers.

Civic Engagement: Civic engagement is the phrase used to characterize people's participation in projects aimed at benefiting their communities, influencing political and social development, or influencing government. Voting, community service, advocacy, political discourse, and public involvement are all included.

Young Adults: Those in this study who fall between the 18–35 age range are known to be an essential demographic for civic and political engagement in Nigeria.

Akoko Edo Local Government Area: The study's geographic focus is the Akoko Edo local government area in Edo State, Nigeria, which is made up of a range of rural and semi-urban towns.

Traditional Media: Prior to the introduction of digital technology, traditional media featured standard mass communication channels including radio, television, and newspapers.

Digital communication platforms and technologies, notably social media, that enable interactive communication, content sharing, and real-time user networking are referred to as new media.

Civic Participation: As used in this study, civic participation particularly refers to the behaviors and actions undertaken by young adults in connection with their engagement in community development, governance, and decision-making processes, which are commonly impacted by media exposure.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter evaluates earlier studies on social media's effect on civic life, especially for youth. It evaluates how social media use has changed, how civic involvement is viewed in the present world, and how young Nigerians, especially in regions like Akoko Edo, are using these platforms to bring about change. The chapter ends with a review of earlier studies and research gaps and also draws on basic ideas that explain these activities.

Comprehending Civic Participation

Historically, civic participation has been vital for establishing communities, keeping leaders responsible, and fostering growth. However, in the modern environment, civic behavior is evolving, especially among youth. One of the most important instruments in this change is social media. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter (now X) have created new pathways for citizens to get involved, from coordinating protests to disseminating knowledge to even communicating with governmental authorities. These days, these platforms operate as forums for public conversation, advocacy, and group mobilization in addition to being locations for social participation. The process through which people participate in initiatives to benefit their community or have an effect on

decisions that impact public life is often referred to as civic engagement. Voting, campaigning, protesting, going to community meetings, volunteering, and supporting a cause are examples of both political and non-political acts. In essence, it is the means by which people express their devotion to the common good and their resolve to accept shared accountability for societal improvement. Politics is not the sole dimension of civic engagement for young people. It might be as basic as bringing attention to a problem in their community, organizing a neighborhood cleaning, or joining a young group that pushes for increased access to school or job prospects. In addition to improving leadership qualities and empowering young people to take care of their surroundings, these activities provide them a feeling of direction and community. Participation in a variety of events builds civic identification, empathy, and resilience qualities important to active citizenship.

Civic participation in a place like Akoko Edo typically merges traditional and contemporary means. Even while town hall meetings and word-of-mouth campaigns are still deployed, a growing number of young people are utilizing mobile phones to spread information, organize others, and advocate for causes that are important to them. These communities' hybrid civic participation symbolizes a

time of transition where conventional and digital instruments coexist and often compliment one another.

Nigerian Youth Civic Engagement

In Nigeria, young people form a substantial demography. More than half of the nation's population is between the ages of 18 and 35, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2020). However, social and political restrictions often hinder their ability to participate in civic life and government. According to Olanrewaju and Omotosho (2016), corruption, a lack of openness, and insufficient representation have led many Nigerian young to feel cut off from normal political processes. Young people nevertheless continue to join in civic life through a range of avenues, including as community service, school groups, and religious affiliations. The #EndSARS movement highlighted the power of young mobilization, since online tools were important in bringing voices from all throughout the country together.

Social Media's Ascent in Nigeria

The greater availability of cellphones and internet connections has driven social media's rise in Nigeria. More than 33 million Nigerians use social media everyday, with the most popular apps being Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter (now X), according to Statista (2022). Real-time communication,

information sharing, and group mobilization are made possible by social media. It offers a setting where users may create and exchange material in addition to consuming it. In addition to offering chances for grassroots action and civic participation, this user-generated content paradigm promotes participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006). Young people in areas like Akoko Edo are employing WhatsApp groups more regularly to plan civic events, voice issues about the government, and make announcements. These tactics assist narrow the gap between civic awareness and physical distance.

Social Media and How Civic Engagement Is Changing

Social media has radically revolutionized the way humans interact, talk, and engage with one another. Social media use has grown dramatically in Nigeria, especially among youth. Millions of individuals increasingly utilize social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Twitter significantly in their daily lives as a result of the broad availability of smartphones and relatively affordable internet. By eliminating the middlemen, they have altered communication by allowing the rapid creation, sharing, and commenting of information by common people. Social media's participatory factor is what distinguishes it from traditional media. Users are more than simply watchers or passive listeners; they may also share videos, write notes, lead discussions, and

even plan events. Social media is the finest platform for political involvement since it allows for active participation. Young people feel empowered because they now have the means to make their thoughts heard.

This has already been widely reported in metropolitan environments. However, the practice is spreading even in rural and semi-urban places like Akoko Edo. Social media is being exploited by young people to call attention to topics such as inadequate roads, limited power, security challenges, and unemployment. While Facebook and Twitter are being used to discover government officials, share videos of local problems, and press for change, WhatsApp groups have evolved into platforms for community debate. These digital platforms provide young people a way to connect with decision-makers directly and skip bureaucratic red tape. Social media presents young people with a cheap and handy tool to participate in public life. In many situations, it provides people a say that is louder than they would ever have in conventional venues like town hall meetings or local political channels. Teenagers, who are often left out of traditional political formations, find these platforms particularly enticing because of their promise to democratize civic debate and encourage participation.

Social Media's Advantages for Civic Engagement

Social media can boost youth civic involvement in a number of ways. It makes knowledge easy to reach, to start. Today's youth have real-time access to information about social issues, political events, and government policies. Since meaningful participation comes with awareness, this is crucial. It is hard for people to hold authorities accountable or make informed judgments if they are not fully aware of civic issues. Second, social media gives young people a voice, even in situations when they may otherwise be suppressed by community organizations or traditional media. Teenagers' voices are generally overlooked in many places, but everyone has a chance to speak up and be heard online. A sense of legitimacy is created by this inclusivity, which also stimulates more active engagement in local and national discussion.

Third, social media makes action and organization possible. People can organize others around a cause by using movies, hashtags, or simple notes. We saw this during the #EndSARS movement, which started online but spilled to Nigerian streets when thousands of youths rallied for change. The effectiveness of these adverts shows how social media may change offline actions and online discussions.

Fourth, social media stimulates the formation of digital groups and networks among youngsters. Partnerships, common goals, and a better feeling of purpose can come from these virtual interactions. A WhatsApp group of fifty young people in a town like Akoko Edo might easily plan a community development program or hold politicians responsible when they breach pledges. These networks provide a feeling of joint ownership, coordination tools, and emotional support.

Furthermore, problems may be amplified quickly as a result of social media content's publicity and virality. Within hours, a single video showing inequality or inadequate infrastructure in a rural place may garner national prominence. Compared to traditional petitions or complaints, this raises pressure on officials and occasionally leads to quicker replies.

Theories that Encourage Social Media Participation

Examining a few theoretical viewpoints is vital to comprehending why kids utilize social media for civic purposes. The Uses and Gratifications description is one such idea. According to this idea, people use media according to their requirements, whether those needs are for engagement, identity, amusement, or knowledge. When it comes to political participation, kids can use social media to interact with like-minded folks, express their identity and beliefs, learn about

problems that worry them, or simply feel like they belong in an online community. For example, a young person in Akoko Edo might sign up for a Facebook group that speaks about local development in order to share their thoughts, network, and be updated. WhatsApp can be used to exchange recordings of local events, plan meetings, and broadcast group announcements. These activities show how media may be actively manipulated to achieve both individual and group goals. Social media's versatility and user-driven design make it the perfect fit for young people's diverse hobbies and requirements.

Henry Jenkins' Participatory Culture Idea is another good idea. According to this theory, users of current media platforms are able to generate and transmit their own material in addition to getting it. In the present internet age, young folks can participate in public debate without authority or formal instruction. One tweet, video, or piece has the ability to ignite discourse or encourage action. This is especially crucial in nations where access to traditional media is limited. For instance, many kids in Akoko Edo might never have the chance to appear on television or radio. However, these worries can be viewed by a significantly wider audience sometimes even going viral with a short Facebook video or a popular hashtag. Everyone has something important to offer, according to participative culture, which gives disadvantaged voices more relevance.

Public Sphere Theory: Habermas (1989) established the idea of a public sphere in which individuals can talk and debate problems confronting society. For teenagers in Nigeria, social media particularly Facebook and Twitter has evolved into a modern manifestation of this domain.

What Previous Research Indicates

Numerous academics have examined the connection between civic activity and social media. Teenagers in Nigeria were increasingly using social media for political speech and action in addition to leisure, according to a study by Omede and Odiba (2020). According to their findings, social media was aiding adolescents in gaining information, expressing their concerns, and organizing for campaigns or protests. This is in line with international study on how younger generations' civic habits are changing as a result of digital tools. The use of WhatsApp for community development in southern Nigeria was the major topic of Adelabu and Esiri's (2018) study. According to their study, a big number of young adults participated in WhatsApp groups where they planned town hall meetings, discussed local news, and even established fundraisers for neighborhood projects. WhatsApp's community-focused design and end-to-end encryption played a key part in gaining user trust.

Olayiwola (2019) examined the use of Facebook and Twitter by young people during elections. He found that, notably during the 2015 and 2019 elections, social media was essential to voter education, campaign discussions, and young mobilization. This study shows how influencers, memes, and hashtags alter online political narratives.

According to a smaller study completed in Edo State by Igiebor (2021), social media was being used to hold politicians accountable in both urban and rural communities. But studies also found that many places faced obstacles including insufficient internet connection, a lack of digital literacy, and limited availability of smart gadgets. According to the study, these limits restricted social media's potential for civic engagement in faraway LGAs like Akoko Edo. This underscores the need for context-specific solutions when adopting digital tools for communication.

Obstacles and Restrictions

Adopting social media for civic engagement is not without difficulties, despite its clear benefits. Disinformation is one of the main issues. Online material is not always correct or helpful. False information can move quickly and cause panic or confusion. In other instances, it could possibly spark bloodshed or aggravate tensions within communities. Digital separation is another problem. Not

everyone has reliable internet connection, a cell phone, or the ability essential to utilize social media properly. As a result, there is a gap between those who can and cannot connect. Computer literacy and affordability continue to be big issues in rural communities like Akoko Edo. Additionally, there is the problem of harassment. When they speak up online, many young people—women in particular—report feeling threatened or attacked. This may limit participation and mute important perspectives. The same patterns of marginalization found outside can be recreated in online settings by modeling socioeconomic inequalities.

Finally, social media is useful for creating awareness, but it doesn't necessarily conclude in major action. Some people might "like" or "share" posts without taking any real action to address the problem. A common term for this propensity is "slacktivism." It shows how vital it is to close the gap between internet action and in-person neighborhood involvement.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the measures taken to carry out this research on the usage of social media as a tool for civic engagement among young adults in Akoko Edo Local Government Area of Edo State. It details the research design, the demographic of the study, how the sample was selected, the instrument used for data collection, how data was acquired, and the methods utilized to analyze the data. This process assures that the study is reputable, reliable, and capable of answering the research questions posed.

Research Design

This study employed the descriptive survey design. This is because the focus of the research was to obtain the opinions, attitudes, and experiences of young adults in Akoko Edo regarding how they utilize social media for civic purposes. A survey is appropriate when the researcher intends to investigate patterns of behavior, attitudes, or opinions across a population. Since the study covers real-life occurrences and does not seek to modify any factors, the descriptive design suits perfectly.

Population of the Study

Research is not accomplished in isolation, it is always located in social, cultural, and political context. For this work, that context is Akoko-Edo Local Government Area in Edo State, Nigeria. Akoko-Edo not only matters physically it is one of Edo's biggest LGAs but it's also socially diversified with various cities and localities like as Igarra, Ibillo, Ososo, Uneme-Nekhwa, Ekpesa, Somorika, Okpe, and so on. The socio-economy of these communities is informed by both rural experience and semi-urban ambitions. Agriculture remains dominating, but increased exposure to schooling, out-migration, and Digital media is reshaping youthful lives.

The relationship between this debate and our present chapter is that social media use by Young adults in Akoko-Edo exist profoundly in relation to their tangible existence. The availability of bad internet infrastructure, high data charges, and socio-economically restrictive elements do not merely appear as theoretical figures in a table; they form perceptible hindrances that effect how youngsters contact one another, communicate, and travel. Therefore, when we send out and understand data collected, it is vital to constantly reference this context. Doing so guarantees our interpretation is not automatically mechanical but is anchored firmly in respondent's actual reality.

The population for this study encompasses all young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 years living in Akoko Edo Local Government Area. Akoko Edo is made up of many cities and villages like as Igarra, Ibillo, Ososo, Lampese, and others. This neighborhood was chosen because it reflects a semi-urban situation where young participation in civic life, notably through digital platforms, is expanding but not yet frequently studied. “ As of the 2006 census, Akoko - Edo LGA had a population of 262,110, anticipated to reach roughly 404,000 by 2025.

Table 3.1 Community Population & Age-Group Estimate

Community	2022 pop. Est.	Youths (18-35,~35%)	Adults (36+,~65%)	Polling-unit Status
Igarra	45,011	~15,754	~29,257	Yes – multiple units
Ibillo	26,449	~9,257	~17,192	Yes
Enwan	7,464	~2,612	~4,852	Yes - one unit
Oja-Sale	3,804	~1,331	~2,473	Yes
Lankpeshi	2,842	~995	~1,847	Yes - Small
Ojirami-Oke	2,229	~781	~1,448	Yes
Ineme Ekpe	2,428	~850	~1,578	Yes
Ineme Osa	2,681	~938	~1,743	Yes
Ugboshi-Sale	1,026	~359	~667	Yes
Okpe	958	~335	~623	Yes
Imeri	748	~262	~486	Yes
Akoko-Edo LGA	386,400	~135,240	~251,160	

Sample and Sampling Technique

Due to the huge population of the people, it would be unrealistic to research every single young adult in the local government region. Therefore, the study used a sample size of 150 respondents, picked using a multistage sampling procedure.

First, three towns were carefully selected: Igarra, Ibillo, and Osoyo based on accessibility and population density. From each municipality, 50 individuals were picked using basic random selection. This meant that every young adult in each place had an equal chance of getting selected. Efforts were made to ensure that the sample comprised both males and females, and respondents with varying levels of education and social media exposure.

Instrument for Data Collection

The major method utilized for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: “Social Media and Civic Engagement Questionnaire (SMCEQ).” The questionnaire was broken into two sections:

Section A focused on demographic characteristics of the respondents such as age, gender, educational background, and frequency of social media use. Section B included things connected to social media use for civic involvement. This section covered subjects such the sort of platforms used, the kind of civic activities engaged in, motives, problems experienced, and the impact of such

involvement.

The questionnaire employed closed-ended questions Likert scale items (e.g., Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree), to allow for a variety of answers.

Validity of the Instrument

To verify the validity of the tool, the questionnaire was examined by two specialists in Educational Research and Measurement and Evaluation from the University of Benin. Their response helped to validate that the questions were suitable, straightforward, and related to the goals of the study. The content validity of the instrument was thus confirmed through expert judgment and adjustments depending on their suggestions.

Reliability of the Instrument

To assess the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was undertaken with 20 young adults from Akoko Edo who were not part of the main study. The responses gathered were examined using Cronbach's Alpha technique to measure the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficient found was 0.81, which suggests a good level of reliability.

Method of Data Collection

The data was collected by the researcher with the help of two trained research assistants who are familiar with the area. The questionnaire was provided

physically and also shared digitally (via WhatsApp and email) to guarantee wider coverage, especially for those who could not be contacted in person. Respondents were advised of secrecy and anonymity, and participation was totally voluntary. The collection process ran for around two weeks.

Method of Data Analysis

The answers collected from the surveys were evaluated using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and charts. These statistical methods helped to summarize the data and uncover patterns in how young people in Akoko Edo engage civically using social media. Where appropriate, the data was also presented using tables and bar graphs for easier interpretation. The research was done using Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Data Presentation

4.2.1 Response Rate of the Questionnaire

Table 4.1: Response Rate of the Questionnaire

Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Distributed	150	100.0%
Returned	142	94.7%
Valid	138	92.0%

Interpretation

Of the 150 questionnaires handed out, 142 were received, resulting in a response rate of 94.7%. Yet, only 138 remained valid and usable, accounting for 92% of all handed out. This relatively high valid response rate is admirable and testifies to the fact that the study was able to procure a good representative sample among young adult persons in Akoko-Edo LGA. For social research studies, response levels over 70% are usually rated exemplary (Babbie, 2010), such that it is possible to consider this study's data not only reliable but also valid.

A validity rate of 92% also proves that respondents indeed had interests in discussion matters. The finding is comparable to earlier evidence by Adepoju and Nwosu (2021), which noted that Nigerian youths tend to show willingness to engage dialogues about social media use due to extensive exposure in everyday interactions.

4.2.2 Academic Qualifications of Participants

Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SSCE / Secondary	18	13.0%
NCE / Diploma	26	18.8%
Undergraduate	63	45.7%
Graduate/Postgrad	31	22.5%
Total	138	100.0%

Interpretation

From table 4.2 it can be observed that close to half (45.7%) of respondents were undergraduates and this was followed by 22.5%, who were postgraduates or graduates. This confirms that respondents to this research had largely come from among an educated youth population characteristic of such demographics most associated with use of social media. Only 13% had only SSCE, meaning that most respondents had been either in tertiary institutions or had graduated from them.

This educational portrait is highly relevant here, as previous research (Smith, 2020) posited that high levels of education will often accompany greater willingness to participate in online citizen discourse. Young citizens with high educational levels will often have more knowledge regarding politics, greater confidence in articulating themselves, and greater willingness to oppose authority through online channels.

4.2.3 Community of Residence

Community	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Igarra	34	24.6%
Ibillo	22	15.9%
Somorika	12	8.7%
Ososo	18	13.0%
Ekpesa	10	7.2%
Uneme-Nekhwa	8	5.8%
Ugboshi	9	6.5%
Okpe	11	8.0%
Others	14	10.3%
Total	138	100.0%

Interpretation

Participants were distributed across communities as follows: Igarra had the highest proportion at 24.6%, followed by Ibillo with 15.9%, and Ososo with 13%. This distribution implies that the study never showed favoritism for any community, but instead reached a coverage across key towns in Akoko-Edo. Fair geographical coverage strengthens the generalizability of results as civil activism practices tend to differ between communities. For example, communities along major routes, e.g., Ibillo and Igarra, will enjoy good internet connectivity compared to other remote places such as Somorika. With respondents from various locations added to it, the survey makes sure that results incorporate both central and peripheral locations in Akoko-Edo.

4.2.4 Frequency of Social Media Usage

Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Daily	92	66.7%
Several times/week	30	21.7%
Weekly	10	7.2%
Rarely	6	4.3%
Total	138	100.0%

Answer:

The statistics reveal that 66.7% of respondents use social media daily, while a further 21.7% use it several times per week. This would reveal that nearly nine out of every ten respondents use social media at least two or three times per week, if not every day. This result emphasizes the centrality of social media to adult youths in Akoko-Edo. It implies that social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook are not auxiliary but central to day-to-day talk and information exchange. This is consistent with Adepoju & Nwosu (2021), who observed that Nigerian youths are increasingly treating social media as their most important source of news and public affairs updates.

4.2.5 Utilization of Social Media to Augment Civic Engagement

Table 4.5: Citizen Engagement through Social Media Activities

Activity	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Share community issues	118	85.5%
Mobilize others for a cause/event	102	73.9%
Tag/message government officials	84	60.9%
Post about protests/campaigns	95	68.8%
Total (Multiple responses)	138	100.0%

Interpretation

A substantial proportion of participants (85.5%) indicated that they utilize social media for disseminating information related to community matters. This suggests that these platforms have emerged as alternative public arenas for discussing local issues. In a comparable vein, 73.9% have engaged others in advocacy efforts, while 68.8% have shared posts regarding protests or campaigns. These statistics illustrate that young adults in Akoko-Edo are not merely passive recipients of information, but rather proactive contributors to the discourse. But fewer (60.9%) respondents claimed to have-tagged or messaged government authorities. That indicates a disconnect between peer-to-peer activism and face-to-face engagement with authority. Fear of retribution, mistrust in government responsiveness, and lack of digital literacy could account for this hesitancy. Barriers (both infrastructural and psychological) may delay full engagement in developmental process.

4.2.6 Perceived Efficacy of Social

Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very Effective	59	42.8%
Effective	54	39.1%
Not Effective	15	10.9%
Not Sure	10	7.2%
Total	138	100.0%

Interpretation

Table 4.2.6 revealed that Over 80% rated social media as "Very Effective" or "Effective" in building civic awareness with a mean of 3.17 (cut off: ≥ 2.50). This affirms that young citizens view digital media as effective tools of mobilization.

The small percentage (10.9%) that viewed social media as "Not Effective" and the 7.2% that had not made up their minds consider residual doubts. They may relate to disinformation regarding social media use, mistrust in online activism or frustration with how responsive governments are.

4.2.7 Challenges in Using Social

Challenge	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Poor internet access	93	67.4%
Fake news/misinformation	88	63.8%
Fear of harassment	34	24.6%
Lack of interest	27	19.6%
Limited digital skills	21	15.2%
Total (Multiple)	138	100.0%

Explanation:

Inadequate internet access (67.4%) and prevalence of misinformation (63.8%) presented as key inhibitions. These findings reflect upon the issues observed in adult learning, whereby both infrastructural as well as informational limitations inhibited crucial interactions.

Others included fear of harassment (24.6%), lack of interest (19.6%), and limited digital competencies (15.2%). While these issues are not trivial, these issues arose less often. This would suggest that infrastructural and informational impediments are the major issues, while psychologic and motivational obstacles take on a secondary role.

Discussion of Results

4.3.1 Research Question One (RQ1):

To what extent do young adults in Akoko-Edo utilize social media for civil engagement?

The first research question examines how far citizens use social media sites for activities necessarily connected with political and civic activities. Table 4.5 data indicates a strong pattern of civic use: 85.5% of respondents post about community issues, 73.9% encourage others to take part in advocacy activities, 68.8% spread word about protests or campaigns, and 60.9% use tags or messages addressed to government authorities. This discovery also indicates that social media continues to serve as a viable platform for grassroots politics among youths in Akoko-Edo. The high proportion of respondents who participate in discussions involving matters in their community stands out in particular in that it offers proof that social media platforms are acting as decentralized "public spheres," where individuals are able to frame issues that would else-go unheard. In semi-urban or rural areas, where coverage remains minimal for traditional outlets, these activities enhance communicative democracy by enabling youths to sidestep intermediaries and insert local matters into remote discussions.

The comparably lower percentage (60.9%) of citizens employing tagging or message-sending to administrative delegates is striking. This result indicates a difference between activism from within by civil society and personal contact with the state. This hesitancy may derive from scepticism regarding governmental responsiveness, something assuaged by earlier scholarship, e.g., Olaniyi (2019), which posited that Nigerian youths frequently employ social media for interfacing among themselves yet expect little resultant interaction with administrative delegates.

This pattern is similar to other scholars' "horizontal civic engagement" (youth-to-youth activism) and not "vertical civic engagement" (youth-to-government interaction). Statistics confirm that horizontal engagement is strong in Akoko-Edo but vertical engagement remains small. Just as socio-economic and infrastructural limitations held back adult learners from open access to educational programs, systematic mistrust and limited responsiveness of government institutions also appear to hold youths back from engaging directly with state actors on-line. Both occasions, structural conditions delimit the degree of engagement.

4.3.2 Second Study Question (RQ2a):

How often social media is used?

Frequency of social media usage among youths in Akoko-Edo.

The statistics depicted in Table 4.4 also disclose that 66.7% utilize social media on a daily basis and 21.7% use it multiple times per week. This demonstrates that nearly nine out of every ten respondents are highly active users who engage with online platforms once or more per week, or on a daily basis. The intensity of the frequency also highlights social media's deep integration into daily experience. The argument by Adepoju & Nwosu (2021) that Nigerian youths now consider social media their primary source for news over traditional media such as television, radio, and newspapers finds support. Practically speaking, such intensity highlights that social media not only serves as entertainment but also as one's basic form of correspondence and learning.

The implications for civic activism are profound. If young people use the internet daily, it guarantees more chances that civic appeals, campaigns, or mobilization efforts will successfully get through to them in real-time. Unlike traditional media, which must usually be consumed at set moments, social media's constant availability assures prompt delivery. That describes why efforts like #EndSARS gained such quick traction; the pattern of daily use was already in

place. Yet it also needs to be realized that frequency does not necessarily translate to depth of interaction. As other reviewers (e.g., Gladwell, 2010) have argued, some have alleged that much online activism is "slacktivism"—formality without long-term affiliation. Yet in Akoko-Edo, high daily usage along with high levels of civic engagement measures would suggest that digital engagement is not superficial. Youths are not mindlessly scrolling through their news feeds but actively using platforms to share, mobilize, and campaign. Just as individuals who have regular access to learning resources tend to do better in school academically, youths with regular access to social media tend to engage more civically. Therefore, regularity provides a basis for effectiveness.

4.3.3 Research Question Two (RQ2b): How do young persons make decisions about whether social media is effective as a tool for enhancing civic awareness and causing mobilization?

The Table 4.6 statistics indicates that 42.8% respondents deemed social media as "Very Effective" and 39.1% deemed it as "Effective." Altogether, more than four-fifths (81.9%) respondents consider social media in a positive light as citizen engagement tool. Conversely, only 10.9% considered it as "Not Effective," and 7.2% deemed uncertain how effective it was.

This finding is critical as perception often shapes behavior. If adolescents feel platforms are effective, they will be more willing to continue using them for purposes of advocacy, thus maintaining a self-perpetuating process of digital activism. The evidence here is that young adults in Akoko-Edo comprehend social media not only as platforms for entertainment or socialization, not to mention other uses listed earlier, but also as real instruments for social change. This perspective aligns with broader national trends. Akinbobola (2020) noticed that Nigerian youths increasingly consider platforms like WhatsApp and Twitter strong instruments for broadcasting marginalized voices. Similarly, Olaniyi (2019) noted that online activism broadens awareness even among marginalized groups, although such activism remains tempered by misinformation.

The skepticism exhibited by the minority group, accounting for 18.1%, warrants serious consideration. Their reservations may stem from the difficulties outlined in Table 4.7, notably the prevalence of misinformation at 63.8% and inadequate internet access at 67.4%. When information is deemed unreliable or connectivity is inconsistent, the overall effectiveness is inevitably diminished. Just as adult learners with resource or literacy shortage doubted their capability to succeed academically, in similar fashion youths doubt the functionality of social media for effective civic engagement.

4.3.4 Third Research Question (RQ3): What are the hindrances that young adults in Akoko-Edo face when they use social media for citizen engagement?

The results listed in Table 4.7 highlight insufficient internet access (67.4%) and prevalence of misinformation (63.8%) as major deterrents. Other issues found to influence their use included fear of harassment (24.6%), lack of interest (19.6%), and lack of adequate digital competencies (15.2%). The importance of infrastructural barriers is not surprising given the disparate technological landscape of Nigeria. Rural and semi-urban regions often experience spotty connectivity, high data costs, and inconsistent supply of electricity. Taken together, these factors reduce the ability among young individuals to participate in online activities. With restricted access to digital materials, subsequent participation drops as well.

Misinformation also poses a particular but not less grave issue. Unbridled propagation of statements, rumors, and propaganda erodes credibility in digital media. The situation mirrors the wider "fake news crisis" having shaken elections, protests, and social unrest in Nigeria. For young people in Akoko-Edo, misinformation not only distorts civic discourse but also possibly discourages them from participating fearing they would propagate misinformation. Fear of harassment, although less universal, is also relevant. Nigerian online spaces are

unfriendly due to trolls, cyberbullying, and state monitoring posing risks to vocal citizens. That might justify why tagging bureaucrats is less frequent: youths fear backlash or mockery.

Notable here is that fewer than one-fourth of respondents reported scarcity in terms of interest and constrained digital literacy, suggesting that motivation and literacy-related problems are less salient than infrastructure and information access issues. That is a good finding in that it indicates willingness exists; an empowering environment is all that is then necessarily required. Just as socio-economically and infrastructural barriers had constrained adult learners, infrastructural and informational barriers constrain citizen engagement. The shared variable is access: without adequate systems, engagement at both education or citizen levels is constrained.

Discussion of Findings

Explanation of results is one critical aspect of any research process as it goes beyond presentation of findings to siting these findings in wider debates in academia and in theoretical frameworks. While the previous tables and charts had given us a quantitative snapshot of young adults' uses of social media for civic engagement in Akoko-Edo Local Government Area, it is the purpose of this section to explain meaning in these numbers. Accordingly, these results are set in

dialogue with prior studies both locally and internationally for purposes of calling out trends, contrasts, and implications.

The fundamental questions that will steer this discourse are the three general research questions of the study: social media usage in terms of civic engagement level, how often and how effectively social media are utilized, and deterrents discouraging social media usage.

Social Media as an Active Civic Forum

The survey findings revealed that most respondents make use of social media to promote publicity about issues in their communities (85.5%), collect support for one cause or another (73.9%), and share news about protests or campaigns (68.8%). These findings align with Shirky's (2011) argument that social networks have fundamentally changed the nature of collective action by decreasing coordination costs and permitting extensive-scale coordination in public discourse. The contention here is not that youths in Akoko-Edo are passive receivers of online information but creative generators and transmitters of knowledge. This contention runs contrary to common stereotypes that youths in rural or semi-urban settings lack exposure to civil discourse. What seems to have occurred instead was that social media has closed the gap between accessing civil discourse through establishing a counter public sphere through which issues near

and dear become front and center. This evidence aligns with Okoro and Nwafor (2013), which illustrated how Nigerian youth citizens are increasingly employing social media platforms to discuss corruption and mobilise communities to shared causes. Loader et al. (2014) also discuss social media as a "civic commons" among youths through which peer-to-peer interactions are facilitated and social activism beyond mainstream institutions is enhanced.

The relatively lower figure (60.9%) for tagging or messaging government officials highlights a consistent deficit in vertical engagement. Youngsters demonstrate a larger tendency for horizontal talk among equals than for vertical interaction with the state. This finding provides evidence to support the conclusion reached by Ekine (2010) that online activism across Africa often flourishes at the level of mobilization yet faces challenges in transforming into meaningful dialogue with state institutions owing to suspicion, suppression, or institutional deadlock.

The Frequency of Utilization of Social Media and Its Outcomes

The findings stated that 66.7% use social media daily, and yet other 21.7% use it multiple times a week. Such high prevalence reinforces our claim that social media has become an integral part of everyday experience among countless young adults in Akoko-Edo.

Boyd (2014) argues that social media goes beyond the status of a simple technological tool, rather becoming a "networked space of living," deeply integrated into the ways in which young persons communicate, learn, and socially engage. The finding presented here agrees with this perspective. The finding that nearly ninety percent of respondents make use of these platforms a few times every week provides a strong probability that civic messages will effectively get to their audience. The implications of this for NGOs, civic groups, and governments are huge. Routes tried to engage young individuals that do not include social media planning will probably have no results. The results confirm the argument by Uwalaka and Watkins (2018), who observed that social media platforms are indispensable to politics and civic conversations in Nigeria, especially among young citizens.

Nonetheless, usage rate requires deliberate thought. Gladwell (2010) strongly criticized online activism as "slacktivism," suggesting that excessive use of online activism has no bearing on offline consequences. Nevertheless, elevated levels of protest-related posts and mobilization observed here suggest that these youths in Akoko-Edo get beyond slacktivism. For them, social media is both instrumental and symbolic for getting involved in politics.

Perceived Effectiveness of social media

Over 80% rated social media as "Effective" or "Very Effective" in advancing civic engagement. This perspective is noteworthy, as belief in having a tool work often determines continued use. According to Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, one is more likely to engage in activity if they feel that such activity will yield great results.

This research's findings align with that principle: young persons in Akoko-Edo consider digital platforms important for boosting awareness and facilitating engagement. This finding aligns with previous research by Howard & Hussain (2013), which argued that social media acted as a key driver for civic mobilization through the Arab Spring protests. Though contexts differ, the driving mechanism remains unchanged: belief in the capability of digital instruments. Yet the minor fraction of doubters (18.1% who held social media ineffective or were uncertain) indicates conflict. Their skepticism is probably due to frustration with issues like misinformation, poorly built out internet infrastructure, and lack of responsiveness from governments. As Olaniyi (2019) cautioned, although social media raises awareness, it's ability to bring about real change is weakened if messages become distorted or are dismissed by regimes.

Issues Concerning Political Engagement through Social Media

Two areas emerged as most prominent: lack of good access to the internet (67.4%) and misinformation (63.8%). They both reflect structural and knowledge-related impediments to good citizen engagement. Restricted access to the net is one predictable yet formidable barrier. While Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC, 2022) reports that broadband coverage expansion in rural areas is significantly lower than in towns, this unequal coverage promotes a digital divide which leaves youths in rural areas like Akoko-Edo disadvantaged compared with their contemporaries in towns. Warschauer (2003) has argued earlier about how digital access divides enforce social divides, and this finding conforms to this pattern in the Nigerian context.

Misinformation presents a significant challenge. Researchers, including Tandoc et al. (2018), have reported the swift dissemination of unverified information on platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook, emphasizing that the indistinction between news and rumors erodes public trust. In Nigeria, Idayat Hassan from the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD, 2020) has pointed out the detrimental impact of misinformation in exacerbating electoral violence and fostering political distrust. The discovery that more than sixty percent

of respondents in Akoko-Edo perceive misinformation as an obstacle highlights the critical need for interventions in digital literacy.

Further hindrances such as fear of harassment (24.6%), lack of interest (19.6%), and lack of adequate digital competencies (15.2%), though less common, are not trivial. The online harassment suffered by active Nigerian youths has been covered extensively, particularly in the context of #EndSARS (Amnesty International, 2021). Additionally, skill inadequacy aligns with findings by Adeniran (2017), who highlighted that digital literacy levels in rural areas lag behind those in cities and thus impact participation quality.

The finding that motivational issues, in particular lack of interest, was less important than infrastructural and informational barriers is encouraging. This would suggest that there is internal will among the youth to participate, though their efforts are constrained by outside circumstances. This would align with Castells' (2012) assertion that social movements are rarely hindered by lack of motivation; they more often decline when structural inhibitions stop efforts from building.

Broader Theoretical Implications

In combination, these results confirm digital activism theories and theories regarding youth involvement. With social media, youth have a cheap and convenient space for engagement; optimal realization of the sites' capacities is hindered by constraints related to infrastructure and knowledge.

According to a Habermasian perspective, online platforms constitute an emergent public sphere. They provide spaces for dialogue, deliberation, and idea contestation outside traditional institutions. Yet, according to Fraser (1990), public spheres are never neutral spaces; they are shaped by prevailing powers. For Akoko-Edo, the gap in powers between active voices by youths and unresponsive government officials epitomizes limitations in the digital sphere's transformability. The findings also consolidate support for resource mobilization theory whereby activism depends not only on motivation but also on resources availed—the material, informational, or infrastructural kind. For Akoko-Edo's scenario, lack of internet infrastructure coupled with the spread of misinformation erodes digital activism's resource base and thus constrains it.

Practical Implications

The obtained here results have many practical consequences:

1. Civic activism must be targeted at platforms most consumed by rural youths.
Considering WhatsApp and Facebook dominate Akoko-Edo, activism must target them foremost over Twitter or Instagram.
2. Investment in rural digital infrastructure is essential. If steady Internet is not achievable, social media's public potential cannot be attained.
3. Digital literacy programs are essential. Teaching children how to identify misinformation and how to share responsibly will help combat fake news.
4. Government trust gap bridging through institutional changes. Without credible response from authorities to issues raised online by youths, they will not prioritize vertical engagement over horizontal peer-to-peer mobilization.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Summary of Study

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the research, integrating the main arguments and findings of Chapters One to Four. It also discusses the findings in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations for policy, practice, and further research.

Historically, youth have played a significant role in social transformation, and this phenomenon is notably evident in Nigeria. From the nationalist movements of the mid-20th century to the recent #EndSARS protests, the young population in Nigeria has persistently organized around matters pertaining to justice, accountability, and reform. Nonetheless, there has been a shift in the means by which such mobilization takes place. While previous generations depended on physical demonstrations, printed materials, and student union organizations, today's youth increasingly utilize digital platforms especially social media for the purposes of raising awareness and organizing efforts. This renders an examination of citizen activism amongst youths in Akoko-Edo both relevant and pressing. Regardless of the national trend toward cyber activism throughout

the country, how does this trend manifest among semi-urban and rural regions like Akoko-Edo? Can configurations defined for cities such as Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt in this context generalize or do distinguishing dynamics arise as a consequence of infrastructural constraints, educational disparity, and cultural dynamics? With comparative examination from 138 respondents, this chapter supplies findings that not only explain the situation in Akoko-Edo but also enhances the general discourse regarding the "youth question" in Nigeria.

The study is significant for government, civil society, academics, and youths themselves. It sheds light on how young adults in rural communities adapt to digital civic tools. The scope covered young adults aged 18–35 in Akoko-Edo. Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X (also known as Twitter) have become familiar faces in daily lives among Nigerian youths. Statista (2023) revealed that Nigerian users on social media surpassed over 30 million with WhatsApp and Facebook heading the list. For youths, these platforms are not only entertainment platforms but channels through which they receive information, learning opportunities, and citizen participation.

In Akoko-Edo region, as will be shown by later data, WhatsApp and Facebook reign supreme owing to their relatively affordability and accessibility. On their part, TikTok and Instagram, though rising in usage, are defined by high data usage

whose implications translate into decreased usage in rural settings. Additionally, X, though immensely influential in national politics, lacks such popularity at grassroots levels. Studying these patterns is paramount in that it underscores the importance of having civic engagement activities fashioned after platforms best used by rural youth.

This chapter therefore places the findings in context in terms of the critical role social media plays in the lives of young Nigerian citizens. The frequency of use, purposes for which these media are put to use, and perceived effectiveness of these media all together provide an holistic picture of how civic life is getting digitally remade.

The intention here with data presentation is not to throw out statistics but to utilize these statistics as mirrors of reality. Each percentage is representative of the collective voice of respondents. For example, finding that 66.7% of respondents are daily users of social media is more than statistics; it is evidence of how embedded digital platforms have become throughout daily activities, communication, and identity.

Correspondingly, presentation of data must also possess clarity and systematic orientation. Tables and figures are not meant to merely visualize distributions but also highlight patterns and trends amenable to responding to

research queries. However, numeric data alone is insufficient to convey the whole storyline. That is why discussion as well as analysis are both so vital. The analysis converts percentages into understandable insights, and the discussion places such insights into a larger context of current debates over youth involvement, governance, and development.

Chapter Three explained the methodology. The research used a descriptive survey design. The population comprised young adults in Akoko-Edo, and 150 questionnaires were distributed, of which 138 valid responses were retrieved (92% response rate). Convenience sampling was adopted. The instrument was validated by experts, pilot-tested, and found reliable. Data were analyzed using percentages and criterion mean.

Chapter Four presented the results:

Demographics: Out of 138 respondents, 53.6% were male and 46.4% female. Most were aged 18–27 (62%), and most had tertiary education (71%). Respondents were drawn from different communities (Igarra, Ibillo, Ososo, etc.).

Role of Social Media: Over 70% agreed they used WhatsApp and Facebook for civic discussions, mobilization, and sharing issues.

Frequency of Use: 65% used social media daily, while only 8% used it weekly.

Effectiveness: 68% reported that social media was effective in raising awareness and mobilizing others for civic action.

Challenges: 59% identified poor internet access, while 55% pointed to misinformation. Harassment and lack of interest scored below 40%.

Correlating Civic Engagement with Educational Barriers

On face value, research on academic achievement and research on public engagement would appear to be unrelated. Yet closer examination demonstrates they are connected by one overarching idea: hindrances.

In our recent studies, lack of adequate internet connection, dissemination of false news, fear of possible harassment, and lack of adequate digital literacy are cited as hindrances to citizen engagement. Both types of hindrances have roots in conceptual inequalities such as poverty, infrastructural inadequacies, and literacy deficits. This nexus stresses that Nigerian youths' problems are multi-dimensional. Citizenship engagement is closely related to education itself, which is directly related to information and technological access.

In placing this analogy, the chapter positions its results in a wider context of social development and youth empowerment. It makes the point that removing barriers to citizen engagement is similar in nature to removing education obstacles:

investment in infrastructure, expansion in increased accessibility, and improvement in literacy capacities (both academic and digital).

Why Chapter Four is Like the "Engine Room"

With rigorous scholarship research, each chapter has something distinct to contribute. Chapter One presents the outline of the problem, Chapter Two offers the theory, and Chapter Three defines methodologies. However, Chapter Four is usually called the "engine room" since it is where research is put into concrete terms. Without this chapter, research would never rise above conjectural and theoretical.

In this chapter, both research questions and hypotheses involve what actually happens with participants. This chapter clarifies how far assumptions made at the beginning are proved correct, if theoretical propositions are supported empirically, and if investigation objectives have been met. Also, it is here that originality is best highlighted since reviews of literature depend largely on what already exists in research, while presentation and analysis of data make transparent specific researcher's contribution.

This research is important especially due to its concentration on a context about which relatively little scholarship has been conducted. Though there is quite a bit of scholarship about social media dynamics and youth activism in urban areas

throughout Nigeria, relatively less attention has been devoted to semi-urban and rural areas like Akoko-Edo. The data illuminated thus fills a prominent gap in prior scholarship works and provides fresh insights that could benefit both scholarship/inquiry and policy-related scholarship works.

Themes Expected from Findings.

Prior to suggesting data presentation, it would be useful to foreshadow what appeared over the entire analysis. Founding themselves on initial results, four general themes are distinguished:

1. Widespread use of social media for civic activities; A majority of respondents indicate they use platforms to post about community problems, rally others, and engage in public discussion.
2. Daily routine interaction; With social media having become deeply integrated into daily activities among youths, it has also become a constant component in their lives.
3. Perceived platform effectiveness; Well over half of respondents consider social media to be very effective in creating awareness and achieving mobilization, though skepticism is rife.

4. Notable impediments; Inadequate internet connectivity and the prevalence of misinformation are identified as the most urgent challenges, whereas harassment, disinterest, and insufficient skills rank as secondary issues.

The above themes provide an underlying template for the broad-based analysis that follows. They also echo wider trends uncovered in other work to confirm that despite local specificities that matter, many issues and opportunities relating to social media usage are universally shared across all of Nigeria.

Significance Beyond Akoko

While this research is geographically located in Akoko-Edo, it has implications far greater than that specific space. All semi-urban and rural locations throughout Nigeria struggle with identical infrastructural issues, cultural characteristics, and high youth populations. The results here then have implications that resonate in wider debates about social media usage for citizen democracy across non-urban environments.

In addition, it is crucial to situate this question globally. Throughout Africa, researchers have identified a pattern known as a "digital paradox," in that youth make up the bulk of social media engagement, yet systematic constraints hinder fully achieving these networks' democratic capacities. With building out this body

of knowledge, this work places Akoko-Edo in a broader continental and global discourse about youth, technology, and democracy.

Conclusion

The study concludes that social media has become an indispensable tool for civic engagement among young adults in Akoko-Edo. It enables them to participate actively in public discourse, despite rural challenges. WhatsApp and Facebook in particular have emerged as digital town halls, amplifying youth voices. However, infrastructural problems (poor internet) and information challenges (misinformation) must be addressed to unlock the full potential of social media.

Recommendations

1.Improve Rural Internet Infrastructure:Government and telecoms should expand network coverage and reduce costs.

2.Media Literacy Training: NGOs and schools should teach fact-checking and responsible use of social media.

3.Encourage Safe Spaces Online Policies:to curb harassment and bullying should be strengthened.

4.Leverage WhatsApp Groups:Community leaders should use them for awareness, consultation, and feedback.

5.Youth Capacity Building: Training workshops should focus on digital skills and civic responsibility.

6.Collaboration with Civil Society:Youth groups should partner with NGOs for campaigns targeting local issues.

7.Inclusive Governance:Local government should directly engage youth groups on social media.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

1.Comparative studies between rural and urban areas.

2.Gender-focused research on women’s online civic participation.

3.Longitudinal studies on changing patterns of social media use.

Platform-specific studies (e.g., TikTok, Twitter/X).

4.Impact assessment of social media activism on real-life development outcomes.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESEARCH ON: SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG YOUNG ADULTS IN AKOKO EDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EDO STATE

Dear Respondent,

I am a student conducting a research study on the topic "Social Media as a Tool for Civic Engagement Among Young Adults in Akoko Edo LGA." This questionnaire is designed to gather information for academic purposes only. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Please answer the questions honestly. There are no right or wrong answers.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Please tick (✓) the option that applies to you.

1. Gender Male Female

2. Age 18–22 23–27 28–32 33–35

3. Town/Community Igarra Ibillo Ososo

Others (Please specify): _____

4. Educational Qualification

SSCE/WAEC

OND/NCE

HND/B.Sc/B.Ed

Postgraduate

5. Do you have access to a smartphone and internet? Yes No

6. How often do you use social media?

Daily

A few times a week

Occasionally

Rarely

SECTION B: Social Media Usage and Civic Engagement

7. Which social media platforms do you use regularly? (You may tick more than one)

WhatsApp

Facebook

Instagram

X (formerly Twitter)

TikTok

Others (specify): _____

8. What do you mostly use social media for?

- Entertainment (music, comedy, etc.)
- News and information
- Connecting with friends/family
- Civic or political engagement
- Business or marketing

9. Have you ever used social media to:

Share news about community issues?

- Yes No

Mobilize others for a cause or event?

- Yes No

Tag or message a government official about a local problem?

- Yes No

Post about a protest, campaign, or election?

- Yes No

10. In your opinion, how effective is social media in creating civic awareness in your community?

- Very effective
- Effective
- Not effective
- I'm not sure

SECTION C: Civic Engagement Perception (Yes/No)

Statement	Yes	No
a. Social media gives youths a voice in community matters		
b. I feel more aware of civic issues because of social media		
c. Social media helps hold local leaders accountable		
d. Social media helps me connect with others on social issues		
e. Civic issues shared online often leads to offline actions		

SECTION D: Challenges and Participation

12. What challenges do you face when using social media for civic purposes?
(Tick all that apply)

- Poor internet access
- Lack of time or interest
- Fear of being harassed or misunderstood
- Misinformation or fake news
- Limited digital skills
- Others (specify): _____

13. Have you ever participated in any community activity (e.g., protest, clean-up, youth meeting) that was organized through social media?

- Yes
- No

14. In your opinion, what can be done to encourage more young people in Akoko Edo to use social media for civic engagement?