

**IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE ENDSARS PROTESTS IN NIGERIA
IN 2020**

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**A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that to the best of our knowledge this work was carried out by **PEACE AYEVBOSA EDMWONYI** in the Department of History and International Studies, Faculty of Art, University of Benin, Benin City.

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DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to GOD Almighty for his support throughout my academic journey.

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I will start by extending my gratitude to God for his favour, grace and mercy towards my life and my family.

Special appreciation goes to my amiable supervisor, Dr Oghogho Oriakhi for her guidance and direction over the course of this research project. My gratitude also goes to Dr Frank Ikponmwosa (Head of Department), Dr Daniel Iweze, Dr Charles Osaruwense (Course Adviser), Dr Williams Orukpe. I wish to extend my appreciation all my lecturers in the Department of History and International Studies for impacting the knowledge necessary throughout the years of my academic sojourn in the University of Benin.

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Additionally, I wish to appreciate my God mother, Prof (Mrs.) Osarome Tawari for her love and support and also to the man I found a father in Mr. Edwin Odion Igiebor, thank you sir for contributing to the success of my academics and for your support. My profound appreciations go to all of my friends for their support and encouragement. I'll not fail to appreciate Sir Martins for being consistent in his support. Thank you all so much and God bless you.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Police is an ancient institution in human history which can be traced to the era when the masses surrendered their rights to the great Leviathan in exchange for security as it is well captured and explained by Thomas Hobbes in his social contract theory.¹ All over the world, it is the duty of the government to be held the life and properties of its citizens and to ensure that laws and orders are maintained by all. To carry out these functions, governments at different levels create different security units of which Police department is vested with the powers to maintain internal order in the society by investigating, arresting and charging suspects to any competent court of law.² In Nigeria, the duties of Police Force are not different from what is obtainable in other parts of the world, but over the years, the Nigeria Police Force have misused their powers by engaging in various human rights violence which includes, brutalities of innocent citizens, collection of bribe from driver, taking lives of Nigerians because they refuse to cooperate with the police and many excesses.³

However, the media over the years has help in exposing this rascality of the Nigerian Police Force. At first newspapers as been the checkmating agent on the excesses of the police. Newspapers and other conventional media houses have carried various oversight on the Nigerian Police and the Nigeria Police has also been accused of failing to charge most of these suspects to court, rather they subject them

to all sorts of inhuman treatment ranging from illegal torture or confession under duress and other corrupt practices.⁴ With the emergence of social media, there had been a wide exposure of police rascality and excesses in the various community where the police operate. Social media in recent time has been an oversight agent to checkmate and report the Police brutality or excessive use of force by law enforcement.⁵ The use of torture as interrogative technique and other wanton abuses of human rights remain some of the major flaws of the Nigeria Police Force which has attracted public odium, opprobrium, and condemnation to the Force with the help of the social media. For instance, the #EndSARS movement began in 2017, as Nigerians shared experiences of police brutality via social media and demonstrated in several cities to call for SARS's dissolution.⁶ In response to those protests, the government pledged an "immediate reorganization" of SARS and an investigation into allegations against the unit.⁷ It is against this backdrop, this study seek to elucidate the manifestations of social media oversight on police excesses on Nigerians.

Conceptualization of Social Media

The term "social media" could be conceptualized to refer to internet-based applications that enable people to communicate and share resources and information. Some examples of social media include: blogs, discussion forums, chat rooms, wikis, YouTube Channels, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. Social media can be accessed by computer, smart and cellular phones, the use of social media are an evolving

phenomenon.⁸ During the past decade, rapid changes in communication as a result of new technologies have enabled people to interact and share information through media that were non-existent or widely unavailable as recently as 24 years ago.⁹

Social media have been used to disseminate a wide range of public safety information before, during, and after various incidents. Prior to an incident (or in the absence of an incident), many emergency management organizations provide citizens with preparedness and readiness information through social media. Social media are also used for community outreach and customer service purposes by soliciting feedback on public safety-related topics. Social media also play an informational role during emergency situations.¹⁰ For instance, in 2009 the U.S. Army used its Twitter account to provide news and updates during the Fort Hood shootings; the American Red Cross similarly uses Facebook to issue alerts of potential disasters. However, the main source of information disseminated and sought after is generally posted by citizens, rather than emergency management agencies or organizations. For example, warning messages via the Internet during the Virginia Tech shooting in April 2007 came primarily from students and unofficial sources, and during the 2007 Southern California Wildfires, citizens sought information through social media because they felt media sources were too general or inaccurate.¹¹ For instance, what led to the ENDSARS protest that erupted in 2020, was as a result of a video of SARS officers shooting a youth in Ughelli, Delta State, went viral on social media.

The video infuriated Nigerian teenagers even more, and the demonstration gained traction and expanded across the country as a show of solidarity by youngsters in other sections of the country. In the account of Abosede, 20th October, 2020 was the date youths took to the streets across the country to demonstrate against police brutality. According to the current report of police brutality using the ENDSARS on Twitter, has brought public attention to it. The online campaign about the police brutality is new, however, Nigeria pop stars have over the years expressed the worries, fear and incident of police brutality.¹²

Nigerian Police Brutality, Torture and Abuse of Human Rights of Nigerians

The primary roles of the police as an institution are meant to be guided at the national and international level by conventions, standards and treaties (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966). In spite of state prohibitions against torture and custodial misconduct by the police, torture has been reported as being commonly used in police custodies across Nigeria, which is a major reason behind deaths in custody. According to the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria, personnel of the Nigeria Police routinely carry out summary executions of persons accused or suspected of crime; rely on torture as a principal means of investigation; commit rape of both sexes, and engage in extortion at nearly every opportunity.¹³ Violent treatment of accused persons by the police or other law enforcement officers is strongly against Article 5 of the Code of Conduct for Law

Enforcement Officials adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, resolution 34/169 of 17 December 1979:

No law enforcement official may inflict, instigate or tolerate any act of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, nor may any law enforcement official invoke superior orders or exceptional circumstances such as a state of war or a threat of war, a threat to national security, internal political instability or any other public emergency as a justification of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.¹⁴

The incessant and consistent reports are received from lawyers, human rights activists, social analysts, and journalists about the police demanding bribes, stealing, extorting money and engaging in different forms of brutality and abuse of rights on daily basis. Despite that, not many empirical studies have been done regarding this to give detail report about the kind of abuse and the level of the brutality that people are facing when they are being arrested or detained by the police.¹⁵

In search of a solution, many Nigerian youth exploiting the use of social media played enormous roles in this fight by amplifying their voices with the trending hash tag of #ENDSARS, which encouraged the youth to come together and fight and demand that the infamous Special Anti-Robbery Square unit police should be disbanded. They further sought for justice for all deceased victims of police brutality with sufficient compensation to the families and the establishment of an autonomous body to oversee the investigation and prosecution of all police misconduct within ten days. Besides, Nigeria youths through the use of social media

fought for peace, and strong institutions which are important, because sustainable development and prosperity cannot be possible without peace, physical integrity, and protection by a state legal system.¹⁶ Thus, this study seeks to assess the role of social media in raising awareness about and checking police excesses.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine the Impact of the social media on the EndSars Protests in Nigeria in 2020. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To trace the history of police excesses and brutality in Nigeria;
- ii. examine the emergence of social media in Nigeria and its role in containing police brutality;
- iii. evaluate the impact of social media in curbing the police brutality.

Significance of Study

This study is significant as examines the role of the social media in the EndSars protest was the most vibrant and potent tool utilized by the Nigerian youth to expose and spread the police brutality and excesses in October, 2020. The origin of police brutality dates back to the colonial era during the British colonial administration of Nigeria. The colonial police was created to bring about peace and order in the colonies. The police also played immense role in quelling uprisings by the colonial subjects. The colonial mentality of the police brutality and abuses of the colonial subjects were carried out to the present Nigerian police force. This potent youth activism in Nigeria in contemporary Nigeria needs scholarly investigation;

hence this study examines the role of the social media in curbing police brutality during the ENDSARS protests in Nigeria in 2020.

Sources and Methodology

This research employs qualitative research methodology, which involves the use of both primary and secondary sources. The study relied on primary materials obtained from oral interviews, and witness accounts of participants of the Endsars protests in Benin and others in the country. The secondary sources comprised articles in journals, chapters in edited books newspaper reports and online sources. The sources of data collection are critically analyzed in the study of the role of the social media in the Endsars protests in Nigeria in October, 2020.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of the study covers the EndSARS protests that began in October 2020 in Nigeria. The limitations of the study are the lack of resource materials such as textbooks and published documents. This compelled the researcher to gather data mainly through oral interviews, media reports and online sources.

Literature Review

The existing relevant works that have a direct bearing on the present study are reviewed as follows: Frederick Obananya in his article titled: "A Philosophical Exploration of the Events of January 15, 1970, and the EndSARS Protest in Nigeria"¹⁰ looks at the measures adopted by the Federal Government in putting down the youths protests with use of the military, This was evident in the brutal

suppression of a protest in 1966 that led to the Nigerian Civil War, caused by the massacre of civilians by the Nigerian army. Frederick Obananya contends that the same method of brutal suppression of peaceful protests was also adopted by the Nigeria security agencies during the EndSARS youth protesters at the Lekki Toll Gate massacre in Lagos. The relevance of the work lies in the Nigerian government's use of the state power to suppress popular protests in the 1960s that culminated into the civil war and the EndSARS protests that led to the death of many Nigerian youths. The study differs from the present study as it does not cover the events of police brutality that led to the EndSARS protests. It also differs from the present study in focus and period.

Chinemerem Onuorah in his article titled: "With the #EndSARS movement, Nigerian women prove they are capable of leading the nation"¹¹ examines the role women played during the EndSARS protest, and the most visible role noted was their leadership roles in guiding the protests in various parts of Nigeria. Aisha Yesufu is identified as among the prominent women who were in the forefront in leading the EndSARS protest even though EndSARS was said to have no visible leader or leaders. The relevance of the work lies in the activities of women during the EndSARS protest, but it is different from this present study in focus and scope as it focused only on the roles women played during the EndSARS protest, while the present study looks at the role of the social media in triggering the protests.

In their article titled: "Beyond Violence and Militarism"¹² Biko Agozino, Emmanuel Onyeozili, Augustine Agu, and Patrick Ibe aver that the act of recruiting untrained individuals to assist the police in curbing crimes, was a wrong approach adopted by the Nigerian government because it leaves the security sector with mostly untrained individuals in the security sector. The relevance of the work lies in the wrong approach used by the Nigerian police in recruiting untrained individual. The article is different from this present study due to its focus on the government's failure to provide effective training for the police officers thereby making them to perform below professional standard. It also differs from the present study in focus and period.

Sada Malumfashi in his article entitled: "EndSARS Protest and the Security Sector"¹³ examines the history of the creation of the SARS unit of the Nigerian Police. The author identifies of the SARS brutalities against Nigerian Youths before the eruption of the protests. The relevance of the work lies on tracing the history of the establishment of SARS and some of SARS' brutalities. However, the article is different from this study in focus.

Temilade Adelaja, in his article titled: "Reuters; Timeline of EndSARS Protest"¹⁴ presents in tabular forms the dates of the Endsars protests including when the protest started and ended. The relevance of the work lies in the tracking of the timeline of the protest that led to the killing of many youths and destruction of

properties in various parts of the country. However, the work differs from this study in focus.

Afeez Soladoye and Adeolu Ojo in their article “Impact of Social Media on Police Brutality Awareness in Nigeria,”¹⁵ look at how Nigerians utilized the social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Whatsapp as avenues to reach out to the world and Nigeria government to create awareness on police brutality in Nigeria which started with their demand to End SARS (Special Anti-robbery Squad) police unit. The findings in the article indicate that the main factor that helped in notifying the general public and pushed the government into taking fast action on the matter was the social media. It was the involvement of social media in the campaign that created the awareness that made the Nigerian Police to take responsibility of their actions, which might not be possible through the traditional media means. The author differs from past research as it focuses on the involvement of the people and the role social media platform(s) played in creating the awareness. The work, however, did not study in detail the various cases where social media were used to checkmate police excesses in Nigeria but observed the general manifestations of social media on police brutality oversight in Nigeria. The work is useful in providing insights on the role of the social media in the Endsars protest in Nigeria.

Jude Onwunoyirimadu in his article titled: “Police Brutality and Violation of Human Rights in Nigeria Causes and Implications”¹⁶ focuses on the police brutality

and violation of human rights in Nigeria causes and its implications as well as suggests ways to prevent police brutality in Nigeria. The author reveals that police brutality in Nigeria has led to loss of lives, torture of detainees and extortion of huge amount from suspects and other corrupt practices. The author recommends that the Nigerian police commission should strictly investigate and sanction erring officers, there should be a proper police reform, and Nigerian police should be subjected to a thorough mental examination before engaging them to service among others.

It could be seen from the reviewed literature that they focused on other aspects of the creation of the SARs unit of the Nigeria Police and Endsars protest. This study concentrates on the role of the social media in guiding the Endsars protests in Nigeria. In this way, this study seeks to fill the gap in the knowledge of the End SARS protest in Nigeria.

Chapter Outline

This research work comprises of five chapters which are as follows:

Chapter One: Background of the Study.

This chapter presents the background of the study by introducing for the aim and objectives of the study, significance, research methodology, scope of the study, and literature review.

Chapter Two: The History and Origin of Police Brutality in Nigeria

This chapter presents the history of the establishment of Nigeria Police and the origin of police brutality in Nigeria.

Chapter Three: The Outbreak of EndSARS Protest in October 2020.

This chapter analyses the events that led to the End SARS protest, the timeline of the protest, and the dimension of the protest.

Chapter Four: Assessment of the impacts of the role of the Social Media in End SARS Protest.

This chapter assesses the impact of the EndSARS protest in Nigeria.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

This chapter is the summary of the study which highlights the findings of the study.

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CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE NIGERIAN POLICE FORCE

The Concept of Social Media

The term, social media is one that has no generally acceptable definition and there are numerous definitions added as the concept keeps evolving. It is sometimes regarded as synonymous with the term “social networking” although social media is more encompassing. Social media can be defined as those websites that are built on Web 2.0 technologies to provide space for in-depth social interaction, community formation, and tackling of collaborative projects.¹ Web 2.0 is a term that describes the changing trends in the use of World Wide Web technology and Web design that aim to enhance creativity, secure information sharing, increase collaboration, and improve the functionality of the Web as we know it (Web 1.0). Web 2.0 is basically all about more functionality and interactivity allowing web users to do more than can be done on web 1.0. Social media has gained popularity over the last decade especially among youths because of its numerous features.² These features allow them to create personal profiles, while connecting with other users of the site. Users can upload photographs, post what they are doing at any given time and send personal or public messages to whoever they choose.³

History of Social Media in Nigeria

The Nigerian society has adopted the use and application of social media in almost every aspect of her daily activities. With the proliferation of digital devices

which make access to the internet and participation in social media, relatively more straightforward, a significant percentage of the literate populace are engaged with one form of social media activity or the other.⁴ A look at social media and the Nigerian society is apt to the extent that one can put into proper perspective, the way and manner the social media has come to impact the Nigerian society. Before the advent of social media in Nigeria, the traditional media, i.e. Radio, Television, Newspapers and Magazines, were the primary sources and conveyors of news and information. Media based social interaction was limited to what the traditional media could offer.⁵ However, following the adoption of the Global System of Mobile Telecommunication in Nigeria, in 2001, a great impetus was provided for the emergence of social media. Even the traditional media currently support its operations with social media platforms. It is therefore appropriate for this discussion to take a look at some of the ways the social media and the Nigerian society have interacted so far. Apart from the liberalisation of the broadcasting industry in Nigeria, no other phenomenon has had a profound impact on the way people communicate than social media. The social media seem to have widened the communication space, which was hitherto restricted. Previously, one needed to have access to either newspapers and magazines, radio and television sets to access news, and the feedback was very slow or almost non-existent. The inclusive and participatory attributes of social media make them more widely accepted and smart as well as convenient choice.⁶

Methods of Operations of the Social Media

One of the most vital interesting innovations of the social media is that it offers us something different from the traditional mass media where you can only send information but with no way to receive a feed-back instantaneously. The social media is particularly unique because it gives people the ability to emerge from not only being consumers of content but to also being publishers of same.⁷ The social media has the ability to function as a two-way traffic where the receiver can also disseminate the same piece of information received and send his feedback to the sender instantly. As long as the receiver has access to the internet, he can send it to a plethora of receivers who are not bound nor limited by geographical or territorial limitations.⁸ There are certain tools that allow the internet and social media perform effectively and these include:

Buttons and Badges: Buttons are graphic elements that usually include an image, a short call-to-action message, and a link for more information. They are often created to be shared, and include HTML code that allows them to be posted on a website. Badges are also small graphic images that include a message and link to a web page. However, badges are often posted on an individual's social network profile or personal blog to show support for or affiliation with a cause or issue, and may include messages that show a personal action was taken e.g. "I now know my HIV status."⁹ Looking at this definition one can see the opportunity these tools could offer in recruiting people for action and in inspiring people individually for a specific

positive activity. For instance, Button and Badges could be explored as an alternative tool for creating personalized health messages for target groups in the country.¹⁰

Image Sharing: This involves posting images (photos, artwork, etc.) to public websites where they can be viewed, tagged, categorized, and even used by others. This also is another beautiful method for public mobilization. This method was actually widely used earlier this year during the occupy Nigeria fuel subsidy saga. Image sharing provides value to communication activities by providing public images on development that users can easily place on websites, blogs or other social media sites.¹¹ The widespread use of mobile phones with cameras makes it easier than ever to take photos. As Odio explains, mobile applications for photos and exploding participation in social networks like Facebook and Twitter have contributed to a surge in the popularity of online photo sharing. More than 100 million photos a day are uploaded to Facebook.¹² Civil society organizations, government policy makers and other development professionals can take advantage of this trend by providing visual images to fans and followers that show development in action, across the different states and reinforce development messages, or simply present existing information in a new, visually interesting format. There are several online communities that provide image sharing services such as, Flickr and Shut which could be of help in this regard.¹³

Content Syndication is a technical application that enables partner organizations to display current contents dedicated to specific issues such as health, agriculture,

politics etc and allows visitors to the public partner’s website access to content without leaving the partner website. This tool, if provided by government professionals and civil society organizations, allows the communication and management of the latest science-based information online on emerging development activities and initiatives. The advantage of this tool is that it allows government, civil society organizations the opportunity to develop a wide range of content on development related topics that could be syndicated to different partners’ website.¹⁴

Picture Showing Activist, Aisha Yusif During the ENDSARS Protests



Source: [Facebook](#)[Twitter](#)[Pinterest](#)[LinkedIn](#)[WhatsApp](#)[Email](#). Accessed on 4th

January, 2025.

History of the Establishment of the Nigeria Police Force

The word police generally was derived from the Greek word Polis', meaning "that part of the ecclesiastical administration having to do with the safety, health and order of the state".⁵ The Greek *Politeria* means the art of governing and regulating the welfare, security needs and order of the city-state in the interest of the public. According to Ehindero, even though Police was derived from the Greeks, it was the Romans who perfected the system. He further observed that the Roman *Politia* means the same as the Greek politeira is the symbol of power residing in the central authority.¹⁵

The history of the present Nigeria Police Force dates back to 1881. Before this period, there were some features of police organisation amongst every tribal community in Nigeria. Traditional rulers, therefore, had able-bodied men attached to them with the aim of guarding them, and in some instances assist in arresting wrong doers.¹⁶ This practice was common amongst the majority of tribes inhabiting the geographical areas now known as Nigeria. It has also been shown that, the traditional law enforcement institutions that were in place in most communities during the pre-colonial time or period discharged their responsibilities creditably in ensuring the existence of a lawful and orderly society. It should, however, be noted that the observation of Oluyede to the effect that pre-colonial policing in Muslims areas of pre-colonial Nigeria and non-Muslim areas are different and instructive. He observed that although 'Allah' was regarded as Supreme Lawmaker, Islamic law was and is

still enforced by human agencies such as the members of the *Shurta*, (Police). It was his further observation that policing in non-Muslim areas of pre-colonial Nigeria appealed to supernatural beings by the priest; Juju practices, ancestral worship are all features of pre-colonial police machinery.¹⁷

Policing in Pre-Colonial Nigeria (Centralised States)

The pre-colonial system of policing in the northern and western Nigeria was based on the system of administration which was centralised and formalised. In the Hausa states of the north, for example, the *dogarai* who were the bodyguards of the *Sarki* (*Emir* or King) performed full time policing function in the community. The *Sarkin dogarai* was the head of this traditional policing organisation.¹⁸ The duty of the *dogarai* included the capture and discipline of offenders, and to guard the town together with warders. Most importantly however the *dogarai* performed the duty of preventing crime through detective and bringing into judgment the criminal after a crime had been committed... also executed the commands of justice.¹⁹

The history of the Sayfawa dynasty in Kanem Borno in the north-east pre-colonial Nigeria has shown that the Talba, who was the judge in mai's (King's) court, was in addition the head of police affairs. In the Yoruba kingdoms of the present Southwestern Nigeria the *Ilari*, *Emesi* or *Agunven* depending on which part of the western kingdoms were responsible for apprehending or arresting criminals and also like the *dogarai*, they executed the commands of justice. In his analysis of the systems in both the North and West,²⁰ An eminent historian, scholar and expert on

Nigerian police, Rotimi posited that the common features of members of the Northern and Western Nigeria's traditional Police:

- (a) were generally drawn from palace slaves;
- (b) appointed by and responsible to the kings or emirs;
- (c) had a political head who was a senior official of government and almost always a eunuch;
- (d) distinctive dress and or hairstyle;
- (e) combined the triple roles of bodyguards, messengers and executioners, and;
- (f) performed diplomatic and revenue collecting functions.²¹

The Organizational Structure of Nigerian Police

The structure of the Police is fashioned along the federal system in such a way that the unit of command at the federal, state and local level is placed under a police officer in order of seniority. The Inspector General (IGP) being the Head at the Federal level, the Commissioner of Police (CP) at the State level and the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) at the Local level.²²

The Constitution provides that the Nigeria Police Force shall be organized and administered in accordance with such provisions as may be prescribed by the Act of the National Assembly in the exercise of the powers vested on it by the Constitution as afore-mentioned the National Assembly enacted the Police Act. The Police Act clearly provides for the command structure of the force. This is to clearly identify flow of command and channel of discipline in the force. The Police Act

creates the office of the Inspector General and that of a number of Deputy Inspector Generals and Assistant Inspector General as the Police Council may deem necessary.²³ The Police Act also vests the Inspector General with enormous powers over the command of the entire Nigeria Police Force. For administrative convenience, the Nigeria Police Command structure is divided into three categories, as shown and illustrated below:

- a. The Command structure at the Force Headquarters
- b. The structure at the Zonal Command; and
- c. The Structure at the State Command.

Police Structure and State Headquarters

The thirty-six state police command headquarter are headed by one commissioner of police each, with the FCT inclusive. It should also be noted that the population and crime rate of a place determine the creation of Area Commands headed by Assistant Commissioner of police. Lagos state has the highest number of areas command, follow by Kano state which other state had four and more area commands. Edo-Delta states for instance which make up the zones 5 headquarter Benin and has the following area commands headed by Assistant Commissioner of Police.

Reasons for the Establishment of the Police Force

The Nigeria Police Force is designated by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as the National Police of Nigeria with exclusive jurisdiction

throughout the country. Constitutional provisions also exist, however, for the establishment of separate Nigeria Police Force branches forming part of the armed forces of the federation or for the protection of harbours, waterways, railways and airfields. One of such branches was the Port Security Police.²⁴ The growth of the country was accompanied with the development of her police force. As already stated, by 1906, the Southern and Northern Protectorates of the force were merged together. That means by 1914 which was the year of amalgamation of the country, the police had already grown towards a central system of control.²⁵

This was put clearly thus: In April 1930, when the Nigeria Police Force was established, the government had encouraged the development of separate police forces in the colony and protectorates under its administrative control. Local conditions and the requirements of the separate administrations dictated the pace of police developments and the nature of their functions in these territories. Being that there must be a “Police System/Force” to keep the administration going, in consonance with this principle, the colonial master of Nigeria, the British Government introduced in this country a system of police force as already stated in 1943 however, the Police Ordinance was promulgated and came into force on April 1 of that year.²⁶

It was an Ordinance which made provision for the organisation, discipline, powers and duties of the police. Section 3 of the ordinance, the Force was to be known as the Nigeria Police Force, section 4 also provides that the Police shall be

employed for the preservation of Law and order, the protection of life and property and the due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged. With the centralization of the Nigeria Police Force, its command flow followed the same pattern. The Force consisted of an Inspector General who is in-charge and such other officers of such ranks as may from time to time be approved by the government according to section 5 of the Nigeria Police Ordinance. By the new formation a single force was intended, for the country, nonetheless, there were in both the defunct Western and Northern regions several local authority and native authority forces.²⁷

The Eastern Region of that time, had neither local nor native authority police though the 1963 Constitution in its section 104(7) permitted the legislature of a region to make provision for the maintenance of law and order by any authority or local government authority established for a province or any part of a province a Police Force for employment within the province. Though the provision appear clearly to preclude a Regional Government from organizing a Police Force, on a regional basis, in *Olajire, Superintendent-General of Local Government Police Force*, it was held that it did not prevent the creation by a Western Region law a superintendent-General of Local Government Police who had General supervisory functions over local forces.²⁸

Apart from these few exceptions, section 105(4) of the constitution expressly forbade the establishment for Nigeria or any part thereof of any Police Force other

than the Nigeria Police Force. In line with this provision of the 1963 Constitution, the 1979 Constitution in section 194(1) established for the whole country a single police force, “the Nigeria Police Force, and specifically prohibited the establishment of any other Police Force in the Federation. To ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the Police Force, there are in place the vision and mission statements and strategies of the Force.²⁹

Vision and Mission Statement of the NPF

Vision Statement thus:

Making the country safer and secure for the attainment of National aspiration.

Mission Statement

To deliver qualitative and efficient security and law enforcement services to the citizens of Nigeria.

Strategy

1) Phased development of a three-point agenda that captures the essence of the vision and mission, through:

1. Implementation of government’s white paper on police reforms and roadmap for taking Nigeria police to the next level.
2. Training and retraining as imperatives for professionalism and confidential building.
3. Building institutional and individual capabilities.
4. Re-invigoration of supervisory mechanisms.

5. Outward resource distribution.

Renewed commitment to combating violent crimes and other forms of criminality through:

1. Intelligence led policing
2. Community policing
3. Consultative and strategic partnerships
4. Optimal utilization of resources: men and material.

Enhancing police image and improving personnel welfare by:

1. Developing the professional capacities of individual police personnel.
2. Zero tolerance for corruption and corrupt practices
3. Moral rearmament and ethical reorientation.
4. Recognition and reward for outstanding performances.
5. Promotion and general welfare packages
6. Accommodation issues: barracks and owner occupier houses.³⁰

The Structure of the Nigeria Police Force

The structure of the Nigeria Police Force is provided for in section 214 (2) (a) and 215(2) of the 1999 Constitution. These sections provide inter area,

SECTION 214(2) (a):-“Subject to the provisions of this constitution (a) the Nigeria Police shall be organized and Administered in accordance with such provisions as many be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly

SECTION 215 (2) “The Nigeria Police Force shall be under the Command of the Inspector-General of Police and any contingents of the Nigeria Police Force stationed in a state shall; subject to the authority of the Inspector-General of Police, be under the command of Commissioner of Police of that state”³¹

From the provisions above, three different structures in the Police Force can be identified. These are:-

- a. Command (Authority) Structure.
- b. Administration structure and
- c. Organization structure

These structures are patterned to meet the constitutional expectations of the Police, to perform effectively the duties assigned to it.

A) Command (Authority) Structure

The Command structure, also referred to as authority structure, of the Police Force is predicated on the regimental nature of the Force and conducted along the Force badges of ranks. Thus, in accordance with section 215(2) of the 1999 Constitution, section 6 of the Police Act, 1990 laws provide that “the Force shall be commanded by the Inspector-General of Police”. This simply means that orders, directives and instructions to perform or carry out the duties with which the Police is carried, flows from the Inspector General of Police, through the chain of Command, to any Officer positioned to implement such order. Disobedience or failure to carry out such instruction, directive or order, attract punitive sanctions.³²

According to Section 7 (1) of the Police Act, the next in the line to the Inspector General of Police, is the Deputy Inspector General of Police. Though this rank is not specially mentioned in the Constitution, it has legal backing, because the Police Act is a law made by the National Assembly in accordance with the constitution. According to section 7(1) of the Police Act, the Deputy Inspector General of Police is the second in Command of the Force and shall so act for him in the Inspector-General's absence. Section 5 of the Act makes room for as many DIGs as the Nigeria Police Council considers appropriate. Every other rank below the IG, takes order of Command from him, in the performance of their lawful duties.³³

The Office of the Assistant Inspector-General of Police is provided for by section 5 and 8 of the Police Act. He shall act for the Inspector-General of Police in the event of the absence of the Inspector-General of Police and Deputy Inspector-General of Police.

Section 5 of the Police Act, in accordance with the provisions of section 215 (2), of the Nigeria Constitution, provides for the Office and rank of a Commissioner of Police who shall be in Control of contingents of the Police Force stationed in a State. He is subject however, to the command of the Inspector-General of Police or whoso-ever acts for him, in his absence. Every other rank in the Force is legally provided for by section 5 of the Police Act. The Command structure of the Nigeria Police can be presented in the order of hierarchy.³⁴

From the foregoing, it is discernable that the policing has always been necessary in all societies for the preservation of order, and social relations. The necessity of policing become has even more evident in modern societies characterised by diversities and contradictions arising from population, heterogeneity, urbanisation, industrialisation, conflicting ideologies, socio-political and economy schism. However, in recent times, the Nigerian Police Force have miss-used their powers by involving in brutality, oppression and other police excesses; but with the advent of the social media, the citizens have been to checkmates the excesses and brutality of the Nigerian Police Force. In other words one of the positive impacts was how social media has really helped during Police Brutality Awareness in Nigeria, as the youths used the Social Networking Sites to express their needs and grievances as they campaigned against the Brutality, Torture and Abuses they face from the police. Social media is not only used for chat, watching Movies or catch cruise, it can be used for communication with the government and the world at large, which the Nigerian youth did during their campaign against Police Brutality. Also, twitter was seen to be a very useful social Networking sites that can be employ for online situational awareness tool.

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CHAPTER THREE

IMPACT SOCIAL MEDIA ON POLICE BRUTALITY IN NIGERIA

Introduction

Police brutality or excessive use of force by law enforcement can be legally defined as a civil rights violation, where law enforcement officers exercise due force against a subject. Use of torture as interrogative technique and other wanton abuses of human rights remain some of the major flaws of the Nigeria Police Force which has attracted public odium, opprobrium, and condemnation to the Force.¹ This study investigates how Nigerians use social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Whatsapp as a platform to reach out to the world and Nigeria government to create awareness on police excesses in Nigeria.

In recent years, a novel phenomenon has developed that offers new possibilities for civilian involvement in oversight efforts, complaint procedures, and police accountability. Unfolding online, social media users can take to Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook to engage in what is call “digital oversight,” which bears similarities to the characteristics, objectives, and outcomes of civilian oversight.²

The Concept of Civilian Police Oversight Function

Civilian police oversight can be defined as an approach in which people from outside the police service take key roles in making police officers to account for their organisation, policies and actions. Civilian oversight significance on the community depends on the type and model implemented.³ Civilian oversight provides forums in

which complainants against police officers can be reviewed, making law enforcement officers accountable for their actions, improve the quality of internal investigation department, discipline and transparency being imposed against police officers, complainants feel validated, while police officers feel vindicated, improve in community relations, improvement in public understanding, mediation between police officers and citizens and assisting in jurisdiction in liability management.⁴

Cases of Social Media Oversight on Police Excesses in Nigeria

There has been several physical combats between police officers and the citizens, which they sworn to serve and protect, often take place on public streets, and tend to occur in the presence of spectators who are either already present at the scene or who grow attracted to it as the situation develops, video and snap incident where police officers assault civilians.⁵ This cases are treated in this study as are follow;

According to the interviewed with Mr. Gifted Agogoh, asserts how his way to the market, he was stopped by some Police officers and they asked for driving license which he gave them and said they want to search the car which he agreed to. They saw a bag of rice (foreign bag of rice) they accused him of carrying contraband goods and as such he will face the consequences (taking me to the station). The police officer asked him and his friends for money but he told the police officer that the money was “too enormous and too big and he should do his worst” the next thing that happened was that he was pushed and slapped by the officer. One of his friend

had to bring his phone to record, one of the officers threaten to smashed the phone.⁶

Mr. Gifted Agogoh, further posits that

In my own case they did not say “vasa me” or stuff like that, they had a point to hold me down which is saying I was carrying a contraband goods. So they said we should “find them small thing” which was 50k. I had to call my dad, he came to the scene and gave them 5k.⁷

Gifted Agogoh further noted that one of the major ways in which the citizen has carryout oversight on police excesses is through mobile phones and this help them to curbed or rather expose the excesses of police officers. But videoing sometimes are quite risky and this might provoke the police officers to shoot you especially in quiet environment with no one around. He also identifies that snapping the names written in the shirt of the officers was also a good idea. He also asserts that so far phones have done a lot in curbing the excesses of some police officer, he gave an instance where there was a particular video that went viral of a police officer assaulting a boy and it got to the eyes of the Inspector General (IG) and that was possible because someone recorded the event. The phone has given a great insight about the ills of the police officers.⁸ An example of police brutality is captured in the picture below.

Picture Showing Police Officers Brutalizing a civilian during peaceful protest in Lagos



Picture retrieved from Arise TV App. Accessed on February 2025.

In an incident in the *Punch* newspaper On April 18; 2020, a lady flogged by policemen in Iwo Osun State went viral on social media. Police officers flogged the Lady Tola Azeez for violating lockdown in Iwo, and the video of the assault went viral on the twitter account of Ruggedman which drew the attention of police authorities after the woman re-tweeted the video, the Police Commissioner in the state announced the arrest of the officers and subjected them to orderly room trial where they were found guilty and dismissed from Nigeria Police Force.⁹

In Vanguard newspaper dated 18th September 2022, there was a viral video on the internet where some police officers assaulted a man in his car and that resulted into a heated argument. The man engaged in dragging a rifle with a policeman during the heated argument and suspicious molestation over his phone. The Police Force Public Relations Officer, CSP Olumuyiwa Adejobi, has said that no Nigerian has the

right to confront policemen or retaliate even if the policeman slaps him/her ‘civilian’. Speaking through his Twitter account, the Force PRO advised any such victim of Police brutality to rather file a complaint with the law enforcement agency.¹⁰ Adejobi further stated that if a person assault’s police personnel in uniform, it would be seen as ‘an act of disrespect to Nigeria. According to him;

Even if a policeman on uniform slaps a civilian, the civilian has no right to retaliate. More so, if he’s on uniform, it’s an act of disrespect to Nigeria to beat an officer on uniform.

“The disrespect is not to the policeman but to our nation and it’s a crime as enshrined in our criminal laws

“So, it’s not a case of what the policeman did that led to it, but the reaction of the civilians who actually assaulted the police.If police assault a civilian, you report and actions will be taken to rebuke him, not to take the law into your hands.¹¹

Similarly, Mr. Obinigwe Alfred, a businessman narrated how he has been harassed and assaulted severally by the Nigeria police officers. One of his most unforgettable experience was when he was stopped on the road and thoroughly searched without his permission.¹² The police officers were checking if they will find any possession of illicit substances of hard drugs. He was even scared that they were go and plant an illegal stuff on him. In another incidence was when he was driving and he was stopped by a police officer using their regular slang “anything for your boy” “bros still vasa me now”.¹³

In another Interview with Gbenga Adesoye, point how him and his friend were together and was arrested by the police because his friend was carrying dreadlock, they both were taken to the station and they (Police officer) asked his friend to call his mom. They were taken to the cell and was Beaten “Blue Black”. They stayed in the cell for up to 2 hours. This police officers went through his phone and his friend was asked “TO BRING 10% of what you collected from Yahoo” and they used words like “vasa me” too.¹⁴ A picture showing the shoddy deals carried out by the police is shown below.

Picture showing Police Officers struggling with a Civilian over the Police Raffle



Source:<https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdailytrust.com%2Fw>

On 25th February 2019, Musa Kadiri, was capture by one onlooker who posted on Facebook where he and police officers were fighting on a highway because of 500 naira which the young man refuses to give the police officers. The

young man in question was beating by four police officers and his car was damage. On the comment session on the Facebook, many Nigerians were insulting the Nigerian Police Force and its became a major news in the national media and later the Police Commissioner of Delta State requested for the arrest of the four police officers.¹⁵

On Arise news Television, during the Morning Show dated 13th May 2023, the three Journalists namely Ruben Abati, Rufai Oseni and Oyj Okpe were discussing the viral video that was trending in the social media of some police officers who killed two drivers during their check point in Ikorudu road. According to Ruben Abati, commented the Nigerian Police Force for arresting, persecuting and issuing an immediate sack letter to those police officers who were involved in the killing of the two drivers.¹⁶ While Rufai Oseni, accused the Nigerian Police Force and the Federal Government for recruiting police officers without adequate training of the ethics policing and that the NPF should engaged in more police training and retraining of the police officers and also said that the Nigerian Government should provide money and facilities for proper training of all the Police officers. Oyj Okpe on the other hand, maintains that the citizen must try to avoid confrontations with the police officers because not all police officers are mentally sound to sustain argument, especially when they have their riffle with them.¹⁷

Photo showing a police officer' who was sacked due to a viral video misconduct during a road block incident



Retrieved from the *Punch* Newspaper, 15th February, 2025

In the *Punch* Newspaper dated May 20th 2020, many Nigerians on Friday via social media demanded justice for a 16-year-old girl, Tina Ezekwe, who was allegedly killed by a trigger-happy policeman in the Iyana Oworo area of Lagos on Tuesday. The cop was said to be from the Bariga Police Division. Reports indicated that the policeman was trying to arrest a bus driver for violating the nationwide curfew imposed by the Federal Government to check the spread of coronavirus.¹⁸ In the process, the policeman was said to have shot the bus driver and Tina standing by the roadside. It was learnt that Tina, an Imo State indigene who resided at Bariga, was rushed to a hospital after the incident. However, she died on Thursday evening.¹⁹

The video was posted on *Twitter* by *Oworo TV* [httptwitter.\(@OworoTv\)](https://twitter.com/OworoTv),²⁰ which went viral, showed Tina's body being dragged amid a panicky crowd. As of

Friday, the video had gathered about 160,000 views on the social media platform. Using the hashtag, *#JusticeforTina*, Nigerians demanded the prosecution of the erring police officer. On Friday, *#JusticeforTina* was one of the most trended topics on *Twitter*. Actress Adesua Etomi-Wellington shared a picture of Tina on her handle, *@AdesuaEtomiW*, and captioned it “*#JusticeforTina*. Tina was only 16.

Another actress, Beverly Naya with the handle *@BeverlyNaya* also lent her voice to demand justice for the murdered teenager. “This is all too much! Police brutality needs to stop! *#JusticeForTina*,” she wrote.²¹ Another *Twitter* user, *@aproko_doctor*, asked all Nigerians to demand justice for Tina. He wrote, “All she did was stand at a popular junction and she was shot by a Nigerian policeman. It could be any of us, and we will not stop until we have a reform of the Nigeria Police Force. “I don’t want to mind my business and still be shot.” Sally Suleiman, with the handle *@is_salsu*, also wrote, “The people who are meant to protect the citizens are killing them. Please lend your voice! *#JusticeForTina*.”²² Also, Efam Harris (*@iefamharris*) said, “Tina is the young boy with an iPhone; Tina is the young woman who sells clothes; Tina is the gentleman who returns late from work; Tina is everyone who the Nigeria Police have killed for no reason; Tina is all of us. *#JusticeForTina*.” *Twitter* user, Ugwunna Ejikem, lamented that Tina was shot dead even though she didn’t bear arms or looked suspicious for any crime.²³ “Her only ‘crime’ was standing at a popular junction within the reach of a trigger-happy Nigerian policeman. “How long will this

continue and how long will they keep getting away with this? Another user, Danny (@Danny_Walterr), described the incident as heartbreaking. “We demand #JusticeForTina a young girl whose future was taken away from her. #JusticeForTina,” he said. Towolawi Jamiu also said, “We will not relent until her (Tina’s) murderers are brought to book. #JusticeForTina.”²⁴

Facebook user, Samuel Irusota, said enough was enough of police brutality in Nigeria. He said, “We can’t continue to live with police brutality. Police brutality is evil, inhumane, and a grave violation of fundamental human rights. “We clamour for justice for the deceased, her family and loved ones. #JusticeForTina #JusticeForEzekwe #SayNoToPoliceBrutality.”²⁵

Another *Facebook* user, Femi Osunniyi, decried police brutality in Nigeria. “Tina was not a threat but the police killed her just as they have killed scores of innocent men and women. Justice must prevail,” he said. Following the outcry, two policemen, Theophilus Otobo and Oguntoba Olamigoke, were arrested by the Lagos State Police Command for the act. Another victim, Musa Yakubu, was said to have also been hit by a stray bullet.²⁶

The state Police Public Relations Officer, Bala Elkana, said in a statement on Friday that after the victims were shot, some policemen took them to hospital for treatment. The PPRO, however, said Tina died two days after her admission, adding that Otobo and Olamigoke had been subjected to internal disciplinary proceedings but would be charged to court if found guilty of the crime. Elkana said, “The Lagos

State Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu, has ordered an in-depth investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Tina Ezekwe, 17.²⁷ Two police officers suspected to have carried out the shooting were arrested and subjected to internal disciplinary proceedings if found culpable, they will be charged to court. The policemen are, ASP Theophilus Otobo, and Inspector Oguntoba Olamigoke, attached to the Bariga Police Station. “The incident happened on May 26, 2020, around 10.45pm. The said police officers fired shots from their pin down point along the Berger area of the Third Mainland Bridge, in circumstances yet to be determined. One Musa Yakubu, 35, was injured at the point and a stray bullet hit Tina.²⁸ “The bullet pierced through the upper side of her left laps. She was rushed to hospital by a team of policemen led by the Divisional Police Officer. The battle to save her life lasted for two days; she, however, died on May 28, 2020, around 9.29pm while on admission. The second person is in stable condition. “The police had been in contact with the families of the victims from the day of the incident. The command deeply sympathises with the family and friends of the deceased person. The CP calls for calm and assures the family that the perpetrators of this dastardly act will face the full weight of the law. Members of the public will be updated on the outcome of the investigation.”²⁹

Police Brutality and Misconduct

Misconduct and breaches of integrity have been central concerns of police for as long as the institution has existed. Indeed, the history of modern police, across Nigeria and beyond, is flooded with many and various examples of impunity, cases of corruption, heavy-handed law enforcement actions and cases of police mistreatment.³⁰ But equally, the history of policing comes with inquiries and commissions into those matters, police reforms and wide-ranging changes to the recruitment and training of police officers, with the widely shared view that only well trained and educated officers who have the highest levels of professional integrity should be employed. Nonetheless, police brutality and use-of-lethal-force incidents have become an important element in the public discourse in recent year.³¹

On October 27, 2020, large youth-led protests against police abuses have shaken cities across Nigeria, Africa's most populous country. The demonstrations emerged after video circulated on social media purporting to show an extrajudicial killing by members of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a unit of the national Nigeria Police Force (NPF) responsible for investigating violent offenses. SARS personnel previously had been implicated in extensive human rights abuses by what the U.S.³² State Department describes as “credible international organizations.” In response to protesters’ calls to disband SARS a demand amplified on Twitter and other social media via the hashtag #EndSARS President Muhammadu Buhari announced on October 11 that the unit would be dissolved and its officers retrained

and redeployed as part of a new task force. Demonstrations and social media campaigns have continued, with activists criticizing SARS's dissolution as insufficient and calling for additional reforms, including accountability for past abuses and higher police salaries to reduce incentives for extortion. The government has cracked down on the unrest; since mid-October, security forces, including military personnel, reportedly have killed dozens of protesters.³³

Advantages and Challenges of public engagement in police accountability through the social media

Increased number of participants	Creates crowd effect by exponentially increasing the number of people reached or impacted by information
Plurality of independent voices	Ordinary people and organised groups can express their views and organise around issues, problems and concerns
Reduces temporal and spatial constraints	Communication of news, information and analysis happens in real-time, unrestricted by borders or geography
Allows for effective collective action	Members of the public can be mobilised to put pressure on government institutions to respond to issues
Efficient and costeffective	Enables the dissemination of powerful images while reducing the cost of participating in or coordinating collective action
Wider reach than mainstream media	Circumvents the economic, legal and regulatory constraints often imposed on traditional and mainstream media
Strength of collective	Numerous individual digital witnesses and stories create a volume of evidence hard to gather through traditional method
Incorporation of metadata for verification	Metadata, which proves where and when something happened, improves the trustworthiness of images and video recordings

Challenges	
Exposure to risk and danger	Such as state surveillance, identification and tracking of individuals, legal action, violence and intimidation
Government control	Through legislation or illicit actions, governments limit or close off the space for communication via social media
Legitimate versus fake news	Given the fake news industry as well as individual actors with interests to promote, it is crucial to establish the credibility of information on social media platforms
Digital divide	Inequalities in accessing social media platforms (e.g. Internet access, digital skills, socio-economic barriers)
Disconnection from local populations	Digital access to a global audience may disconnect activists from the realities facing local communities, who may themselves be victims of the digital divided
Lack of context	Images and footage of police brutality may be misleading, providing a limited snapshot rather than the holistic context of an event (such as what is occurring outside the frame of the image/video or the inherent complexities, e.g. the history between the actors involved)
Slacktivism	The cacophony of voices, information overload and quick turnover of news generated by the Internet may reduce the political potential or impact of an image or video.
Evidence doesn't find the right platform or people	Many videos and images uploaded to social media platforms never find their way to the people who can act on them

Source: Retrieved from A. R. Cross, "Police-Related Social Media Exposure and Adolescents' Interest in Becoming a Police Officer," *Adekunle Ajasin University Journal of Financial & Social Issues*, Vol.4, No.1, June, 2016.

Information Technology, Social Media and Public's Engagement With Police Accountability

Technology has enabled increasing numbers of people across the Nigeria to record evidence of police misconduct, or simply monitor routine interactions between the public and the police. Handheld devices and mobile connectivity allow

such information to be gathered and disseminated quickly and easily via social media platforms.³⁴ In this way, social media has been used by the public as a tool to inspire action or advocate for policy change in the demand for police accountability. However, the rapid opening up of this new platform for public engagement in police accountability comes with a complex mix of opportunities and risks.³⁵

The above analysis above, it should be noted here that the law enforcement agents and citizens alike have found themselves in a new era of police visibility. This chapter has demonstrates how citizen wielded technologies and social media platforms can challenge and elaborate upon “existing mechanisms for police accountability”. These devices at the disposal of the citizen presented Nigerian citizen the freedom to document incidents of police misconduct as they unfold in real time, share these incidents with networks of social media users, and engage with the content through critical online discourse. Throughout this chapter, it has been argued that certain forms of social media engagement regarding incidents of police violence can serve as digital equivalents of civilian oversight bodies, breeding a new form of oversight that is more technological in nature.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the role of the social media in curbing police brutality especially during the ENDSARS` protests organized by the Nigerian youths in October, 2020. The findings from this study add to the growing literature on the role of social media in social movement in Nigeria as it represents one of the few studies to examine the utilisation of social media in curbing police excesses and brutality on Nigerian youths. Although the issue is not only applicable to the Nigeria, other countries also different ways their law enforcement agencies engage in brutalizing their youth and the adoption of social media in curbing such excesses and abuses.

Though social media has some negative impacts on the youth and the society, however, this study has established that it still has some considerable positive impacts. The application of the social media has helped in exposing numerous police brutality and abuses also served as means of curbing their excesses through social media oversight in Nigeria. The Nigeria youths also used the Social Networking Sites to express their needs and grievances as they campaigned against the police brutality, torture and abuses they encounter from the police. Social media is not only used for chatting, watching movies or catching cruise; it can also be used for communication with the government and the world at large, which the Nigerian youth did during their campaign against Police brutality. A typical example such as

Twitter is seen to be a very useful social networking site that has been employed for online situational awareness tool.

The study has traced the history of the Nigerian Police Force, the nature, organizational structure and responsibilities of the police. It also explores the numerous police excesses, brutality and rascality on the Nigerian youth and Nigerians. The study has examined the role of social media in raising awareness about police excesses, brutality and rascality in Nigeria. It has captured some cases of physical assaults (police killing Nigerians unlawfully and also unlawfully obtaining money from innocent Nigerians as reported by the various social media outlets.

The study has brought to the limelight the everyday life experiences of the causes of protest that triggered the youths to action. The study found out that persons who participated in protests in Nigeria were informed about the events through the various social media platforms. The study also found that social media platforms are ideal media through individuals' protests to voice their grievances to the Nigerian authorities. The social media is an interactive avenue where people address their concerns and challenges. This study concludes that the Nigerian people will continue to utilize the social media to exert pressure on the government to solve issues of public outcry to enable the government to take appropriate measures to tackle the problems.

This study also showed how Nigerians utilize the social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Whatsapp as a platform to reach out to the world and Nigeria authorities to create awareness on police brutality in Nigeria which started with their request to End SARS (Special Anti-robbery Squad) department.

The findings in this study indicated that the integral factor that helped in notifying the general public and pushed the government into taking prompt actions on the matter was social media. Indeed, it was the involvement of social media in the campaign that made the awareness to spread at the speed of light, and made the Nigerian Police to take responsibility, for their actions.

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Names	Age	Occupation	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
Adesoye, G.	45yrs,	Teacher	Oluku, Benin City,	2 nd February, 2025
Agogoh, G.	51yrs	Business/Student,	Uselu, Benin City,	12 th February, 2025.
Obinigwe, A.	47yrs,	Trader,	Ekosodin Benin City,	2 nd February, 2025
Osugi P.	49yrs	Police Officer	Ugbowo, Benin City	4 th February, 2025
Omonzele W.	51yrs	Police Officer	Ugbowo, Benin City	4 th February, 2025

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