IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON RURAL SECURITY IN OKE-OGUN AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Insecurity is now a global concern, and Nigeria is having its own fair share of this challenge. Presently, there is hardship in Nigeria, occasioned by high cost of living and insufficient food production. This is largely due to insecurity in the rural areas, which is responsible for agriculture and food production. This shows gross inadequate and inefficient public security provision. One of the emerging technologies for managing security challenges is the social media. Therefore, this paper examines the impacts of the adoption of social media on rural security in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Using survey design and questionnaire as the instrument, analysis of primary and secondary data through descriptive and inferential statistical tools, the findings show that there is moderate adoption of social media platforms in the Oke-Ogun area, significant experiences of previous rural insecurity activities, fair usage of the platform for various rural security-enhancing activities, and moderate impacts of social media on rural security in the area. The paper recommends increased budgeting, improved communication infrastructure, more engagement and orientation on the specific-purpose-use of social media for rural security, and censoring programmes that can enhance security and deliberately establishing media platforms for security issues, to strengthen the impacts of social media on rural communities in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Capabilities, Media Adoption, Media Impacts, Rural Community, Social Media

1. INTRODUCTION

Information and communication is vital for effective governance of any organization or society, therefore, adopting appropriate communication tool is indispensable. The inadequacy of traditional communication tools has given way to increasing relevance of social media. Social media has an edge over other forms of media because of its cost, availability, accessibility, and inter-connectivity of groups. Its adaptation and usage towards solving individual and groups' problems also stresses the need to provide infrastructure for its effectiveness by government. Nigeria as a country has many rural communities with various peculiar challenges which include rural security. Nigeria is presently confronting nationwide insecurity with rural areas including Oke Ogun areas, experiencing incidences of kidnapping, theft, cattle rustling, and banditry. Hence, high cost of living and food shortage are consequences of the insecurity in rural areas that are responsible for agriculture and food. Ineffective public security institutions, in terms of adequacy and competency, requires innovative approach at local levels, hence, the need for social media for effective information and communication, which is not for community members' communication alone, but also for collaboration and networking with public agencies.

Therefore, the research questions are: what is the level of adoption of social media in Oke-Ogun area? What is the nature of rural insecurity incidences in this area? To what extent do they engage social media for rural security activities? And has there been any impact of social media on rural security in this area? Consequently, for impactful findings, the paper will also test the following four hypotheses; there is no significant adoption of social media in Oke-Ogun area, there are no previous experiences of rural insecurity activities in Oke-Ogun area, there are no usages of social media platforms for rural security purposes in Oke-Ogun area, and lastly, that social media does not impact on the rural security of Oke-Ogun area.

Thus, the objectives of this paper are: to determine the degree of adoption of social media platforms in Oke-Ogun area, to identify various previous experiences of rural insecurity in Oke-Ogun area, to examine the capacity in using social media platforms for rural security purposes in Oke-Ogun area, and to investigate the impacts of Social media platforms on the rural security of Oke-Ogun area. The remaining parts of the paper are as follows; chapter two for conceptual review, chapter three for conceptual framework, chapter four will state the methodology, chapter five for results and findings, chapter six will focus on discussion of findings, while chapter seven is for conclusion.

2. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Social media is a pivotal aspect of modern communication, significantly impacting personal interactions and organisational strategies. Current literature emphasizes that social media is evolving gradually beyond being ordinary social platforms and simple networking tools to essential instrument for marketing, critical information dissemination, and enabling community engagement (Smith, 2022). According to Lee and Kim (2021), social media's influence extends to molding public opinions and driving social movements. The platforms' ability to quickly spread ideas and mobilise collective action plays a substantial role in reshaping political and social landscapes.

Rural security encompasses the protection of rural areas against crime, natural disasters and other hazards that may threaten the safety and well-being of residents. The scope of rural security includes crime prevention, emergency management, and resilience building in relation to the specific needs of rural communities. It centered on the strategies and measures that can protect rural areas from various threats and risks. This concept involves safeguarding communities from crime, managing emergency responses, and addressing vulnerabilities specific to less densely populated regions. It includes the efforts to secure the communities in the volatile regions from banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts that are threatening agricultural activities and peaceful community life.

Rural security in Nigeria has been a critical area of concern due to rising violence and instability in rural areas and its effect on national stability and political stability. The challenges hindering the autonomy of the closest tier of government; local government, to significantly impact on the rural security further exacerbates the security concern (Aderogba, 2022a). The increasing security challenges in Nigeria rural communities in various geopolitical zones are becoming a national and international concern. For instance, there is deteriorating bandit and armed groups' activities in the northwest; attacking villages, cattle rustling, and kidnapping for ransom with negative consequences on rural communities, leading to displacement and disorganizing rural economic activities (Pate, 2021).

The strategy of Nigerian government to eradicate the menace includes the deployment of security forces and improving intelligence gathering in the challenged areas by establishing specialised task forces and increasing deployment of the military in high-risk areas (Oluwole, 2022). Other strategies include strengthening local law enforcement agencies and encouraging community policing to build trust between residents and security personnel (Eze, 2023). Additionally, the broader strategy to stabilize these regions

targets the underlining root causes of rural insecurity. According to a report by the International Crisis Group (2023), these socio-economic initiatives for long-term stability, reduces the incentive to engage in criminal activities in the rural communities. Effectiveness of the Community engagement and collaboration between security forces and local populations highlight the efficacy of local intelligence and active involvement of community members in reporting and preventing crimes as critical collaboration essential of rural security strategies (Agbu, 2022).

Studies indicate that social media can significantly enhance rural security by improving communication between community members and local authorities. For example, Anderson and Murphy (2022) highlight that social media platforms facilitate rapid information sharing about security threats to hasten responses from communities. The information speed is critically valuable in rural areas where traditional communication methods are slower and less efficient. The dynamics driving social media platforms are essential in determining content, influencing user behavior and information consumption (Brown & Green, 2024). Social media is increasingly impacting rural security and influencing the security dynamics in rural communities (Harris, 2023).

Social media platforms are crucial in modern communication, including the realm of rural security and are classified variously by literatures. Social Networking Sites (SNS) category includes Platforms like Facebook and LinkedIn, which are used for both personal and professional networking. In rural areas, these sites can facilitate community engagement and local information exchange. Their prompt capabilities are essential for quickly disseminating information and coordinating responses to security threats (Smith, 2020). Another category Micro blogging Platforms: Services such as Twitter [now X] allow for rapid, brief communication. These platforms are valuable for issuing urgent updates and alerts. In rural settings, micro blogging can share promptly, the warning and information about emergencies, criminal activities, and safety measures (Johnson & Lee, 2021). Messaging Apps category like WhatsApp and Telegram provide private and group messaging features that are crucial in coordinating and communicating within the communities during emergencies. These apps can assist in organizing local security efforts and sharing information discreetly in rural areas with limited traditional communication infrastructure (Garcia, 2022). Other categories include Video Sharing Platforms, which usually facilitate the sharing of videos, including safety tips and real-time incident reports. For instance, YouTube and TikTok platforms assist in raising awareness about security issues; provide educational content related to safety, and document incidents for further investigation. More importantly, video content can enhance local security knowledge in rural regions where

there is challenge in accessing information (Wilson, 2023). Rural areas are prone to poor physical planning, thus, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Mapping Tools category such as Google Maps can aid the users in creating and sharing detailed maps. For purpose of rural security, these tools are useful in identifying vulnerable areas, tracking threats, and planning security measures, as well as in visualising crime data and emergency response routes (Thompson, 2024).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, proposed by Everett Rogers (2003), describes adoption of innovations; new technologies, practices, or ideas by a society. According to the theory, individuals fall into five categories of adopters: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. This categorization is influenced by factors such as the relative advantage of the innovation, its compatibility with existing systems or values, its complexity (ease of use), its ease of trial (on a small scale), and visibility of its benefits to the public. These elements determine the speed and effectiveness of adoption within a social organisation (Rogers, 2003).

In rural security, especially in the context of social media, DOI theory is useful for analysing how rural communities adopt platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter [now X] to improve communication, report crimes, and enhance overall safety. Social media provides rural residents a fast and flexible tool for disseminating security alerts, such as livestock theft or suspicious activities. DOI theory offers a valuable framework for understanding the spread of social media in rural security contexts, but it requires adaptation to account for the unique barriers and risks present in these settings. The social, cultural, and technological limitations of rural areas must be considered when implementing social media innovations (Rogers, 2003; Banerjee et al., 2021; Nordin et al., 2021).

The Capability Approach Theory on the other hand, according to Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, is a normative framework that focuses on individuals' ability to achieve life accomplishes and preferred value. It shifts the attention from resources and wealth as the primary indicators of development to the actual freedoms and capabilities individual possesses. Thus, the capability is not predicated on the resources individuals' possesses, but what they can actually do and achieve with it (Sen, 1999). It shifts the focus from material wealth to enhancing human well-being and empowering people to make decision on the basis of their values. The assumption is that (community) development is not determined by merely measuring

income or economic growth but, by assessing what the individuals' capabilities (community) can effectively achieve in areas like health, education, and political participation— (Nussbaum, 2011).

In the context of rural security and social media, the capability approach assesses extent to which social media platforms impacts the resources and freedom of the rural individuals and communities in securing their environments. Hence, adoption of social media for rural security purposes, such as reporting crimes, monitoring activities, and sharing critical information, can be assessed through its impact in strengthening the capabilities of rural populations. For instance, by facilitating prompt communication, it enhances people's ability to participate in their community's security, thus, enhancing their capability to provide a safe and secure environment (Nordin et al., 2021). The theoretical model below illustrates the correlation between the two theories and rural security.

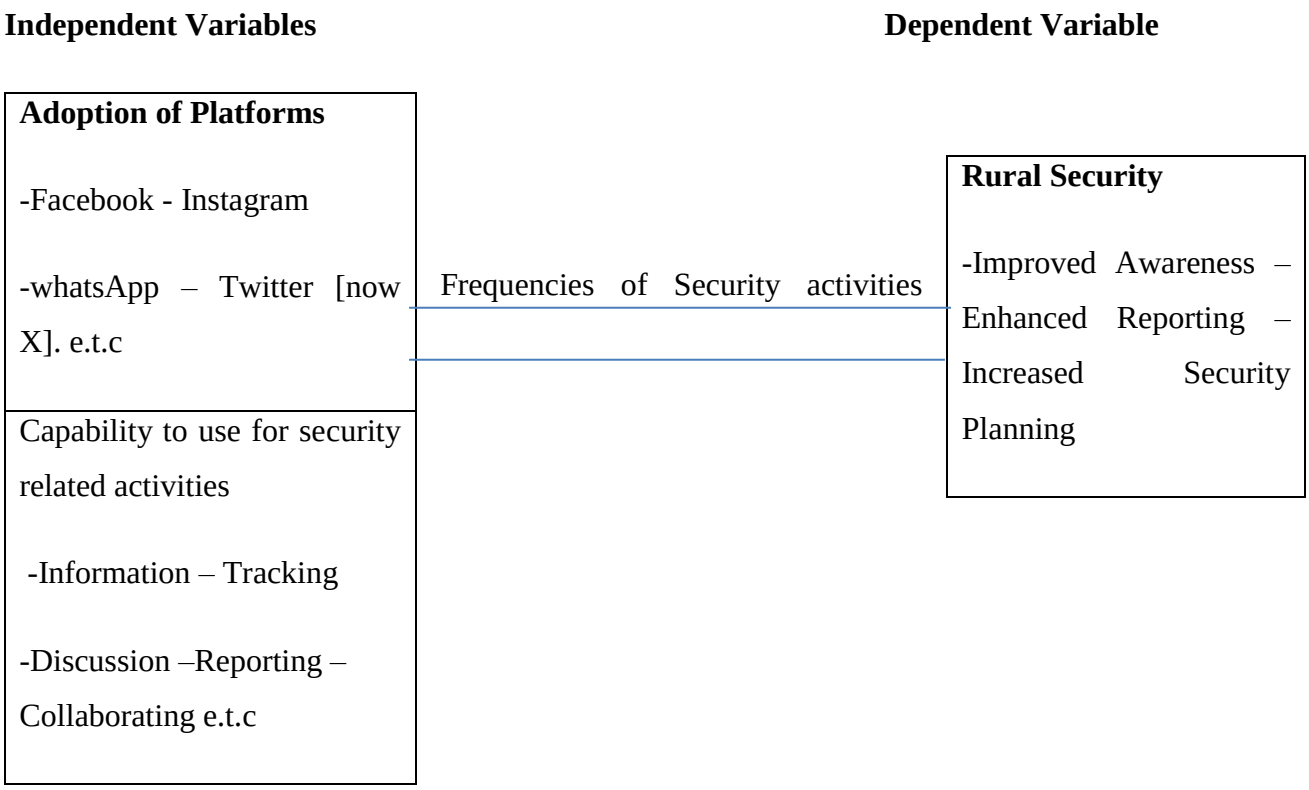

Fig 1: *The conceptual framework chart for the study by the Author (2025)*

4. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts survey design. It uses both primary and relevant secondary data, the instrument for primary data is an online structured questionnaire divided into four sections: Section A deals with demographic data with 4 items, Section B deals with choice of media and usages frequency with 3 items, Section C deals with previous experiences and incidences of insecurity with 3 items, while Section D deals with impacts of the usage on rural security in Oke Ogun area with 5 items. To ensure the validity, the questionnaires were adapted from the literature review and similar previous questionnaires relating to the research. The reliability assessment using Kuder-Richardson formula 20 (KR-20) revealed rKR20 = 0.76, which is a strong correlation coefficient (within the range of 0.70 - 0.89). In addition, for ethical protection, the letter of request to administer questionnaire on staff assures of confidentiality of information and same stated in the questionnaires, it sought the consent of respondents, and the questionnaire avoids any question that can relate to individual privacy and identities. The population of study is Oke Ogun area which is one of the four political division of Oyo state considered as having more rural villages and town within the state; the reason for it adoption as area of the study . Oke Ogun area have ten local government, this study decided to select sample from two of them (twenty percent) because of logistic difficulties associated with such area. The population is 779 primary school teachers teaching in primary schools operating in those two local governments, the reason being that they are crop of literates that are considered to be enlightened and having higher possibility of adopting social media at rural community level.

The sample size is determined based on Taro Yamane 1967 formula, of which n=N/(1+(N*e^2)). Thus, the sample size (n) of population size (N) of 779, at an error margin (e) of 0.05 is approximately n=265. The instruments administered online through the WhatsApp social media platform of National Union of Teachers of respective local government, this will assist in purposefully restricting the responses to media users. The exercise was stopped immediately it reached the determined number of respondent in line with our calculated sample number above. The data analysis is both qualitative and quantitative through descriptive and influential statistical tools like percentage for description, Chi-square for relationship test, and Tables for data presentation to enhance analyses and in discussing the research questions and hypotheses.

5. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Data presentation

Table 1: Age distribution of respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
18-25 years	39	15
25-35 years	13	5
35+ years	213	80
Total	265	100

Table 2: Gender distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	55	20.8
Male	210	79.2
Total	265	100.0

Table 3: Adoption of social media platforms

Activities	Agree	%	UD	%	DA	%
Adopted social media platforms	265	100	0	0	0	0
Reliable for security information	250	94	0	0	15	6

Table 4: Platform preferences

Platform	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	234	88.3
Twitter	65	24.5
Whatsapp	221	83.4
Instagram	130	49.1
Others	0	0

Table 5: Frequency of usage

Schedule	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	250	94.4
Weekly	15	5.6
Monthly	0	0
Rarely	0	0
Total	265	100.0

Table 6: Previous experience of rural insecurity

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	247	93.2
No	18	6.8
Total	265	100.0

Table 7: Experiences of incidents

Incidents	VF	%	UD	%	NE	%
Theft	156	59	0	0	109	41
Vandalism	91	34	0	0	174	66
Kidnapping	156	59	0	0	109	41
Assault	65	25	0	0	200	75
No Any	13	5	0	0	252	95

Table 8: Usages for rural security

Usage	VF	%	UD	%	NU	%
Reporting	106	40	0	0	159	60
Receiving information	184	69	0	0	81	31
Security discussion	106	40	0	0	159	60
Tracking of security threat	107	40.4	0	0	158	59.6

Table 9: Social media impact on rural security

Impact	VF	%	UD	%	NI	%
Improved awareness	221	83	0	0	44	17
Increased security planning	91	34	0	0	174	66
Enhanced reporting	91	34	0	0	174	66
Negative impact	0	0	0	0	0	0
No impact	0	0	0	0	0	0

Data Analyses:

Data from responses are grouped according to items measuring the constructs and issues. Table 1 and 2 indicate that 80% of respondents are mature and above 35 years with 79% male. Table 3 shows that 100% adopts different social media platforms. 94% of them confirm its reliability for security information usage. Table 4 reveals respondents preferences with 88% on Facebook and 83% on WhatsApp. However, according to Table 5, frequency of usage shows 94% daily usage and 6% weekly.

Furthermore, in Table 6, 93% has different form of previous experiences of insecurity within the neighborhood. According to data in Table 7, 59% previously experienced theft and kidnapping, followed by vandalism with 34% and 25% assault cases.

Data on types and nature of usages are in Table 8, with 69% using it to receive information, while 40% uses it in tracking security threat, discussing security issues, and reporting security breaches.

However, respondents differ on perception of social media impacts with 83% highly impacting on improving awareness, 34% agrees it impacts on enhanced reporting and increasing security planning.

Test of Hypotheses:

Test of Hypothesis One:

H_{01}: There is no significant adoption of social media in Oke-Ogun area.

H_1: There is significant adoption of Social Media in Oke-Ogun area.

Table 10: Analysis of the Data in Table 3

Activities	Agree (A)	Undecided (UD)	Disagree (DA)	ROW TOTAL
Adopted social	265	0	0	265
Media platform	250	0	15	265
Column Total	515	0	15	530

To test the hypothesis, chi-square or Khi square (X^2) statistical was used. $X2 = \varepsilon \frac{(Fo-Fe)^2}{fe}$

Where fo is observed frequency and fe is expected frequency.

fo already computed, and to calculate fe; $fe_{ij} = \frac{R_T \, x \, G}{G_T}$

RT is Row total, CT is column total, GT is grand Total

X^2 calculate from the data above on adoption of social media platforms is 15.436

X^2 table valve at 5% (0.05) Level of significance and at a 2 degree of freedom (df).

df (degree of freedom) = (r – I) (c – I)

df = (r – I) (c – I)

Where r is number of rows and C is number of columns

X^2 table valve = (X^2 ($\propto$, d.f) and $\propto$ is a symbol for level of significance 5% (0.05)

df = (r – I) (c – I) = r = 2 c = 3

df = (2 – 1) (3 – 1) = 1 x 2 = df = 2

X^2tab = X^2 (0.06, 2) = 5.991

Decision Rule: If X^2 calculated > X^2 table value then Null hypothesis (Ho) will be rejected while alternative hypothesis (H_1) will be accepted and vice versa.

Conclusion: X2 calculated is greater than X^2 table valve 15.436 > 5.991. This implies that Null hypothesis will be rejected while alternative hypothesis will be accepted. Social Media platforms are significantly adopted in Oke-Ogun area, and can be leveraged on for social security.

Test of Hypothesis Two:

Ho_2: There are no previous experiences of rural insecurity activities in Oke-Ogun area.

H_2: There are previous experiences of rural insecurity activities in Oke-Ogun area.

Table 11: Analysis of the Data in Table 6

Incidents	VF	%	UD	%	NE	%	ROW TOTAL
Theft	156	59	0	0	109	41	265
Vandalism	91	34	0	0	174	66	265
Kidnapping	156	59	0	0	109	41	265
Assault	65	25	0	0	200	75	265
No any	13	5	0	0	252	95	265
Column total	481		0		844		1325

X^2 calculated from table 11 above is 246.01

X^2 table value i.e. $X^2 \propto df$, i.e. df=8, $\propto = 0.05(5\%)$

$X^2 (\propto df) = X^2$ (5% df) = X^2 (0.05, d.f)

X^2 (0.05, 8) = 15.51

Therefore, X^2 calculated is 245.01, while X^2 table value is 15.51

Conclusion: Since X^2 table value is less than X^2 calculated value i.e. X^2 calculated value (246.01) exceed X^2 table value (15.51), the Null hypothesis (Ho) will be rejected while Alterative hypothesis (H_2) is accepted. This indicates that there are previous experiences of rural insecurity activities in Oke-Ogun area. By implication social media will be relevant to the strategies and security measure to curb or eradicate the atrocity committed by the criminals in Oke-Ogun area.

Test of Hypothesis 3:

Ho_3: There are no usages of Social Media platforms for rural security purposes in Oke-Ogun area.

H_3: There are usages of Social Media platforms for rural security purposes in Oke-Ogun area.

Table 12: Analysis of the Data in Table 8

Usage	VF	%	UD	%	NE	%	ROW TOTAL
Reporting	106	40	0	0	159	60	265
Receiving information	184	69	0	0	81	31	265
Security discussion	106	40	0	0	159	60	265
Tracking of security threat	107	40.4	0	0	158	59.6	265
Column total	503		0		557		1,060

X^2 calculated is 68.47

X^2 table value at 5% level of significant (∝) and 6 degree of freedom (df)

X^2 (0.05, 6) = 12.59

Conclusion: it is obvious that X^2 calculated exceed X^2 table valve i.e. 68.47>12.59 thus calculated value of the X^2 (68.47) falls on rejection region. Therefore, Null hypothesis (i.e. Ho_3) will be rejected while Alternative hypothesis (i.e. H_3) will be accepted. Thus, it implies that there are usages of social media platforms for rural security purposes in Oke-Ogun area and there are needs to strengthen it.

Hypothesis 4:

Ho_4: Social Media does not impact on the rural security of Oke-Ogun area.

H_4: Social Media impact on the rural security of Oke-Ogun area.

Table 13: Analysis of the Data in Table 9

Impact	VF	%	UD	%	NE	%	ROW TOTAL
Improve awareness	221	83	0	0	44	17	265
Increase Security planning	91	34	0	0	174	66	265
Enhanced reporting	91	34	0	0	174	66	265
Negative impact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No impact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Column total	403		0		392		795

X^2 calculated valve is 700.11

X^2 table value at level of significance (∝) 5% i.e. 0.05 and 8 degree of freedom.

$X^2(0.05) = X^2(0.05, 8) = 15.51$

Conclusion: X^2 cal $>X^2$ table, 700.11 >15.5. Therefore, Null hypothesis will be rejected while Alternative hypothesis will be accepted and if otherwise null will be accepted. By implication, Social media impact on the rural security of Oke-Ogun area, hence, there is need for strong public policy to promote its adoption.

6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Basically, the above results reiterates the fact that Social media has come to stay with humanity as a way of life, though, its adoption, capability to use, and impacts varies due to the influences of other peculiar variables in different places and regions. The variation is due to the degree of adoption by specific individuals and communities as groups, availability of tools and infrastructure, preferences for different social media tools and platforms, usages for different interests, and the nature of impacts on various user groups. The result of test of hypothesis 1 and findings from analysis of data above indicates that there is wider and significant adoption of social media among the literates in Oke Ogun area of Oyo state. All the respondents (100%) embrace the use of social media, and while 94.4 % indicate daily usage, the remaining 5.6 % uses weekly and 0 % monthly, which attest to its increasing relevance and impact in the rural areas. Interestingly, higher number with 88.3 % adopts Facebook while 83.4 % uses WhatsApp regularly. Apparently, Facebook facilitates interaction with wider networks while WhatsApp is simpler and restrictive among specific group for private interpersonal interactions. Also, the finding reveals no barrier in ages and sex in terms of adoption and usage, hence, all males and females, and all age brackets respondents adopt and use different types of social media platforms.

Another finding is the occurrences of criminal activities that threaten rural security, which is an indication that insecurity is not peculiar with only urban communities and cities. 94.3 % of the respondents confirm the reliability of social media for community security. 93.2 have previous experiences of insecurity, with 98.3 experienced thefts, 34.3 experienced act of vandalism, 24.5 assault, and 58.9 experienced incidence of kidnapping.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the Oke-Ogun communities possess the capabilities to use the media platforms for various beneficial purposes including community interest. However, in addressing the security challenges, 40% uses social medial for reporting, 69.4% for receiving information, 40% previous participation in online serious discussion, and 40.4 for tracking community security threat. It is obvious that beyond using social media for receiving information the usages in other areas of security are low, which is an indication that the capacity is fair, but not significant.

Notwithstanding the above observation, the finding indicates social media significantly impacts on rural security in Oke-Ogun area. 83.4 % agrees it impact on security awareness, 34.3 % on enhanced security reporting, and 34.3 % agrees to impact on increased security planning.

Findings from related studies indicate that social media platforms impact both positively and negatively on rural security in Nigeria. Assessing the impact of public attitudes towards citizen journalism on local security perceptions; Odii (2020) observes positive view of citizen journalism as a watchdog. Hussaini and Muhammed (2020) study identifies social media as a potential monitoring tool, with 20% of respondents agreeing that security forces have been benefitting from online activities to disarm planned attacks.

Ojobor (2019) investigate the positive role of social media on local security efforts by interviewing local security personnel and residents in rural Nigerian communities, finding shows that 50% of respondents believe social media have improved communal surveillance by alerting them to potential security threats.

In another study on the effect of social media on Teenagers and Youths in Rural Nigeria, Nwafor (2022) find that 64% of respondents use social media primarily for entertainment, while 35% uses it for educational purposes. 15% students using educational content from YouTube confirms improvement in academic performance.

The above justifies the result of hypothesis 1 and reasons for adopting social media for rural security in Oke–Ogun area and possibly other rural communities in Nigeria. There are various reasons for adopting any new technology including social media (Aderogba, 2022b), thus, rural communities adopts social media activities among other reasons for rural security.

Furthermore, another issue is the capability for usages. This has to do with choice and ability to use the technology or the platforms for various objectives. There exist different platforms, which individuals can adopt; however, this is greatly influenced by other factors including flexibility in operation, cost of adoption, infrastructure availability, accessibility, and relevance to purpose. The result of the test of hypothesis 2 and analysis indicate moderate and fair spread in term of usages, which may be the consequent of interplay of these factors in the rural areas.

The most important is the impact of the usage on the objective or purpose. This is highly determined by the outcomes and effects on the determinants. Although, the test of hypothesis 3 indicate positive correlation, however, it is not significant. 83.4 % respondents indicate it impacts on improved awareness, 34.3 agrees it enhanced security reporting, while 34.3 confirms increased security planning. Again, the reasons for moderate impacts varies, some are obvious while others are implied. Findings from related studies corroborate this assertion. The digital divide remains a significant concern. Chukwu and Ojo (2023) note that, unequal access to digital technologies can create disparities in how rural communities benefit from

social media. Efforts to improve technology access and digital literacy are crucial for maximizing the benefits of social media while minimizing its risks.

The findings strengthen the theoretical basis for the study. It aligns with DOI theory in revealing different digital media tools adopted and in use by the residents of Oke Ogun area, level of adoption in managing various security related issues in their communities, and how the platforms impact variously in enhancing security of the areas. Also, the findings correlate the Capability theory in revealing the capability of the residents in using the digital platforms with 100 % respondents confirming the usage for one aspect of security issues or the other, which indicates their level of knowledge and application of the tools despite challenges of technological infrastructure in the rural areas.

The increasing penetration of social media in rural Nigeria has impacts with profound implications for rural security. The platforms emerge as crucial tools for enhancing communication and information dissemination. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp have revolutionized communication in rural areas, where traditional media are inadequate (Akinwunmi, 2022). These platforms facilitate prompt updates and alerts, enabling communities to respond swiftly to security threats. Ogundele and Suleiman (2023) argue that such promptness is vital in rural areas, where delays in information dissemination can exacerbate security risks.

Moreover, social media enhances community engagement by enabling residents to report suspicious activities, and also in coordinating with local law enforcement agents (Adeniran & Alabi, 2024). New media is a veritable tool for informal education, including rural security orientation in remote areas (Aderogba, 2022c). This increased interaction fosters a collaborative approach to security, encouraging proactive measures and collective problem-solving. Social media through video content enhances local security knowledge in rural areas where there is challenge of access to information (Wilson, 2023). Also, of concern is the challenge of poor geo-structural plans of rural areas for security tracking. For purpose of rural security, these tools are useful in identifying vulnerable areas, tracking threats, and planning security measures, crime data analysis and designing counter emergency response routes (Thompson, 2024).

It is essential to note that while social media offers useful tools for community engagement and security monitoring, it also requires enhanced digital literacy among rural populations to effectively navigate these platforms and manage potential risks (Smith, 2023). A balanced approach by combining social media with traditional security measures can achieve more. Integrating digital tools with community-based strategies

can enhance overall security effectiveness, as observed in successful initiatives from other regions (Olamide & Adebayo, 2024).

However, the expansion of social media into rural areas also introduces new challenges. Nguyen et al. (2024) point out that a growing digital presence can encourage more online crimes such as fraud and cyber bullying. Also, the spread of misinformation through social media can be one of the sources of local tensions and cause of unnecessary alarm (Brown & Lee, 2021). Aligning with this submission Nwafor (2022) research reveals that 20% of the sampled youths already exposed to risky behaviors like online gambling or compromising content through social media platforms. However, Ojobor (2019) study shows 30% of his sample acknowledged that misinformation spread through these platforms has led to at least two significant security incidents in the study area, including false alarms of terrorist attacks that result to mass panic and loss of property.

The survey of Kimtai and Adeoye (2021) on Social Media dynamics and regional insecurity in five Northern Nigerian states reveals 72% of respondents confirm social media usage often amplifies divisive narratives, contributing to unrest and deepening ethnic and religious divisions. Also, misinformation through platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook led to at least five documented cases of communal violence. In addition, Hussaini and Muhammed (2020) documents how social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and encrypted messaging apps spread misinformation and fake news on Boko Haram operations to create widespread panic in affected communities. Survey data from local security forces reveals that 45% of recent Boko Haram-related activities influenced by the communication via social media.

Furthermore, Finding of Jones (2020) from the analysis of social media usage across Sub-Saharan Africa establishes correlation between increased internet access and the rise in cyber warfare incidents and youth radicalization. Groups like ISIS exploit platforms like Telegram, Twitter, and WhatsApp for radicalization, especially in regions with poor infrastructure and limited governmental presence. The finding indicates 30% of the online content concentrates on ideological indoctrination of Sub-Saharan youth. Similarly, Awan (2019) examines how social media exacerbates radicalization in rural regions with limited digital literacy in Africa, Europe, and South Asia, with documentation of 12 cases where individuals from these regions were radicalized online, leading to extremism and concludes that social media serves as a powerful tool for radical groups to exploit underdeveloped areas for recruitment. Finding further shows that social media platforms like Twitter [now X] and Telegram facilitate the recruitment of individuals to extremist activities, especially in rural areas with low digital literacy.

7. CONCLUSION

Insecurity is becoming a major concern in Nigeria because of its effects on development, hence, the need to start examining various aspects of insecurity in Nigeria. Insecurity, which previously characterised the urban areas and cities, has now extended to the rural communities, which are responsible for agricultural productions. Social media is now gradually becoming one of the major instruments of managing organizations and societies. Thus, this paper examines the impacts of the adoption of social media in Oke-Ogun area of Oyo State which is considered as one of the zones with significant rural communities. The findings show that social media platforms are significantly adopted in Oke-Ogun area, there are previous experiences of insecurity in the area, there is moderate usage of social media for rural security, and social media moderately impact on rural security in the area.

However, the above findings adduce some implications for policymakers and decision-makers. There is an increasing adoption of social media in the rural areas with possible infrastructural challenges. Therefore, security policymakers will need to formulate policies that will mandate the government to provide necessary infrastructure for accessibility and affordability of the social media resources. In addition, there is fair and moderate adoption of social media for rural security activities, which requires guide and encouragement. Hence, there is a need for policy and guidelines to promote rural security orientation, and guidance against the negative adoption of social media platforms to aggravate insecuruty in rural areas.

Thus, the recommendations to enhance the impacts of social media in Oke –Ogun and other areas with little government presence include; government provision of communication infrastructure that requires simple maintenance affordable and accessible to the rural communities. Secondly, government needs to steadily increase the annual budgets to support rural security funding. Also, government and media community need to initiate an intervening awareness programmes on various usages of social media for rural security, to improve the rural security orientation. Establishing community security platforms for engagement and collaboration between the community members and public security agencies will efficiently compliment the traditional security architecture. Similarly, censoring programmes that can promote rural insecurity among the youths, especially in the rural areas, by the Nigeria Communication Commission, will reduce the exposure and temptation to engage in crime among the rural youth.

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