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**Influence of Social Media on the Campaign Against Baby Trafficking in Enugu State,
Nigeria.**

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to ascertain the extent of social media influence on baby trafficking in Enugu state. Since 2008 after the discovery of the illegal trade in the state, it has taken a more dangerous form as more baby factory facilities are being discovered in the state. It explores the views and perception of various resident of Enugu on the use of social media to combat child trafficking in an environment where baby factory is prevalent. Survey research design was used in eliciting responses from the residents of Enugu, using multi stage sampling technique. Due to largeness of the population, the researcher selected a manageable but representative sample size that made up the study size. Three hundred and eighty five respondents form the sample population and this was gotten using the Australian calculator. Consequently five research questions were drawn from the objectives. Simple percentage count was used to interpret data collected. The study was anchored on the Technological Determinism theory, whereas findings showed that Enugu state residents were aware of social media and how it can be employed to solve some social issues like baby trafficking in Enugu state. Some barriers however as discovered in the cause of the study includes: power outage, problems of internet connectivity, and financial challenges among others. The study recommended that social media should serve as a right channel to mobilize the people of Enugu in fight against baby trafficking.

Key words: Influence, social media, baby trafficking/ baby factory, child abuse.

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an essential element of human existence. A process through which human creates shared meaning, through sending and receiving messages. Communication is ever present with human and it could take the form of interpersonal or intrapersonal. The mass audiences are communicated to using the mass media. Nevertheless, the primary aim of communication is to advance knowledge and improve existing social societal conditions [1]. Although Communication has been with human for ages, the gadgets and styles of communication keep changing. New media have paved ways for participatory, democratic, and user generated-content pattern of communication. The online platforms and technologies used for this new system of human communication are called the social media. Some of the social media include: Facebook, twitter, Myspace, Skype, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube among others [2, 3].

Social media are internet- based interactive platforms whereby people can create and exchange information in a participatory manner on a real-basis [4]. [5, 6, 7, 8], define social media as “ A group of internet-based applications that build on ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of users generated content”. Social media have succeeded in altering how information flows and how people communicate. [9] noted that mobile phones offers user’s real time information, education, entertainment, and escape. Social media are more broadened and ubiquitous, just as Millions of people now get connected to them for learning purpose, interaction or exchange of information.

It is almost impossible to have any country in the world that has not felt the influence of social media, because people in the urban and rural areas share information with one another through text, photo, or video using various networking sites. Social media give its users ample opportunity to express themselves freely and instantaneously [10, 11, 12]. Social media users in Nigeria have increased due to breakthrough in Information and Communication Technology, which have opened a world of endless possibilities for all and sundry. [13] “noted that social networking platforms have reduced the cost of mass communication to the level at which almost anybody can afford”.

The most used social network in Nigeria is Facebook which has 16 million Nigerian active users. Research indicated that 7.2 million Nigerians visit Facebook every day, while 97 percent of them access the social media site using their mobile phones [14]. Nigeria has one of the continent’s highest smart phone penetration rates. Twitter is another social media platform which enables its users to tweet. Twitter is a social media platform that we use to share links and follow up news as it breaks. It has 313 million active users in 2016. (www.statistics.com). Also YouTube, a social media platform enables its users to share videos, blogs give its users opportunity to post commentary as well get chance to comment and receive feedback. Instragram and other social media sites also allow the users in participatory, interactive and democratic dialogue [15].

Social media enable the users’ access to interact with others, generate and disseminate their own content. With Social media, people can express their freedom of information as stipulated in chapter IV section 39 (1) of 1999 Nigeria constitution. Despite the fact that social networking sites according to [16], have been used by human traffickers for criminal purposes, it can as well serve as veritable tools to combat baby trafficking.

Human rights are essential for dignity of man. Human beings are entitled to exercise and enjoy their rights as humans. [17], noted that human rights are promulgated to ensure that persons or individual are treated fairly in order to develop their full potentials. Children also have their own special rights added to them in order

to ensure their adequate protection, as well as attending to their unique needs. Children's right according to [18] "Is the human rights of children with particular attention to the rights of special protection and afforded to minors". The rights of all the children under 18 years was officially recognized by the world leaders in 1989 when the United Nation (UN) Convention on Rights of the child was signed, of which Nigeria is a signatory to this treaty [19].

The 1999 constitution on the fundamental rights upholds the basic rights of a child as human being. Nevertheless, the child's right act upholds the rights of children, restores their confidence and self-esteem and improves their status [20]. This assures the children of total care and protection, and as well empowers all children to enjoy their rights fully. From the statements above, we can confidently affirm that child trafficking is a complete violation of children's rights and contravenes the United Nation Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC), chapter four IV of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and 2003 child rights act (CRA).

Under international law, child trafficking is a crime involving the movement of children for the purpose of their exploitation [21]. Despite all these laws protection of human rights, human trafficking which violates human rights, is widespread in Nigeria, as [22] noted that Nigeria continue to be the source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. The concept of child trafficking comprises of organized movement of a child across the international borders or within the country for exploitation. Child trafficking renders the child vulnerable due to exposure to prostitution, or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, removal of organs, etc. The United Nations office for Drugs and crime, (UNODC) define Trafficking in Persons as

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Nigeria as a country has in several occasions being accused of human right abuses on its citizens, and the several reported cases of baby factories recently have added to the surplus of human right abuses and a new trend to child trafficking. [23] opined that baby factories is one of the organized lucrative crimes in Nigeria. She added that human trafficking is a well-organized crime perpetuated in both developing and developed countries of the world. It is no longer news that women and girls are

constantly trafficked within and across the nations, but it has solely taken a new dimension and that appeared to be the worst of all form of human trafficking; which is the increase in cases of trafficking in children [24].

The child trafficking phenomenon has gradually resulted to Baby Trafficking, or what is also referred to as Baby Harvesting or Baby Factories. Baby trafficking involves breeding, selling, trafficking, and abuse of infants and their biological mothers. Baby trafficking also involves recruiting of parents and children for adoption or trafficking market [25]. In some cases of human trafficking, the victims are aware of crime, they will simply assent to the crime due to some premium attached to it; however the victims in this baby factory issues are underage kids that can't reason or demand for rights to protection. Several policies employed by the Nigerian government to curb the rising case of child abuse, seems to degenerate to another dubious crime of baby factories. Baby factory business was reported by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in 2006 where States like Abia, Ebonyi and Lagos were specifically listed among states that baby factories exist. Thus Women and children became vulnerable victims to this societal menace. Consequently more of baby factories have been discovered in some states in Nigeria like Ondo, Ogun, Borno, Akwalbom, Lagos, Delta, etc, unfortunately this brutal business is prevalent in the south-east [26].

Baby factories thrive in Imo, Anambra, Ebonyi, Abia, Imo, and Enugu states respectively. In June 2011, police freed 32 teenage girls from a baby factory located in the city of Aba, Abia state. In October 2011, 17 pregnant girls were saved from an orphanage in Lagos. In May 2013, police rescued 6 teenage girls from a "baby factory" in Enugu, 17 pregnant teenage girls and 11 babies in Southern Imo province and about 26 teenage girls in Umuaka village, Imo State. From 2013 to 2016, more baby factories were raided by security operative in South- East Nigeria [27].

More so in June 2013, police freed 16 pregnant young women from a clinic in Aba City, Abia State. In July 2013, police arrested the owner of the illegal home "Moonlight Maternity Home" and a nurse who assists him in selling babies. In August and September 2013, police unveiled two more cases of baby factories in Imo State. Several "baby factories" were also reported in Anambra State. While In 2011 the Nigerian police force also raided two hospitals and dismantled two baby factories in Enugu State. According to [28], from 2013 to 2016, a total number of 14 baby factories were raided by police in South-East Nigeria.

Enugu State is one of the states in South-East, Nigeria. It was created in 1991, from Anambra State. Its capital is Enugu. The cities in the State include: Enugu, Ngwo, Agwu, Agbani, Oji River, Udi, and Nsukka. Enugu state consists of 17 local government

areas. In terms of its economy, the citizens are predominantly rural and agrarian with a substantial proportion of its working population that engaged in farming, trading, and other services. The dominant occupation for those in the urban centers is trading, and other services. Small proportions of the population are engaged in manufacturing activities [29].

Enugu State has various good numbers of schools and higher institutions of learning. A total of 23 states in Nigeria have adopted the Child Right Act bill. Unfortunately, Enugu state is yet to adopt the bill. Despite the fact that about 23 states in Nigeria have adopted this bill, it's is still hard to hear of any state in Nigeria where children are not subjected to numerous abuses and violations. Historically, the illicit trade of infants over monetary gain started in Enugu state in 2008, when the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Person and other related matter (NAPTIP), in conjunction with the Nigerian Police force, raided a network of baby traffickers that disguised as orphanage home. Consequently, 25 teenage girls were rescued from the raid [30].

Again in 2011, Nigerian police raided and dismantled two more hospitals used in breeding infants for sale in the trafficking market. More baby factory was discovered also in 2015 in Enugu precisely at 9th mile in Udi local government area by the state police command. Nevertheless, a total number of thirteen girls were rescued from an eighty years old woman in Enugu state as revealed by [2].

Although, there is no reliable estimate of numbers of children trafficked, but a current trafficking in person report showed that Nigeria is a source, transit, and a destination country for human trafficking. In recent time there have been discoveries of baby factories by the law Enforcement Agencies in Enugu, however further inquiry revealed that government officials in the state, are somewhat agents in baby trafficking business [4]. In view of the statements above, this work is centered on how social media can serve as a vehicle in fighting baby trafficking in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

Child trafficking trade is rampant and lucrative in Nigeria, but prevalence in the South-Eastern Nigeria as earlier mentioned. Report from United Nation (UN) indicates that at least ten children are sold every day across the country. Almost every state in the South Eastern part of Nigeria has come in the news over the incidence of baby factories. The trafficking syndicates usually coerced their victims to give up their child, for as low as N20, 000, after which the babies would be sold to buyers at exorbitant prices depending on the sex of the babies. Male infants are sold up to N2 million.

Although there are some married women who willingly sell off their babies due to some sorts of perceived poverty.

Nigeria was ranked by the UNESCO as third on human trafficking crime, after economic /financial fraud and drug trafficking [16]. The porous nature of Nigerian borders, has contributed to the increase in traffics of infants and children within and across the nation. This act has revealed the inadequacies of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP). NAPTIP is an organization created by the federal government to prevent human trafficking, investigate and prosecute human traffickers, and protect all victims of the crime.

The issues about baby trafficking are worrisome as people no longer value humans. Child trafficking is a global phenomenon, a heinous crime against humanity which arose due to increase in moral decadence, declining family values, poverty, unemployment, greed, corruption, parental laxity, etc., Baby trafficking is a form of abuse of infants and children, an infringement on infant's rights as human beings, slavery, sexual harassment on the teenage girls; as research indicated that even doctors in the "maternity" home forcefully impregnate the teenage girls and restrained them in the facility against their will.

Several policies and treaties have been enacted by the Enugu state government in fight against human trafficking and protection of women and children, as well as reducing the cases of child abuse. Instead of curbing the anomalies, it rather took a different dimension. Thus we now have cases of baby factories in our societies. More so, there is scarce empirical studies on how new media technologies can assist in fight against baby trafficking, (Latonero 2011). In view of the new opportunities which social media offers to reach out to the general publics this study is sought to discover how social media can influence the campaign against baby factory in Enugu State.

Objectives of the Study

The essence of this work is to investigate how social media can influence the campaigns to fight baby trafficking in Enugu State. The study therefore is seeking to achieve the following objectives

- 1 To ascertain the level of baby factory awareness among residents of Enugu state
- 2 To find out how social media can be employed to campaign against baby factory in Enugu state.
- 3 To determine factors that can hinder social media use on campaign against baby factory in Enugu State.

Research Questions

- 1 What are the levels of baby factory awareness among residents of Enugu state?
- 2 How can social media be used to campaign against baby factory in Enugu state?
- 3 What factors constitutes barriers to social media use on campaign against baby factory in Enugu State?

Significant of the Study

This work is bent on social media and its influence on campaigns against baby trafficking in Nigeria. Therefore, findings from this work will add to existing knowledge. The study will assist relevant higher institutions of learning in Enugu State. It will be of great benefit to the people of Enugu State and Non-Governmental Organizations who work towards eliminating baby trafficking in the state and country at large. The study is intended as well to be a valuable document for scholars and researchers. The study has social relevant in the sense that it will serve as a guide to social media experts, as well as enhance the knowledge of agencies on the prohibition of child trafficking on techniques that can be used on social media as instrument to discourage baby trafficking.

Scope of the Study

The social media included in this study are: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and YouTube. The issue is based on social media access, uses, and how Enugu State residents' react to information on the social networking sites. The study would have been extended to more states in South-East which incidentally have baby factories in operation, but couldn't due to time factor.

Limitation to the Study

The constraints experienced in the course of this study include: Technological factor as most times connecting to the internet to source for materials needed is a problem. There are also issues on financial difficulties and apathy, and difficulties in sourcing for information as most people will not be comfortable in divulging information.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The method adopted in this work is survey research design. Survey research is use to study group of people or items through collection and analysis of data from people or item that represent the entire group as well as eliciting responses from people.

Area of Study

The area of study is Enugu State which is one of the five states in South- East geopolitical zone. The research work covers the three senatorial districts in Enugu State, which include: Enugu East, Enugu West, and Enugu South. Three local governments were picked from the three senatorial districts.

Under Enugu East, Nkanu East local government was chosen.

In Enugu West, Udi local government was picked.

Under Enugu North, Nsukka local government was picked.

Population of the Study

The population of the study is made up of residents of Enugu state. Based on the 2006 National Population Commission figures, Enugu State has a population of 3,257,298.

This figure was taken ten years ago, therefore, to get the current population; growth rate percentage change method was adopted a thus:

$$N_1 = N_0 (1 + Kn)$$

N_1 = Current population

N_0 = population as at last census

K = population growth rate @3.2% or 0.032

n = Number of years after last census

$$N_1 = 3257,298 (1 + 0.032(10))$$

$$N_1 = 3257,298 (1 + 0.32)$$

$$N_1 = 3257,298 \times 1.32$$

$$N_1 = 4,299,633$$

Therefore, the present population of Enugu state is 4,299,633.

Sample Size

Due to the largeness of the population size for this study, a manageable Sample size of 385 was selected from the population using the Australian calculator. (See the appendix).

Sampling Procedure

The sampling technique used in this study is the multi stage sampling techniques.

Stage one: Enugu State was selected out of the five South Eastern state. The selected state has come in news several times over the issue of baby factory which is prevalence in the South-East geopolitical zone.

Stage two: In this stage, simple random sampling was used to select three senatorial districts which include: Enugu East, Enugu West and Enugu North.

Stage three: Simple random sampling was equally used to drawn the three local government areas. And they include: Nkanu, Udi and Nsukka.

Stage four: Finally, purposive sampling was used to select the 385 respondents from the three selected local government area based on their knowledge on the subject matter. 385 copies of questionnaire were purposively distributed to the residents of the three local governments.

Instrument of data Collection

Questionnaire was used as instrument of data collection. The instrument is considered appropriate because it is capable of generating needed data for the analysis.

Method of Data Collection

The study adopted the primary source of data collection. That is the raw data was collected using a structured questionnaire which was given on face-to-face contact with respondent.

Validity of Instrument

To ensure that the measuring instruments really address the purpose of the study, face validation was done by an expert from the department of mass communication, University of Jos, Nigeria was given copies of the instruments.

Method of Data Analysis

The method adopted in analyzing data in this study was descriptive statistic using frequency distribution tables, and percentage of bio data, frequency and mean for the research questions. Questionnaire was designed in Likert Scale format to measure responses where the respondents respond by ticking: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD); Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD). Data collected was shown in a Likert Scale chart. The likert scale was done using the table mean to establish whether the item is accepted or rejected. This was done using the criteria mean of 3.0 to show accepted while criteria mean of less than 3.0 indicates rejection.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Survey method was used to collect data being analyzed. A total number of 385 questionnaires were evenly distributed to random selected respondents. Out of the 385 questionnaires distributed only 375 or 90% copies of the questionnaires were completed and returned.

RESULTS

Table 1: Sex

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	177	47.2
Female	198	52.8
Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey (2016)

Table 2: Age

Respondent	Frequency	Percentage %
16-21	81	21.6
22-26	101	26.9
26-31	102	27.2
31 & above	91	24.3
Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey (2016)

Table 3: Educational Qualification

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage %
Degree	201	53.6
Others	174	46.6
Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey (2016)

Table 4: Marital Status

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Single	188	50.1
Married	120	32
Divorced	28	7.5
Widow/widower	39	10.4
Total	375	100

Source: Field survey, 2016 (Number of respondents = 375)

Table 5: awareness of Enugu state residents on baby factory

S/N	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
5	Most of Enugu State residents were aware of baby factory operations in the state.	115	130	65	30	35	3.69	Accepted
6	Baby factory syndicates disguised their facility as a factory for small enterprise to lure young women.	181	107	-	50	37	3.92	Accepted
7	Teenage girls and young adults are usually victims of baby factory	288	84	-	3	-	4.75	Accepted
8	Baby factory syndicates disguised their facilities as hospital and orphanage homes to lure their victims.	149	199	13	5	9	4.26	Accepted
9	Poverty, economic hardship and lack of proper information contributed to growing trend of baby factory in Enugu state.	148	210	5	8	4	4.69	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2016 (Number of respondents = 375)

Table 6: Areas we can use social media to fight baby trafficking

S/N	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
10	Social media can best serve as a media to target the youths and the general public	131	209	12	14	9	4.17	Accepted
11	Social media can serve as tools in educating the people on the implication of baby trafficking	170	120	29	25	31	3.99	Accepted
12	Social media can be employed to teach morals to people	142	159	-	38	36	3.88	Accepted
13	Social media can serve as a security check to curb baby trafficking	141	127	21	45	41	3.75	Accepted
14	Social media can serve as a medium to increase awareness and prevent baby trafficking	120	188	9	35	23	3.84	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2016 (Number of respondents = 375)

Table 7: Barriers to social media campaign

S/N	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
15	Religion and cultural affiliation is a barrier in accessing Social Media	35	39	18	170	113	2.23	Rejected
16	Cost of using social media and internet facility is high	119	149	49	38	20	3.82	Accepted
17	Low network connection and lack of communication infrastructural facility is a barrier in accessing Social Media.	279	91	-	5	-	4.7	Accepted
17	Lack of knowledge of social media use can hinder media campaign against baby trafficking	134	101	27	61	52	3.55	Accepted
18	Power outage can hinder access to social media	192	179	-	4	-	4.49	Accepted

Source: Field survey, 2016 (Number of respondents = 375)

DISCUSSION

The study was focused on the use of social media to combat baby factory in Enugu State. Research question one sought to ascertain the views of the people of Enugu on their knowledge about baby trafficking. All the research questions from item 5 to 9 have positive responses from the respondents. This however reveals that baby trafficking awareness is very high among the people of Enugu. In other words majority of the people in Enugu are aware of the illegal and brutal business. The implication of this discovery however is that the hardship and high level of poverty have made so many people engage in all sorts of evil for survival means.

Research question two looked at ways we can use social media to fight child trafficking. All the questions on the table were accepted by the respondents. The research question on item 10 received highest positive responses with criteria mean of 4.17. This is actually apt considering the fact that the study looked at the exploitation of young women which are also youths. In view of this it is obvious that social media can be employed for various uses which include to teach morals, to check activities of the criminal syndicates, etc., the implication of the findings is that most residents of Enugu are not only aware of the existence of social media, but they are also actively involved in consuming the social media contents. This however showed that in campaigning messages against baby trafficking in Enugu State can be sent to the populace through the popular social media sites either by text, picture or video form.

Research question three sought to discover barriers that can hinder social media access in Enugu state. Thus three out of the five questions on the items were accepted with item 18 having the highest criteria mean of 4.49, which really is evidence that lack of power supply to charge technological devices, can hinder the success of baby factory campaign. Economic factor is also a barrier to this campaign as shown in the table. But cultural and religious barriers are the least cause as indicated on the table. This showed that social media are right tools for baby trafficking campaign. The implication therefore is that most people in Enugu State could support the campaign if the media is effectively put in use.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this work, it is right to conclude that social media can influence the campaign against baby trafficking in Enugu State because it is a vital communication tool to combat baby trafficking. Apparently, there seems to be not much awareness on the use of new media or social media platform to combat this deviant act. Most stakeholders are yet to explore the use of social media to adequately promote campaign to combat baby trafficking. Baby factory although operate in some states of the federation, it is very implicitly prevalent in Enugu state and teenage girls are mostly

victims. Also some Stakeholders use the platform negatively rather than positive development, and fight against baby trafficking.

Based on the literature review, findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Social media should serve as a conduit for social mobilization of the people of Enugu State on the campaign against baby trafficking. The mobilizations should be able to targets the youths in both secondary schools and higher institutions. This project should be strategically done and it should be a priority for the state and local governments, as well as the Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society. The essence of the mobilization is because the social media style of communication comprises personal and group interaction on state and local scale.
2. It is also recommended that information about happenings within and around Enugu State should be made known on social media. This will enable all the governments and security agencies to track the issues reported in the area.
3. The research also recommended that seminars and workshops training on effectiveness of social media should be organized sequentially by various stakeholders, for the people of Enugu State. This will make the people have a better knowledge and value of social media and its potentials influence on the people in achieving common good.

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