



# #EndSARS Protest: A Discourse on Impact of Digital Media on 21st Century Activism in Nigeria

**Kelvin Inobemhe<sup>1</sup> & Tsegyu Santas<sup>2</sup>**

Nasarawa State University. Keffi, Nigeria

Received: 22 December 2021 | Revised: 14 May 2022 | Accepted: 24 May 2022

## Abstract

This paper “#EndSARS Protest: A Discourse on Impact of Digital Media on 21st Century Activism” examines the role of digital media in a new generation of activism with a critical assessment of the protest in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper expands on the meaning of social media activism, finds out ways digital media was deployed in mobilisation and management of the protest and also delves into how social media pose as challenge to activism within the context of series of anti-police brutality protests that took place in Nigeria. Specifically, the study looked at how, despite the failure of mainstream media in the country to give the movement prominence, technology (through social media) helped to encourage transnational activism and global solidarity with respect to #EndSARS. The paper relied on existing literature through the use of library research technique. It utilised the technological determinism theory – that served as its theoretical base or foundation. The paper found, among others, that digital media especially social media played significant roles in mobilisation and management of the protest. It also revealed that due to the power that digital platforms wield, authority may be tempted to introduce some form of regulations that may hinder their use. The paper concludes that, indeed, digital media have tremendous impact on 21st century activism in Nigeria. Therefore, the paper, among others, recommends that government must now realise the powers of communication and technology and therefore embark on constant communication with the people while also addressing pre-existing social ills in the country.

## Keywords

#EndSARS; Digital; Social Movement; Activism; Nigeria Protest; 21st Century



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons «Attribution» 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

<sup>1</sup> Email: [inobemhe@nsuk.edu.ng](mailto:inobemhe@nsuk.edu.ng)

<sup>2</sup> Email: [tsegyu@nsuk.edu.ng](mailto:tsegyu@nsuk.edu.ng)



# Протест #EndSARS: дискурс о влиянии цифровых медиа на активизм в Нигерии XXI века

Инобемхе Кельвин<sup>1</sup>, Сантас Цегю<sup>2</sup>

Государственный университет Насарава. Кеффи, Нигерия

Рукопись получена: 22 декабря 2021 | Пересмотрена: 14 мая 2022 | Принята: 24 мая 2022

## Аннотация

В этой статье «Протест #EndSARS: рассуждение о влиянии цифровых медиа на активизм XXI века» исследуется роль цифровых медиа в активизме нового поколения с критической оценкой протеста в Нигерии. В частности, автор статьи останавливается на значении активности в социальных сетях, выясняет, как цифровые медиа использовались для мобилизации и управления протестом, а также исследует, как социальные сети бросают вызов активизму в контексте серии протестов против жестокости полиции, которые произошли в Нигерии. В частности, в исследовании рассматривалось то, как, несмотря на неспособность основных СМИ в стране привлечь внимание к движению, технологии (через социальные сети) помогли стимулировать транснациональную активность и глобальную солидарность в отношении #EndSARS. Статья опирается на существующую литературу с применением метода библиотечного исследования. Автор использовал теорию технологического детерминизма, которая послужила ему теоретической базой, или фундаментом. Анализ обнаружил, среди прочего, что цифровые медиа, особенно социальные сети, сыграли важную роль в мобилизации протеста и управлении им. Выяснилось также, что из-за влияния, которым обладают цифровые платформы, у властей может возникнуть соблазн ввести некоторые формы правил, которые могут препятствовать их использованию. В статье делается вывод о том, что цифровые медиа действительно оказывают огромное влияние на активность в Нигерии XXI века. Поэтому в статье, среди прочего, рекомендуется, чтобы правительство немедленно осознало возможности коммуникации и технологий и, следовательно, приступило к постоянному общению с людьми, в ходе которого решало бы также и ранее существовавшие социальные проблемы в стране.

## Ключевые слова

#EndSARS; цифровые; общественное движение; активность; протест Нигерии; XXI век



Это произведение доступно по лицензии [Creative Commons "Attribution" \(«Атрибуция»\) 4.0 Всемирная](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

1 Email: [inobemhe@nsuk.edu.ng](mailto:inobemhe@nsuk.edu.ng)

2 Email: [tsegyu@nsuk.edu.ng](mailto:tsegyu@nsuk.edu.ng)



## Introduction

Digital technologies largely drive information and communication in the 21st century. Consequently, people rely heavily on digital means to communicate, seek and get information, as well as constantly stay up-to-date with happenings or events around the world. The digital technologies are so useful to the extent that even old or traditional media forms through digitalisation, in no small measure, also rely on digital technologies especially the new media to reach a vast majority of the audience. In agreeing with the foregoing, Igyuve, Inobemhe, Ugber and Udeh, (2020) aver that traditional media are synching with new media to take on new forms.

Digital technologies could be systems, devices or even methods. When we look at digital media, we talk of a minute device that can fit into one's pocket providing connections to the world (Simon, Grimes & Roch, 2018). With such technology, one can access news (get information), and communicate either at different times or simultaneously. Examples of digital technology include social media, multimedia platforms, mobile phones and online games (Nwoziri, 2020). According to Digital Technology Hub (n.d.), digital technologies are systems or hardware that make use of digital data to achieve a specific task as defined by a user. In other words, the user gives the command and the technologies execute. Goodman (2021) provides digital technology types as: social media, smartphones, websites, video-streaming, digital television, electronic books, geolocation, digital music, blogs, printers, computers, self-scan machines, cars and other vehicles, clocks, robotics, drones and guided missiles, banking and finance, buying and selling online platforms and many more.

In modern times, it is rare for the younger generation to get the time to sit by a set – radio or television (Igyuve et al., 2020) neither do they pay much attention to printed copies of newspapers and magazines – and all point to the availability and accessibility with respect to modern digital devices. Consequently, it is hard to see younger persons move anywhere without devices (Nwoziri, 2020). Therefore, digital technologies are what drive the new information age, and 21st century media, just as much as they are now being acknowledged to promote participation in the democratic process of modern democracies. For example, a scenario on how digital technologies was used to promote protest is the video that trended on social media which shows a police officer kneeling on George Floyd's neck in the United States – an act which resulted in uprising that took the form of mass protests largely organised online (Granillo, 2020).

Digital media do not just serve as tools for activism in modern times but creates platforms that embolden actors to take up the responsibilities to press home their demands in (previously) unimagined proportions or dimensions. In line with the foregoing, Marnicio (2014) avers that social media have transformed from mere platforms that connect people to information sharing tools for “constructing



legitimacy for both revolutionaries and authoritarian regimes,” (p. 46). They are no longer seen as just platforms, but as avenues or opportunities for citizens’ active participation in democracies – whether through direct participation or through protest, insurrection of revolution. Marnicio further explains that governments elsewhere have also been seen or known to target opposing voices through social media. Recent events in the world prove the foregoing assertion – from the Arab spring, the Lekki toll gate protest/#EndSARS, the insurrection on Capitol Hill by the right-wing, to aftermath of the Myanmar coup d’état, digital media have proven to be 21st century platforms and opportunities that authorities anywhere should be wary of, in any case (Gilbert, 2021)

Organising protests or demonstrations has become more interesting and affordable in a world where access to information is made easier and affordable as a result of digital media powered by digital technological innovations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Whether it is mobilising people for protest or providing media coverage, digital media is surely changing the way things are done, and the switch to virtual environments in recent times is gaining commensurate popularity (Wallis & Given, 2016), and it is what is referred to as digital activism, and so is it largely considered non-violent and does not involve hackers (Edwards, Howard & Joyce, 2013). However, far from the position of Edwards et al., digital activism is now taking on many forms, and governments around the world are playing one role or the other to ensure the powers are seen either through direct opposition and confrontation or the use of same platforms.

The year 2020 came with several challenges for many Nigerians, the most prominent being the outbreak of Coronavirus in the early part of the year – impacting negatively on the economy. In the last quarter of the year, the younger generation of activists took to the street to demand an end to corruption and police brutality. The protest was largely led by young people who called for the disbandment of SARS – Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigerian Police Force that was alleged to have carried out unlawful arrest, rape, torture, and even extra-judicial murders (Ani, 2020). The protest turned violent on October 20th precisely, when security forces allegedly stormed what is now known as the epicenter of the protest – Lekki Toll Gate Plaza, Lagos-Nigeria and opened fire on the protesters (Facsar, 2020). The BBC (2020) reports that Amnesty International alleged that 12 people died after the military was drafted to the scene of the protest.

However, digital media was reported to be the main driving force behind the movement. The Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC) issued a set of guidelines directing traditional media organisations in the country to avoid reporting the event in order to forestall any form of embarrassment such will cause the government (Ani, 2020). It is important to note that such calls meant nothing to the protesters. If anything, they were further emboldened to carry on while they received the required coverage on social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube,



and Facebook<sup>1</sup>. The foregoing depicts the power of digital media of the 21st century – as on one hand, they play the role of alternative channels to traditional media, and on the other, serve as platforms for civic engagement, citizen participation in the political process in diverse ways – ranging from debates to protest and so on. Therefore, this study examines events that characterised the EndSARS protest and takes a critical look at the role and impact of digital media on 21st century activism in Nigeria.

## Statement of the problem

Before the advent of new media, organising and managing protests used to be a herculean task because lots of efforts and labour go into activities which include mobilisation and management of the process. It was more of a face-to-face process of organising protest. According to Madison (2017) activities such as passing fliers, talking to people to get them to organise and petitioning characterised mobilisation and management of protest in the time past. Further, Madison avers that the way people organise themselves has evolved as the world has seen or witnessed more social movements, demonstrations and protest in recent time than any point in history. The factor that makes the difference is technology – and with regards to this, social media is considerably the most prominent and significant.

Another area worth considering is that of the challenge with respect to success of protests or social movement which is said to revolve around media – especially in the area of framing and overall coverage. Understandably so, and as seen elsewhere, the media through coverage can further give teeth to social movements. During the #EndSARS protest, the near total snub from reputable media organisations in Nigeria was widely acknowledged – a situation that further pushed organisers of the movement to explore the powers of social media in organising, mobilising and totally managing the series of protests that took place in the country. Therefore, when the media ignored the protest in its infant (early) stages, movers did not relent but sought alternative coverage with the use of social media – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram<sup>2</sup> and many others.

However, studies on the extent to which social media and associated technologies aid in the mobilisation and management procedures of protest are not so many. In other words, the area of study is not so researched, and so it is considered novel because its roots can be traced to the Arab Spring uprising. In the 2020 #EndSARS protest in Nigeria, social media especially Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were identified as platforms that played significant roles in public mobilisation, coverage, promotion and overall management. It is, therefore, important to investigate how these platforms aid in organisation and management of social movements. On the basis of the foregoing, this study assessed the impact

1 The social network owned by Meta Corporation, which has been recognized as extremist in the Russian Federation (The government is forcing us to report it – **Editors**)

2 The social network owned by Meta Corporation, which has been recognized as extremist in the Russian Federation (The government is forcing us to report it – **Editors**)





digital media had on the protest – and from the angle of initial mainstream snub, it focused on how alternative media in form of social media became useful in overall management of #EndSARS protest in Nigeria.

## **Objectives of the study**

---

The study pursued the following objectives:

1. To determine the meaning of social media activism within the context of #EndSARS protest in Nigeria.
2. To identify ways digital media was deployed in the organisation and management of #EndSARS protest despite mainstream media snub.
3. To find out how social media pose as challenge to activism within the context of the #EndSARS protest.

## **Research questions**

---

1. What is the meaning of social media activism within the context of #EndSARS protest in Nigeria?
2. What are the ways through which digital media was deployed in the organisation and management of #EndSARS protest despite mainstream media snub?
3. In what ways do social media pose as challenge to activism within the context of the #EndSARS protest?

## **Review of concepts**

---

### **Concept of Digital media**

Digital media are products of digital technologies. However, it is more complex a term than anyone can imagine, and therefore, there is no generally accepted definition for the word “digital media”. According to Maryville University (n.d.), digital media can be seen as digital data that are transmitted through digital cables or satellites using binaries 0s and 1s to digital devices with capacity to translate same formats such as audio, video, text, graphics and so on. Maryville University further emphasises that whenever one makes use of a cellphone, tablet computer, personal computer, or visit webpages, or even open mobile phone applications, such a person is making use of digital media.

Similarly, Goldberg (2019) defines digital media in components. According to Goldberg, digital can be seen as “any data represented by a series of digits (1 and 0), while media refers to a method of broadcasting or communicating information” (para. 1). Therefore, Goldberg sees digital media as any kind of information broadcast on a screen, and could appear on websites, software, applications, video games and many more. Further, Goldberg asserts that “digital” could come or present itself in different formats – such as audio, video, photo, text and so on.



According to Goldberg (2019) different types of digital media exists, and such include Ebooks, social media, blog posts/article, online advertising, digital art, video games, and virtual reality. Maryville University (n.d.) divides digital media in subgroups and expatiates that other types could fit into the broad categories of: audio, video, social media, advertising, news, literature and so on. Maryville University further identifies notable digital media companies such as Google, Netflix, Apple, Facebook and Twitter, and Amazon. The digital technology companies are seen as the future of digital media, and from the examples provided, one can see that social media is a type of digital media. In modern times, social media platforms serve as converging point for all other types of digital media. The terms digital media, new media and digital technologies are used interchangeably in this paper.

### **Concept of Activism**

Whenever people march on the street to demand better living conditions, end to misrule, a change in government, asking for what is right or wanting to put an end to all forms of discrimination, then activism is in play. It takes efforts of a number of people in a society at a particular point in time or history to bring about a change – be it social or political. Therefore, there is always need for activism. In line with the foregoing, Prilleltensky (2020) asserts that the actualisation of a transformative change in a society or community is a collective responsibility. It is so because it will be too tasking for a single individual to embark on a push or movement for social change or re-engineering and get to be taken serious by the government.

Activism can be seen as “efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic, or environmental change, or stasis with the desire to make improvements in society and to correct social injustice” (Egbe, n.d.). From the foregoing definition, we can assert that activism requires actions or efforts aimed at effecting a change to an identified problem or defect or wrongdoing in a given society. In any case, activism is mostly about change of status quo and it involves people. Put differently, activism is people-driven and usually involves a vast majority of the population if success is envisaged.

There are different categorisations of activism as espoused by different authors or scholars. According to Watson (2005), there exist about thirteen (13) standard types of activism, and these include grassroot activism, volunteer, letter writing and petitions, direct lobbying, consumer boycotts, litigations, selective purchasing ordinances, ethical investing, economic sanctions, demonstrations, civil disobedience, agitation, and career activism. According to Egbe (n.d.), the aforementioned are but “methods of activism” (p.12). Consequently, Egbe categorises activism into various forms such as letters to newspapers, boycotts of businesses that are usually patronised, rallies, strikes, street marches or demonstrations, hunger strikes and sit-ins.

Furthermore, Egbe (n.d.) states that activism can be expressed through art. From time immemorial, activism has been about people and their uniquely organ-



ised ways of effecting change. However, different eras have had unique ways of organising people to press or effect change in society. In 21st century, however, digital technologies drive protest as seen in recent times. Arab Spring in 2010, #Occupy Nigeria in 2012 and recently that of #EndSARS, indeed, it is glaring that different ages and times present different methods of activism. It is also noteworthy that from the Arab spring in 2010 and the first use of #BlackLivesMatter in 2013, digital media – social media and activism have remained inseparable (Reid & Sehl, 2020).

### ***Relationship between digital media and activism in Nigeria***

Before the 2020 #EndSARS protest, major protests in Nigeria have largely been in form of political movements or labour struggle (Akeredolu, 2020). Examples are series of protests led by the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) in the past as well as the Occupy Nigeria protest of 2012. Though technology also played a role in the 2012 Occupy Nigeria protest (Hari, 2014; Egbunike & Olorunnisola, 2015), but not in the magnitude it was used in the 2020 #EndSARS protest. Perhaps, the reason for this could be the advancement in technology and commensurate adoption, or different other interconnected considerations (Ogobude, 2020). #OccupyNigeria got a substantial traditional media coverage unlike the #EndSARS campaign, a major motivation for use of social media to provide the requisite coverage.

The roots of activism in Nigeria can be found in colonial era (Akeredolu, 2020; George, 2020). In other words, Nigeria's activism can be traced to the pre-colonial times especially amongst the Igbo people of South Eastern part of the country (Alozie, 2020). Young and vibrant Nigerians including men and women played a role in various protests at different times in the history of the country. In line with this, Alozie expresses that women also played a role in the activism of colonial era in Nigeria through petitions – and the very famous Aba Women's Riot of 1929 stands out. Mainly organised by the women folk, the riot achieved reasonable success when compared to other similar ones recorded in the history of activism in the country.

From the above, it is safe to say that women have always been involved in protests and also played active roles in the 2020 EndSARS – from Aba Women to Funmilayo Rasome-Kuti, and then Aishia Yesufu and DJ Switch, the list is endless of women who are always in the frontline in this regard (Olaoluwa, 2020). Other prominent protesters and protest leaders in Nigeria include Wole Soyinka, Gani Fawehinmi, Ken-Saro Wiwa, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Chinua Achebe and many others, who have demonstrated the resilience in the people of Nigeria (Okunola, 2020). All men and women and youths in their prime have always led others in protest for better governance in Nigeria. However, the difference between the old and modern times is the digital technology that is readily available. Nigerians are also taking advantage of available technologies to make their voices heard in modern times.





Since the present All Progressive Congress (APC)-led government took over in 2015, things are beginning to change for organised social movements in Nigeria (Odoh, 2020). If the police are not attacking protesters, hoodlums take over the disruptive mechanisms (Olukoya, 2020; *Police fire tear...*, 2021; Kaduna, 2020a) or even the snub from mainstream media have all contributed to the novel twist to organising protest in the country. However, examples of clampdown by security forces are seen in the series of protest by Islamic Movement in Nigeria otherwise known as Shia group, and the recent attack on EndSARS protest nationwide. Therefore, Nigerians that belong to different social movements are tilting towards online protests – though the EndSARS took both online and offline dimensions – meaning they were organised online but materialised across offline platforms locations nationwide.

According to Akeredolu (2020), protests are not new in Nigeria, while some such as Iwe Irohin (a local newspaper that vigorously chanted a movement against slave trade) and Aba Women riot were largely peaceful, others have been violent in some ways. Akeredolu chronicled protests across various forms and times – from the military protest through coup-d'états, organised labour and then to the social media era, and many other avenues the people deemed appropriate to use as instruments to effect desired change in society. Further, Akeredolu describes social media which is an aspect of the digital media as the “silver bullet” through which Nigerians have made their voices heard on both home and international fronts.

Armed with mobile devices and the internet, digital media era has changed the game in forms of protests – especially Facebook and Twitter (Akeredolu, 2020). According to Akeredolu, various protests, movements or campaigns that have been amplified through social media include #OccupyNigeria, #NotTooYoungToRun, and recently #EndSARS. Besides receiving wide support locally, digital media amplified protests are also gaining widespread recognition and support world over. With just the application of “share” button a post could go viral – just as simple comment on a Twitter hashtag could draw a global attention and prominence given by netizens to various movements as seen in the #EndSARS scenario.

## **Theoretical framework**

---

This paper is hinged on the technological determinism theory. The main premise of the theory is that technology has the power to shape social change and also determine the future (Drew, 2021). The theory is also based on the premise that whenever there is advancement in technology, there is also a commensurate shift unto another phase in human history. Asemah, Nwammuo and Nkwam-Uwaoma (2017) align with the foregoing with a position that “...technological determinists interpret technology in general and communication technologies in particular as the basis of society in the past, present and even the future” (p. 298).



The origin of the theory can be traced to Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929) – an American sociologist who first used the term “technological determinism” (Asemah et al., 2017). History is decided by technology (Smith, as cited in Drew, 2021). According to Drew, significant events that proved that technology plays a role in the shaping of society and its history include the invention of writing, stirrups and European feudalism, gunpowder empires, the invention of the printing press, the modern nation-state, and the invention of the internet. The foregoing are few of the numerous example of how technological advancement of every age and time helped to shape human society and history.

The invention of the internet and associated technologies such as computers with microprocessors in the previous century is seen as epoch making event in the history of invention due to its status as the most disruptive of all technologies with respect to the revolution in human experience (Drew, 2021). The foregoing also explains the powers the internet and innovations such as social media wield in human communication and information sharing in general. The platforms of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and many more) are reputed to be powerful tools in human communication, and the ways people live their lives in modern times.

In organising protest and managing same, social media platforms as powered by the internet are reputed to have opened the scope of public involvement (Madison, 2017). With respect to the foregoing, the speed with which information travels across social media platforms aid authorities such as the government and the police also to be part of the process – whether they receive prior notice or not. In other words, they can get to activate various mechanisms aimed at managing the impact of social movements due to the speed with which social media spread information. The technological determinism theory is the theoretical framework for this study because it helps broaden the understanding of how digital technological impacts on activism with respect to the #EndSARS protest in Nigeria.

## **Literature review**

---

Globally, social media types of digital media are seen to have replaced the pre-existing structures or techniques of mobilisation as they are considered as major tools used in organising and managing social movements (Ojedokun, Ogunleye & Aderinto, 2021). Similarly, Ajisafe, Ojo and Monyani (2021) revealed in their study that social media play significant roles in not just the mobilisation of resources but the entire mobilisation architecture of social movements – a situation that was glaring during the #EndSARS protest in Nigeria.

A study by Obaid (2020) revealed that social media have considerable influences on social movements which can be viewed from two angles – on one hand, they accelerate or improve the process of recruitment, communication, mobilisation, information dissemination, as well as the expansion of spaces for mobilisation that were hitherto left uncovered by older traditional mobilisation techniques or



methods. Further, Obaid avers that on the other hand, social media's influence on social movement can also be seen in the area of modifications brought into tactics and procedures in stimulating organisation and participation – thereby expanding the scope and mission of social movements in modern times. It is also the reason there can be simultaneous on-ground (offline) and on-line protests – as seen during that of #EndSARS in Nigeria.

According to Ruppel and Arowobusoye (2020) the youths of Nigeria armed with social media tools and without a clear and identifiable leadership organised and promoted the #EndSARS movement – one that clearly showed the impact of the digital technology platforms in modern day protests. Further, Ruppel and Arowobusoye revealed that the use of social media enhanced the protest as hundreds of thousands of youths in Nigeria took part in the movement which saw demonstrations in different parts of the country. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (being the most prominent) became pivotal tools in the protests which were seen on two fronts – online through social media and on the ground as seen in major cities of Nigeria (Ekoh & George, 2021). Further, Ekoh and George likened the EndSARS protest to those organised in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd in the US as social media platforms served as the driving forces behind the two. Organisers utilised social media to pull participants, and also to promote and disseminate information with respect to the most successful social movement in Nigeria organised through the instrumentation of technology (Dark, 2020; Kazeem, 2020; Adekoya, 2021).

A study by Adekoya (2021) revealed that social media played significant roles in the mobilisation and management of EndSARS protest in Nigeria. Further, the study revealed that social media platforms served as channels through which people's views got heard and as tools for dissemination of up-to-date information regarding the protest and activities of the movement. Finally, the study revealed that while the use of social media platforms during the EndSARS protests in the area of mobilisation, sensitisation and management purposes was high, same platforms also served as conduit through which people spread misinformation and outright falsehood on different national issues.

A study by Soladoye and Ojo (2020) also revealed that in Nigeria, social media help in awareness creation with respect to police brutality and had served as a viral tool that got the government involved. Further, the study found and revealed that the use of social media in social movement (especially that of EndSARS) helped to draw the attention of international community and organisations to cases of torture, brutality and abuses faced by Nigerians in the hands of the police force. According to Soladoye and Ojo, a large number of Nigerians took part in the campaigns against police brutality with the use of Twitter to create awareness as the platform served as the power engine that ignited the physical protests witnessed across major towns, communities and cities in the country. In their thousands, Nigerians marched and demonstrated their zeal to see a change in the former ways with which the police handled issues of importance to the nation.



## Methodology

---

This study utilised the library research method to dissect the impact of digital media in 21st century activism. Nigeria recently saw one of such digital-media assisted activism in the form of EndSARS protest. Therefore, library documents which include articles in journals, book chapters and other online materials formed bulk of the sources of data retrieved and utilised for this paper.

## Discussion

---

### ***Social media activism***

Generally, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are useful to different social activities in several ways and activism is not left out. Protest movements and activists can take advantage of ICTs to organise, recruit and network, mobilise and coordinate action, carry out independent dissemination of frames related to the movement, and discuss, debate, deliberate and decide (Cammaerts, 2015). From the foregoing, it is clear that ICTs can aid social movement mobilisation and overall management because organisers are at liberty of taking advantage of the available technologies at every point in time.

Social media have transformed into “integral tools for those wishing to provoke social change” (Dumitrica & Felt, 2020, p. 1822). It is instructive to note that digital media gave birth to what is now known as “social media activism”. According to Reid & Sehl (2020) social media activism is a form of advocacy or protest towards a specific cause that utilises social media platforms. From organising to promoting the protests or advocacy, social media platforms were adopted and actively deployed or used in the #EndSARS protests that took place in various parts of Nigeria. Again, this aligns with the postulations of the technological determinism theory that technology determines the society we live in. Just as the invention of gun changed how disputes are sorted out (Asemah et al., 2017) so is social media bringing about modifications to the ways protests are organised and managed in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world.

For every protest, there is the need to make attempt to garner public support, because without it, the campaign or movement becomes useless (Egbunike & Olorunnisola, 2015). Further, Egbunike and Olorunnisola observe that mobilisation for movements require media attention, same way negative frames from mainstream media have negative impact on public perceptions of an organisation – a situation with negative impact of a reduction in support base. Before now, social movements’ organisers relied heavily on traditional media forms (Breuer, 2012) to help sell their message through frames with a view to garnering public support and sympathy – sometimes at a heavy financial cost. However, in modern times, social media platforms are changing the narratives, as with little-to-nothing financial input, organisers can sell an idea to the people and subsequently get their support, input and sympathy (Ovide, 2020).



According to Reid and Sehl (2020), social media activism includes activities such as awareness, promotion, and solidarity through the use of available features such as posts, hashtags, and campaigns. For example, #BlackLivesMatter first trended across social media platforms in the United States in 2013 – and the world saw a resurgence in 2020 following viral video of George Floyd's gruesome murder by police officers. As people showed solidarity by sharing and commenting on several hashtags developed during the time, social media activism was on going and receiving acceptance by world people (Olson, 2021). In other words, the spread of word online attracted the support of internet users as people took advantage of virtual platforms.

However, online movement of publicity must be matched with offline action as anything less will amount to “slacktivism” (Reid & Sehl, 2020). Slacktivism is seen as a weak form of activism especially one that is concentrated online such as microblogging (Murthy, 2018). Further, Reid and Sehl observe that merely using hashtags or performing other social media activities may be seen as opportunistic and lazy unless matched with commensurate action – such as street protests or demonstrations. It is such offline protest that emboldens the people who march on the street to effect the desired social change.

In fact, a survey conducted by Pew Research reveals that 69 percent Americans agrees that online platforms are required for a successful social activism (Philips-Alvarez, 2019). Social activism on social media is just as impactful as the offline ones. However, the online campaigns must be matched with offline movement or protest to achieve the desired result, and eventually effect, motivate or occasion the needed change in society. It is pertinent to also note that in modern times, protest organised online, though largely peaceful, most often achieve the desired result within record time (Falola, 2021). Examples are #EndSARS, #BlackLivesMatter among others.

### ***EndSARS and Digital Media Activism in 21st century Nigeria***

No doubt virtual protests are on the rise the world over – and what is baffling to authorities is the rate at which the global village concept is playing out when it comes to organising protest in modern times (McCabe, 2021). This is in consonance with technological determinism theory that technologies have the capacity to shape society and human history. EndSARS took Nigerians and the Nigerian government by surprise and as a result, a lot of mistakes were made by the authorities in handling the uprising (Banka, 2020; Maclean, 2020). Further, Maclean revealed that though government set up panels of enquiry, protesters also claimed that coordinated government actions targeted organisers of the protests.

First, let us examine the issues that led to the protest. Created in 1992 by the regime of then military head of state Ibrahim Babangida to fight violent crimes, such as armed robbery and many more, Special Anti-Robbery Squad of the Nigerian Police Force has been accused to carry out its constitutional responsibilities and even more. According to Obia (2020), SARS modus operandi was unconven-





tional unlike the regular police personnel; operatives of the units were tasked to adopt tougher measures to combat crime in Nigeria – a move that may have occasioned the now confirmed cases of abuse. The police tactical unit has been accused of crimes which borders on abuse – torture, kidnapping, extortion, rape, extra-judicial executions, armed robbery and many more.

Prior to the 2020 mass protest, similar ones had earlier been organised in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively while government, on each occasion, appeared to have reached a decision either to reform the unit or disband it. However, none of the promises was seen to materialise, hence the vigour and strength of the 2020 version of the protest against SARS. Though this was not the first time a protest with same demands has been organised, the recent one happened to be the first time the protest received such wide publicity and support (Dark, 2020). Further, Dark avers that social media played a prominent role in ensuring the world gets to know about the protest. In other words, digital media contributed immensely to promoting EndSARS protest in Nigeria in the area of publicity and consequently garnering wide support from every part of the world. In other words, people were influenced to support the movement through their exposure to technology. This is in line with the technological determinism theory that technology available to humans within a particular point in time determines a lot about human activities (Griffin, 2000).

The 2020 protest began early October, when a video of abuse by officers of the SARS unit surfaced online and went viral. In the video, the officers were seen killing the man and fleeing the scene of the act with the vehicle of the victim. The video quickly went viral on social media platforms especially Twitter and Facebook prompting the creation of the hashtag (#EndSARS). In the course of the protest, a #5for5 demand was added to the movement as those who led the movement made five key demands (Ruppel & Arowobusoye, 2020). As further revealed by Ruppel and Arowobusoye, the five demands include: 1) immediate and unconditional release of protesters arrested in the course of the latest struggle of the movement, 2) justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and compensation for families, 3) setting up of a committee to investigate and prosecute reports of police misconducts, 4) psychological evaluation before redeployment of personnel of the disbanded SARS unit in accordance with the new Police Act, and 5) increment in police salary so they get adequate compensation for their duty of protecting lives and property of Nigerian citizens.

The hashtag #EndSARS on Twitter got shared by high profile Nigerians including celebrities with large fan base or following – while several made financial input to help people stay online (Dark, 2020). Relatedly, Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey joined the train and showed support to the movement that adopted digital media to campaign against police brutality in Nigeria with a tweet calling for donations towards the cause through crypto currency (Kaduna, 2020). Twitter has been identified as the main gateway through which the #EndSARS campaign drew wide



support locally and internationally because with the hashtag receiving support from prominent people in society and even the Twitter CEO, the movement received the desired attention and recognition.

It is noteworthy that elsewhere, it has been argued that the protest was beyond the calls to end police brutality (Agbalajobi, 2020). Further, Agbalajobi describes the EndSARS protest as “the result of pen-up anger” (para. 7), occasioned by series of government policies that are considered dehumanising, and the tough times the young generation of Nigerians are made to go through on a daily basis. Therefore, the youths took advantage of the times coupled with the global village idea to press home their demands in total disregard of several warning and fear-mongering initially sold to them by authorities. Though the protest later turned violent when military personnel allegedly opened fire on peaceful protesters, the aim was not still defeated as the youths in their thousands sent a strong message to the government of their resolve to effect the desired change.

The sub-heads “social media activism” and “EndSARS and digital media activism in 21st century Nigeria” as presented and discussed above both provide evidences for the findings based on research question one (1). The research question sought to determine the meaning of social media activism within the context of #EndSARS protest in Nigeria. The sub-heads provide insights to the meaning of the term “social media activism” and showed how it can be used or applied within the events that unfolded in Africa’s most populous nation.

### ***Ways digital media was used to mobilise, promote and manage #EndSARS***

As earlier observed, several digital or new media platforms were used to either promote or provide coverage to the EndSARS protest that took place across Nigeria in 2020 (Kazeem, 2020) with the prominent amongst these platforms being Facebook and Twitter. Also, as observed earlier, the move to actively use digital media became necessary following a regulatory body’s guidelines released to traditional media organisations in the wake of the protest to ensure undue publicity is not given to the protesters. In other words, protesters were left to seek alternative means to give their movement a global recognition. Since social media has been reported to be useful in promoting civil actions elsewhere, the need to also adopt technologies became the surest way out for members of ENDSARS movement. Interestingly, Twitter was one of the most prominent.

According to Obia (2020), Twitter served three major purposes in the course of the #EndSARS protest, as the platform was used to coordinate the campaign, to give it a global voice, and to berate anyone or group opposed to the campaign in one way or another. Hereunder, functions of Twitter as one of the digital media or mediums used during the protest are discussed:

- Twitter as a tool for coordinating EndSARS protest – According to Obia (2020), participants in the movement through Twitter received information, and daily update on the activities of the campaign. For examples, venues and other information such as the time for takeoff at different locations in Nigeria



was shared daily on Twitter to enable participants converge at specific locations for the movement to be orderly. Kazeem (2020) captures this as the seamless transition between online and offline campaigns. Further, Kazeem states that with just a share of location, crowds grew from just a dozen to hundreds of people participating in the protests that rocked Nigeria.

- Twitter as a tool for amplifying EndSARS protest – Once the local media turn its back on the protest as instructed by the regulatory body, NBC, frontline people in the EndSARS movement turned to digital media. Obia (2020) observes that the aim of using digital media was to give international media organisations adequate information in order to get media space – a feat which was achieved and celebrated by the protesters. Similarly, Obia further notes that Twitter was used to garner the needed support and build conversations and traffic around hashtags among which are #EndSARS, #EndPoliceBrutality, #SARSMustEnd, and #EndSARSToday. Kazeem (2020) avers that with over 28 million tweets, there is no doubt whatsoever, that the protest was largely successful on virtual platforms where it all began.
- Twitter as a tool for virtual attacks on opposers of the movement or individuals and brands who kept mute – Evidences abound that Twitter was also used to call out those who either kept mute, or did not identify with protesters (Obia, 2020). In these categories include high profile individuals such as celebrities, financial institutions such as banks, consortium, MNCs amongst others.

Digital media and technologies also played a major role in the protest as they were used as means to raise funds for the movement. On one hand, links to donation websites or platforms were shared on Twitter, and on the other, same or similar technologies helped in easing the process of donations. According to Kazeem (2020), donation link to help mobilise funds from home and abroad to support people who occupied major places in Nigeria were put up in order to make the crowdfunding process a seamless one. The foregoing also buttresses the postulation of technological determinism with respect to the use of technology and the power technological inventions and innovations wield in our society.

Whereas, Twitter can be referred to as the “main base” for the #EndSARS campaigns, other social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube were also used. For example, several pages promoting the movement on Facebook sprang up in the wake of the protest – a page EndSars on the platforms has over 3,000 members. It was mainly used as alternative platform to keep people informed about activities of the movement. It is pertinent to note here that Twitter remained the main base, with support from other platforms. Again, celebrities and interest groups also contributed in ensuring that the different hashtags trended across platforms – Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.



The discourse above presents answers to research question two (2). The research question sought to ascertain the ways through which digital media were deployed in the organisation and overall management of #EndSARS protest in the face of the snub by the restricted mainstream media in Nigeria. The section presents how social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook gave the protest the needed online presence and prominence across the world just as much as it was used to reach participants in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world.

### ***Lessons learnt from the #EndSARS movement***

One of the most significant lessons learnt from the #EndSARS campaign is that Nigerians across ethnic and religious divides could unite for a common cause. Away from the ethnic colouration usually given to political issues by the elite class, EndSARS protest, against all odds, proved to have unified young Nigerians from all walks of life for a common cause of ending police brutality (see Ayandele, 2021). Until the initial hijacking by hoodlums, and later the armed men invasion of Lekki Toll Gate, protesters were peaceful and resolute with a call for the disbandment of SARS and an end to all forms of police brutality in Nigeria.

Another lesson from the campaign is that the people can always achieve whatever it is they collectively set as objective. Just like the previous protests, the Nigerian Police Force through its Inspector General announced the disbandment or dissolution of the SARS on October 11, 2020 just few days into the nationwide protest (see Obia, 2020). However, it is pertinent to note that the youths who already got used to such press statements did not care but pushed further for a force-wide reforms and serious commitment from government on prosecuting perpetrators of the alleged crimes committed by the units. Though the protest led to the Lekki shootings and subsequent setting up of a panel of enquiry, the main aim which was to end police brutality seem to have been achieved as the disbandment of SARS and subsequent announcement of the formation of SWAT was seen by some as a different dimension. Therefore, digital media can be a force to reckon with in 21st century activism.

Following the wide condemnation that trailed the Lekki toll gate shooting, it has taught the Nigerian government lessons about digital media (Ruppel & Arowobusoye, 2020). With the mobile phone and access to the internet, the young Nigerian can reach a million of people world over in a matter of minutes. The #EndSARS protest was largely organised and led by the youths of Nigeria who were armed with the most sophisticated types of gadget to tell their story to the world their own way, fashion or style (Ajisafe et al., 2021). Regardless of the tactics employed to quell the movement, it has sent a message that technology and indeed social media is a tool for change. This aligns with the position of Spasojevic (2017) who asserts that with the role of social media in the uprising in Iran in 2009 and that of Egypt in 2011, social media has proven to be a tool for social, political and social change.





Another important lesson derivable from the #EndSARS protest of 2020 is that Nigerians are writing a new social contract (Agbalajobi, 2020). Looking back at history, the political elites are known to always take Nigerians for granted because, according to some of them, Nigerians cannot really organise themselves to demand for what is due to them or what is right. However, Agbalajobi observes that this generation of Nigerians have the intention to change public perception or understanding of the outlook or form a relationship between the political elites and the people should take. This time around, it is, indeed, loud and clear in the manner the protests were organised and managed, that is, with respect to the #EndSARS protest.

The protest has taught Nigerians a new lesson about the power of the citizens to develop a culture of ensuring government respect their rights. This is in agreement with the proposition of the technological determinism theory that “technology is viewed as the driving force of culture in a society and it determines its course of history” (Asemah et al., 2017, p 295). In Nigeria, cases of right abuses are ever-increasing – at least, according to several reports (Ibekwe 2019; Mbamalu, Daka & Onochie, 2020; Ojeme, 2021). Sometimes, it even seems as the practice is institutionalised in some parts of the country – as most of government agencies saddled with responsibilities “to promote and protect human rights and dignity failed relatively if not totally” (Ofoegbu, 2014, p. 69). However, through the #EndSARS protest, the youths of Nigeria were able to expressly state the kind of government they want (Ojewale, 2020) and also went further to paint a picture of the Nigeria they want to build for the future generations.

### ***How digital media poses as challenge to activism***

The biggest challenge of digital media to activism in Nigeria is that platforms, post and hashtags give popularity to players in unimaginable proportions (Paul, 2019). The danger here is that government can also rely on same platforms to target the organisers and major or key players of the movement including the social media platforms used. As seen during the recent #EndSARS protest, key actors were identified and singled out for punishment. For example, bank accounts belonging to some members of the movement were frozen (though the courts later ruled in their favour). The Federal Government of Nigeria suspended the micro- blogging site Twitter following the protest with the smokescreen that the platform played roles in undermining the country’s corporate existence (Ajisafe et al., 2021). Though the ban has now been lifted, the message is clear as to how the use of platforms could trigger a fight back by the authorities who may see them as powerful tools in the hands of members of the society.

Authorities seeing the power of digital media can also rely on fictitious charges to press for policies to regulate social media platforms. Communist China has proven (against the belief that the Internet cannot be policed) that indeed, it is possible to censor and even police virtual environment and platforms. This, according to Hari (2014), stems from the increasing distrust on the part of the





government. There is a growing concern that social media or other digital media can so empower the people to start a virtual revolution that will consume the political elites – at least the Nigerian government also expressed such fears (Olowolagba, 2021). In so many ways, it impacts negatively on activism due to the negative publicity that may be freely provided and the seeming power platforms exude.

Consequently, governments who wish to censor free speech can rely on events such as the EndSARS protest to push for censorship or regulation of social media (see Baiyewu, 2020). Further Baiyewu reveals that though a bill to regulate social media was initiated and is currently being considered by the National Assembly of Nigeria, events surrounding the EndSARS protest provide good grounds that justify the position and grounds of the sponsors of the bill. The Nigerian minister of Information – Lai Mohammed was quoted to have said that the Nigerian government needs technology and requisite resources to police the social media (Osae-Brown, 2020). Parliamentarians debated the issue of death penalty on anyone convicted of deliberately spreading falsehood on social media. Though Nigeria is a religious and ethno-sensitive nation, political leaders can hide behind such laws to punish opposing or dissenting voices (Santas & Inobemhe, 2021).

Digital media such as social media can also create a false sense of activism, and is capable of diminishing efforts put into a cause (Medina, 2020). People can rely on digital activism and develop a sense that online protest could be equivalent to offline ones – a scenario that can easily develop into a false sense of activism. In other words, digital activism could lead to slacktivism and it is not good for social movements – as it comes with negative effects of collective efforts of social movements because certain elements may avoid physical activities without even knowing it. A protest can only be successful when it stems from a collective effort of all stakeholders – whether it requires physical assemblage or not. In other words, a protest whether physical or online may achieve the set goals and objectives when it is backed by the people. In most cases, the foregoing is the case especially when backed by a vocal few or majority of the people in any society.

There is also a personal cost to digital activism (Dumitrica & Felt, 2020). With respect to the foregoing, Dumitrica and Felt opine that digital activism is capable of taking a toll on personal and professional life of an individual, and though they could pull through the process of digital activism – sometimes through the help of participants, the long-term effect could be “burnout” which could hamper on future involvement (p.1830). In the study carried out by Dumitrica and Felt, certain areas such as personal relationship, emotional outburst due to trolls and online bullies were identified by participants as some of the ways digital activism affected their lives. The foregoing discourse contains findings to research question three (3) which sought to find out ways social media pose as challenge activism within the context of #EndSARS movement in Nigeria. It is noteworthy that the challenges as discussed above are not exhaustive.



## Conclusion

---

The paper concludes that social media activism refers to the use of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and the likes to successfully launch and prosecute social change agenda. Within the context of the #EndSARS in Nigeria, the study also concludes that the digital media played significant roles in the organisation and management of the protest as the hashtag got the requisite global attention due to its successful launch and use across virtual platforms by Nigerians who took part in the entire process – from start to finish.

From the above discussion, the paper concludes that digital media especially social forms have so great an impact on 21st century activism globally, and Nigeria is not left out. From the Arab Spring that rocked the Arab world from 2010 through 2012 to #BlackLivesMatter movement in America, and then to #OccupyNigeria and #EndSARS in Nigeria, digital media have had tremendous impact on the way activism is conducted in modern times. Most significantly, social media platforms were used for varied purposes during the #EndSARS protest as they proved useful in fund-raising, garnering support and amplifications of the most popular social media-organised and sustained social movement in Nigeria in recent times. This was even more significant owing to the near total snub the protest initially got from the mainstream media in the country.

However, it is noteworthy that though digital media played a major role in the aforementioned social movements, certain other pre-existing factors also contributed. In the case of Nigeria, the youths saw an opportunity to send a clear and strong message to the ruling class of their resoluteness in taking back the nation from the brinks of collapse due to poverty, unemployment, hunger, growing inflation, and other economic issues. Another area that required attention – and from which this can better be viewed – is that of the perspective of the polarisation and division of the Nigerian populace along ethnic and religious lines mainly by the political elites. Therefore, an opportunity came for the youths of Nigeria to write their names in gold as a generation that did not fold its arms and watch but actively played a part (through the instrumentation of social media) in saving the nation from the brink.

## Recommendations

---

On the basis of findings of this study, the following recommendations may be useful:

1. Nigerians must understand the power of social media platforms at organising social change movements and work towards ensuring that they are put to proper use to actualise future ones. Therefore, citizens must learn how to make proper use of platforms thereby shunning cyber-stalking and bullying (which forms part of grounds upon which proponents of social media regulations base their arguments). Such can be achieved through thought-



provoking self-examination and excersing a degree of restraint even in the face of provocation across platforms.

2. The government must recognise the power of a united people and the impact of technology in our world in modern times and therefore work in sync to promote communication with the people using platforms – rather making moves to overregulate them. When government embark on constant communication with the people, this will ensure that a cordial relationship is built upon mutual understanding and respect – and therefore minimise rancour.
3. Having realised the strength of social media platforms within the context of social media activism, government of Nigeria must now seek ways to address pre-existing social factors such as poverty, unemployment, hunger and other social ills that motivate anti-government social movements in the country – whether offline or online. This can be done through pro-people policies aimed at addressing root causes of the hydra-headed challenges bedevelling the country.

## References | Список литературы

---

- Agbalajobi, D. (2022, October 20). Why #EndSARS protests are different, and what lessons they hold for Nigeria. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/amp/why-endsars-protests-are-different-and-what-lessons-they-hold-for-nigeria-148320>
- Ajisafe, D., Ojo, T. A., & Monyani, M. (2021, June 28). The impacts of social media on the #EndSARS youth protests in Nigeria. *Proceedings of the ICTeSSH 2021 Conference*. Proceedings of the ICTeSSH 2021 conference, Virtual conference. <https://doi.org/10.21428/7a45813f.638ef816>
- Akeredolu, F. (2020). *Nigerian protesters are making history, again*. Stears Business. <https://www.stears.co/article/nigerian-protesters-are-making-history-again/>
- Alozie, B. (2020, August 7). How Igbo women activists influenced British authorities during the colonial rule of Nigeria. *Quartz*. <https://qz.com/africa/1889847/how-nigerias-igbo-women-influenced-british-colonial-rule/>
- Ani, I. (2020, November 2). Nigeria's #EndSARS Movement and Media Suppression. *Columbia Journalism Review*. <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/nigeria-endsars-press-freedom.php>
- Asemah, E. S., Nwammuo, A. N., & Nkwam-Uwaoma, A. O. A. (2017). *Theories and models of communication*. Jos University Press.
- Ayandele, D. O. (Jumo). (2021, February 9). Lessons from the #EndSARS Movement in Nigeria. *ACLEDD*. <https://acleddata.com/2021/02/09/lessons-from-the-endsars-movement-in-nigeria/>
- Baiyewu, L. (2020, October 27). #EndSARS: We must regulate social media before it destroys us –FG. *Punch Newspapers*. <https://punchng.com/endsars-we-must-regulate-social-media-before-it-destroys-us-fg/>



- Banka, N. (2020, November 20). Explained: Why have the #EndSARS protests rocked Nigeria? *The Indian Express*. <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/nigeria-protest-corruption-government-sars-7058604/>
- Breuer, A. (2012). The Role of Social Media in Mobilizing Political Protest: Evidence from the Tunisian Revolution. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2179030>
- Cammaerts, B. (2015). Social media and activism. In R. Mansell & P. Hwa (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of digital communication and society* (pp. 1027–1034). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Dark, S. (2020, October 25). #EndSARS: How Nigerians harness social media against police abuse. *Aljazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/10/25/endsars-how-nigerians-use-social-media-against-police-brutality>
- Digital systems. (n.d.). Digital Technology Hub. <https://www.digitaltechnologieshub.edu.au/teachers/topics/digital-systems>
- Drew, C. (2021, September 16). *Technological Determinism Theory (5 Examples, Pros & Cons)*. Helpful Professor. <https://helpfulprofessor.com/technological-determinism-theory/>
- Dumitrica, D., & Felt, M. (2020). Mediated grassroots collective action: Negotiating barriers of digital activism. *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(13), 1821–1837. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2019.1618891>
- Edwards, F., Howard, P. N., & Joyce, M. (2013). *Digital Activism and Non-Violent Conflict* (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 2595115). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2595115>
- Egbe, A. (n.d.). *Activism creates distinction*. <https://www.laga-enforcement.org/media/presentations/power%20point%20presentation%20-%20Activism%201.pdf>
- Egbunike, N., & Olorunnisola, A. (2015). Social media and the #Occupy Nigeria Protests: Igniting or damping a Harmattan storm? *Journal of African Media Studies*, 7(2), 141–164. [https://doi.org/10.1386/jams.7.2.141\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/jams.7.2.141_1)
- Ekoh, P. C., & George, E. O. (2021). The Role of Digital Technology in the EndSars Protest in Nigeria During COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 6(2), 161–162. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-021-00161-5>
- Facsar, F. (2020). Nigeria's #EndSARS protests: What you need to know – DW – 10/22/2020. *Dw.Com*. <https://www.dw.com/en/what-you-need-to-know-about-nigerias-endsars-protests/a-55362389>
- Falola, T. (2021). *Understanding Modern Nigeria: Ethnicity, Democracy, and Development* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108936866>
- George, A. (2020, October 25). The roots of the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. *Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/10/25/roots-endsars-protests-nigeria/>
- Gilbert, E. (2021, April 6). The Role of Social Media in Protests: Mobilising or Polarising? 89 Initiative | The First European Think-Do Tank. <https://89initiative.com/the-role-of-social-media-in-protests-mobilising-or-polarising/>
- Goldberg, D. (2019, July 29). What Is Digital Media and How Can It Help My Career? *Springboard Blog*. <https://www.springboard.com/blog/design/digital-media/>
- Goodman, P. (2021). 20 Examples of Digital Technology. *TurboFuture*. <https://turbofuture.com/misc/Examples-of-Digital-Technology>



- Granillo, G. (2020). *The Role of Social Media in Social Movements*. Portland Monthly. <https://www.pdxmonthly.com/news-and-city-life/2020/06/the-role-of-social-media-in-social-movements>
- Griffin, E. (2000). *A first look at communication theory* (4th ed., pp. xx, 526). McGraw-Hill.
- Hari, S. I. (2014). The Evolution of Social Protest in Nigeria: The Role of Social Media in the “# OccupyNigeria” Protest. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 3(9), 33–39.
- Ibekwe, N. (2019, March 22). How widespread impunity is encouraging right abuses in Nigeria – U.S. report. *Premium Times Nigeria*. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/321535-how-widespread-impunity-is-encouraging-right-abuses-in-nigeria-u-s-report.html>
- Igyuve, A., Inobemhe, K., Ugber, F., & Udeh, N. T. (2020). A discourse on the use of new media technologies in Nigerian television newsrooms. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management Review*, 3(6), 247–264.
- Kaduna, G. (2020a, October 15). #EndSARS: Again, hoodlums attack protesters in Lagos. *Premium Times Nigeria*. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-west/420933-endsars-again-hoodlums-attack-protesters-in-lagos.html>
- Kaduna, G. (2020, October 15). Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey joins #EndSARS campaign, calls for Bitcoin donations. *Premium Times Nigeria*. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/420909-twitter-ceo-jack-dorsey-joins-endsars-campaign-calls-for-bitcoin-donations.html>
- Kazeem, Y. (2020, October 13). How a youth-led digital movement is driving Nigeria's largest protests in a decade. *Quartz*. <https://qz.com/africa/1916319/how-nigerians-use-social-media-to-organize-endsars-protests/>
- Maclean, R. (2020, November 13). Nigeria Goes on Offensive Against Youth Protesting Police Brutality. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/world/africa/Nigeria-EndSARS-protests.html>
- Madison, S. (2017, January 9). How Social Media Has Changed the Way Political Movements Organize. *GovTech*. <https://www.govtech.com/gov-experience/How-Social-Media-Has-Changed-the-Way-Political-Movements-Organize.html>
- Marnicio, A. (2014). From progressive to repressive: The role of social media in the Syrian conflict. In *Trajectories of change: Challenge and transformation in the wake of the Arab spring* (pp. 43–47). <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/trajectories-change-challenge-and-transformation-wake-arab-spring>
- Mbamalu, M., Daka, T., & Onochie, B. C. (2020, March 19). U.S. report indicts Nigeria for rights abuse, killings. *The Guardian Nigeria News – Nigeria and World News*. <https://guardian.ng/news/u-s-report-indicts-nigeria-for-rights-abuse-killings/>
- McCabe, R. (2021). *Global Political Protests and the Future of Democracy*. Center for Strategic & International Studies. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/global-political-protests-and-future-democracy>
- Medina, G. (2020, August 3). *The latest social media challenge is promoting lazy activism*. *The Cougar*. <http://thedailycougar.com/2020/08/03/social-media-challenges-false-activism/>
- Murthy, D. (2018). Introduction to Social Media, Activism, and Organizations. *Social Media + Society*, 4(1), 205630511775071. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305117750716>





- Nwoziri, H. (2020). *The Impact of Digital Technology on the 21st Century Youth*. – Aspilos Foundation. <https://aspilosfoundation.org.ng/2020/09/22/the-impact-of-digital-technology-on-the-21st-century-youth/>
- Obaid, H. (2020, April 14). The Impact of Social Media on Social movements and public opinion formation. Visto. <https://vistointernational.org/publications/the-impact-of-social-media-on-social-movements-and-public-opinion-formation/>
- Obia. (2020, November 11). #EndSARS, a Unique Twittersphere and Social Media Regulation in Nigeria. Media@LSE. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/medialse/2020/11/11/endsars-a-unique-twittersphere-and-social-media-regulation-in-nigeria/>
- Odoh, I. (2020, October 18). #ENDSARS protests may bring down APC in 2023, Experts warn. Business Day. <https://businessday.ng/amp/politics/article/endsars-protests-may-bring-down-apc-in-2023-experts-warn/>
- Ofoegbu, J. (2014). The place of human rights in Nigeria's democracy. OGIRISI: A New Journal of African Studies, 10(1), 60. <https://doi.org/10.4314/og.v10i1.4>
- Ojedokun, U. A., Ogunleye, Y. O., & Aderinto, A. A. (2021). Mass mobilization for police accountability: The case of Nigeria's #EndSARS protest. Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice, 15(3), 1894–1903. <https://doi.org/10.1093/police/paab001>
- Ojeme, V. (2021, April 1). Nigeria records significant human rights abuses in 2020–US 2020 Report. Vanguard News. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/04/nigeria-records-significant-human-rights-abuses-in-2020-us-2020-report/>
- Ojewale, O. (2020, October 29). Youth protests for police reform in Nigeria: What lies ahead for #EndSARS. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/10/29/youth-protests-for-police-reform-in-nigeria-what-lies-ahead-for-endsars/>
- Okunola, A. (2020, October 1). 10 Activists in Nigerian History Who Represent the Resilience of Its People. Global Citizen. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/nigeria-independence-activists-history-resilience/>
- Olaoluwa, A. (2020, December 1). End Sars protests: The Nigerian women leading the fight for change. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-55104025>
- Olowolagba, F. (2021, June 10). EndSARS protest was not to overthrow govt—Nigerians counter Buhari. Daily Post Nigeria. <https://dailypost.ng/2021/06/10/endsars-protest-was-not-to-overthrow-govt-nigerians-counter-buhari/>
- Olson, R. (2021). Roles of Social Media in the Black Lives Matter Movement During COVID-19. Honors Projects, 838. <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/honorsprojects/838/>
- Olukoya, S. (2021, April 28). Protesters attacked in Nigerian demos against police abuse. AP NEWS. <https://apnews.com/article/police-police-brutality-africa-lagos-nigeria-64a909a53c4916bff606becc53b93601>
- Osae-Brown, A. (2020, November 11). Nigeria Mulls Social Media Rules as #EndSARS Protests Go Online. Bloomberg.Com. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-11/nigeria-mulls-social-media-rules-as-endsars-protests-go-online>
- Ovide, S. (2020, June 18). How Social Media Has Changed Civil Rights Protests. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/technology/social-media-protests.html>



- Paul, E. (2019, November 8). *From hashtags to the reality: 5 impactful social movements in Nigeria that started on Twitter*. Techpoint Africa. <https://techpoint.africa/2019/11/08/social-movements-twitter-nigeria/>
- Philips-Alvarez, L. (2019, October 1). *10 Facts About Social Activism*. The Borgen Project. <https://borgenproject.org/10-facts-about-social-activism/>
- Police fire tear gas in Nigeria 'Democracy Day' protests. (2021). Aljazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/6/12/police-fire-tear-gas-to-break-up-nigeria-protests>
- Prilleltensky, I. (2020). *The Importance of Activism during a Crisis* | Office of Institutional Culture | University of Miami. University of Miami. <https://culture.miami.edu/blog/importance-of-activism/index.html>
- Reid, A. (2020, July 7). *Genuine Social Media Activism: A Guide for Going Beyond the Hashtag*. VII Digital. <https://www.viidigital.com/genuine-social-media-activism-a-guide-for-going-beyond-the-hashtag-2/>
- Ruppel, S., & Arowobusoye, O. (2020, October 27). *#EndSars: How Social Media Challenges Governance - the Case of Nigeria*. PRIF BLOG. <https://blog.prif.org/2020/10/27/endsars-how-social-media-challenges-governance-the-case-of-nigeria/>
- Santas, T., & Inobemhe, K. (2021). *Social Media Regulation in a Democratic Nigeria: Challenges and Implication*. *Media & Communication Currents*, 5(1), 71–88.
- Simon, D., Grimes, M., & Roch, S. (2018). *Digital media and communications*. In D. Simon (Ed.), *Communication for Business Professionals* (pp. 1305–1332). eCampusOntario.
- Soladoye, A. A., & Ojo, A. O. (2020). *Impact of social media on police brutality awareness in Nigeria*. *International Journal for Management and Modern Education*, 1(1), 14–27.
- Spasojevic, L. (2017). *Social Media as a Tool for Political Change: The Uprising in Iran (2009) and Egypt (2011)* [Master's thesis, Harvard Extension School]. <https://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/33826164>
- Ugobude, F. (2020, October 21). *How Technology Is Playing a Crucial Role in the #EndSARS Protests*. OkayAfrica. <https://www.okay africa.com/protest-in-nigeria-end-sars-technology/>
- Wallis, J., & Given, L. M. (2016). *#digitalactivism: New media and political protest*. *First Monday*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v21i2.5879>
- Watson, R. O. (2005). *Thirteen types of activism*. Dictator Watch. <https://www.dictatorwatch.org/A101/dwguide/thirteentypes.html>
- What Is Digital Media? All You Need to Know About New Media. (2020, March 4). Maryville Online. <https://online.maryville.edu/blog/what-is-digital-media/>