

Social Media and Marital Instability as Basis for Domestic Violence in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

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The social media brought crises like divorce and violence into the family unit. Hence, this paper assessed social media and marital instability as an amalgamation for domestic violence in Ota Ogun State, Nigeria. The study anchors on betrayal theory and modernisation theory. The study was cross-sectional survey and descriptive in nature hence, its method of data collection and analysis was both quantitative and qualitative. The primary data was obtained through administration of 150 questionnaires to the residents of Ota through convenience and purposive sampling methods. Content analysis of textbooks, journals and online resources were the sources of secondary data. Out of the 150 questionnaires taken to field only 137 were returned, consequently the response rate was 91.33%. Findings showed that 61% of the respondents were male, 39% were female, 95 of the respondents had internet-enabled android phones and 5% of the respondents did not have android phones. The results of the hypothesis tested showed that the Spearman Regression analysis has a value of 0.94 which was greater than P value of 0.05 at 5% level of significance, hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This study recommends adequate orientation on the use of social media and subsistence counselling among couples. This study will be valuable to the community, families and researchers in the field of sociology of family and crime.

Keywords: Social media, marital instability, domestic violence, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria

Introduction

The social media has been influenced by the 1840s introduction of the telegraph in the US, which connected the country, ARPANET which was introduced in 1967; and in the late 1970s developed an effective cultural exchange of non-government/business ideas and communication. In the year 1982 a handbook on computing at MIT's AI Lab was launched (Sites, 2014). The PLATO system launched in 1960, which was developed at the University of Illinois and subsequently commercially marketed by Control Data Corporation, offered early forms of social media with 1973-era innovations such as Notes, PLATO's message-forum application; and TERM-talk, its instant-messaging feature. The application to technology has improved communication, interactions and social networking in the world. However, this feat has some demerits in every aspect of human development that it has impacted.

There are various aspects of social media that people all over the world are operating, in order to establish diverse relationships all over the world (Kawaljeet, Kapour, Kuttimoni and Scidhar, 2018). The history of social media could be traced to the penetration of a global system for a Mobile communication in 1960s. In Nigeria, the wide adoption of technology in the early 80s promoted the wide usage of the Global System for Mobile Communication in every aspect of human endeavour, the application of social media like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApps, To-Go and other related applications. These technologies have greatly increased communication and interaction across the globe. One of the advantages of this innovation is reduction in the cost of communication across continents, which enhances social communication and interactions; and creations of business and investment opportunities. However, at the family and other social institutions,

these applications have created a lot of crises like marital conflicts, loss of trust, violence and ultimately, putting marital bonds asunder. There are instances where two individuals establish mere friendship through social media and eventually get engrossed in the relationship at the expense of their conjugal relationship. In the long run, this results in diminishing returns in family love affairs. Most families in Nigeria have experienced unprecedented conflicts induced by social media: there are reports of verbal assaults where couples exchange hot arguments on account of postage of pictures and friendship on the social media. Stabbing, divorce and even murder are rampant among couples who not manage the situation. These problems created by social media have great

negative influence on the larger society because the family unit is among the veritable agencies of socialisation. Children who are more socialised into these conflict scenarios are bound to become dangerous adults and this is inimical to future society. Hence, this paper assessed social media and marital instability: amalgamation for domestic violence in Nigeria:- an evaluation of Ota in Ogun state, Nigeria. The study was guided by the major research question: what is the place of social media on family instability in Nigeria? The study specific objectives are: (i) the roles of social media in family conflict, (ii) the effects of conflict created by social media and (iii) the coping strategies.

Table 1: Statistics of Social Media Users in Nigeria (July 2019 to July, 2020)

S/N	Social Media	Number of Users	Position
i)	Facebook	64.66	1 st
ii)	Twitter	16.62	2 nd
iii)	Pinterest	13.	3 rd
iv)	YouTube	2.9	4 th
v)	<i>Instagram</i>	2.14	5 th
vi)	<i>LinkedIn</i>	0.36	6 th
	Total	100	

Source: Adopted from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/> on 16 January 2017 modified by the author

As shown in Table 1, majority of Nigerians use Facebook; they have friends on Facebook, thus the married ones are likely to be tempted into adultery. If any one of the partners get to know about the other's hidden relationship, it might result in domestic violence. The end results of this are unsuitable and dangerous to entire society. As the number of users of social media increases, threats associated with the technology like domestic violence increases. Twitter has the second largest number of users; this is less violence-prone than Facebook.

Methodology

The study was cross-sectional survey and descriptive in nature, applying both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The study area was

Ota, located in Ado-Odo Local Government Area in Ogun West Senatorial District. It shares boundary with Lagos and Agbara and it is a highly populated area. The indigenes are referred to as the Awori people. It is quite rapidly urbanised and most of the residents are highly educated. They possess and use internet-enabled phones. The secondary data was obtained through content analysis of text-books, journals and online resources. Primary data was got through administration of 150 questionnaires on the resident of Ota, in Ogun State, Nigeria, through purposive and convenience sampling methods. 138 questionnaire, 330 questionnaire were returned from the field, consequently. The response rate was 69%. This research design was chosen to get more information for the comparing of both dependent and independent variables. The inclusion criterions are

the residents of Ota and possession and frequent utilisation of internet enabled devices. The hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between social media and family stability was tested with the analysis of Variances. The study was conducted in the vicinity of tertiary institutions, like Covenant University and the Bells University. The academic staff who are highly educated form the sizable number of the respondents. They are actively involved in research processes and demonstrate understanding and commitment to accept and respond to questionnaire.

Research hypothesis

Null hypothesis

H₀: [There is no significant relationship between social media and domestic violence].

Alternative hypothesis

H₁: [There is a significant relationship between social media and domestic violence].

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2: Gender distribution of respondents

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	98	71.0
2	Female	40	29.0
	Total	138	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

From the table 2, most of the respondents that participated in the study were male 98(71.0%).

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

S/N	Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	20—27 years	17	12.3
2	28---35 years	28	20.3
3	36---42years	34	24.6
4	43—50years	41	29.7
5	51---58years	10	7.2
6	59 years and above	8	5.8
	Total	138	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018

From table 3, most of the respondents that participated in the survey were between the ages of 43—50 years, 41(29.7%). This showed that the

participants of this study were in the active ages of persons who embrace social media.

Table 4: Showing educational qualification distribution of the respondents

S/N	Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	No Education	12	8.7
2	Primary School	17	12.3
3	SSCE	22	15.9
4	N.C.E/DIPLOMA	29	21.0
5	B.Sc/HND	37	26.8
6	Postgraduate	21	15.2
	Total	138	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018

From Table 4, majority of the respondents 37(26.8%) were B.Sc/HND holders; majority of the respondents were highly educated.

Table 5: The distribution of respondents based on the hours spent on social media in a day

S/N	Hours on social media	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	> 1hr	23	16.7
2	1-3hrs	50	36.2
3	4-6hrs	32	23.2
4	7-8hrs	21	15.2
5	9-10hrs	12	8.7
	Total	138	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

From the Table 5, most of the respondents 50(36.2%) spends 1-3hrs on social media daily.

Table 6: Social media is one of the causes of domestic violence

S/N	Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Agree	24	17.4
2	Slightly agree	11	8.0
3	Strongly agree	64	46.4
4	Disagree	13	9.4
5	Slightly disagree	11	8.0
6	Strongly disagree	9	6.5
7	Neutral	6	4.3
	Total	138	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

From Table 6, most of the respondents 64(46.4%) strongly agreed that social media leads to domestic violence.

Table 7: Hypothesis Testing

Ho: [There is no significant relationship between social media and domestic violence]

Table 7: Showing the relationship between Social media and domestic violence

Predictor	B	R	R-SQUARE	F	P
Time spent on social media	0.933	0.90	0.81	131.6	< 0.05

Dependent Variable: Instigation of domestic violence

Table 7 indicates that the time spent on social media significantly determines domestic violence (R= 0.90, R²= 0.81, F= 13.6 and P<0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis early stated that there was no relationship between social media and domestic violence was thereby rejected, there is a strong relationship between time spent on social media and domestic violence.

Discussions

The findings from this study show that there is a significant relationship between time spent on social media and domestic violence. It was observed in the study that time spent on social media significantly results in domestic violence, and it does affect the home. Despite numerous benefits of social media, there are some hindrances social media has put in the way of family stability. It has injected mistrust in some families, according to Joseph and Lilach (2015), and corroborated by Noah (2000). The rate at which couples engage in social media activities and pronounced presence of some couples in some forms of social media has resulted in loss of confidence among the couples. Social media is a powerful means of global communication that stimulates interaction in every social institution including the family (Katherine, 2012; Romanov, et al., 2017). When this problem is not given timely attention, it escalates into violence which will ultimately consume the family in its entirety. The level of infidelity created by social media is quite high. From the findings, it was discovered that 64.6% of social media users are Facebook subscribers. This social media likewise is not a respecters of marital status and 71% of the respondents were male, hence it was observed that males are actively involved in the use of social media, and engage in extra marital relations. The

age of those that participates in social media fall between 36 to 42 years. This shows youths' increased interests in Android phones and the possibility of persons in this age range to join Facebook. The respondents are educated persons because the study was conducted around Covenant and the Bells Universities; and majority of the respondents are academic and non-academic staff of these higher institutions whose staff are required to have high academic qualifications. As revealed from the study, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and To-Go are threatening marital stability across the globe. In the same vein, 64% of the respondents strongly agree that social media causes domestic violence and that the result is destructive to families.

Conclusion and recommendations

Findings from the tested hypothesis show that there is a significant relationship between social media and domestic violence; the secondary data got from different sources also consolidate these results. Meanwhile, we cannot disregard the fact that social media has brought some advantages to the family interactions in terms of reconnecting distant family members and in other areas of human endeavours like business, politics and economic management. This paper recommends consistent counselling among family members and minimal use of the social media in order to alleviate jealousy and other undesirable consequences. The study will be useful to individuals as members of families, organisations in charge of family affairs, non-government establishments and researchers in the field of social and behavioural sciences.

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