

# PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON CHILD- RIGHT ADVOCACY IN ONDO STATE

**OWOEYE DAVID KOLAWOLE**

**Department of Mass Communication,  
Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria.  
+2348061369083, 08084032049;  
Kolawoledavidowoeye@gmail.com**

## ARTICLE INFO

**Article No.:** 03

**Accepted Date:** 23/04/2025

**Published Date:** 13/05/2025

**Type:** Research

## ABSTRACT

This study investigated perceived influence of social media use on child-rights advocacy in Ondo State. The study was guided by five objectives. Anchored on Agenda-setting Media theory and Social Marketing theory, the study was conducted with survey method with a population of 1,440 and a sample of 360. Findings of the study revealed that respondents are well aware of the child-rights advocacy in the various social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp which are more frequently, used than traditional channels of communication such as radio, television, newspaper etc. The social media give opportunities to its users to participate in discussion. The challenges of social media on child-rights advocacy are cost of smartphones, data purchase, maintenance, frequent power outage, internet service failure and the fact that some website owners or bloggers do not show interest in child-rights advocacy. Respondents opined that child-rights advocates should not limit their advocacy to only social media. They want import duties on smartphones and their accessories reduced and that federal government should address the problems of power failure so that the social media users can re-power their devices. The study therefore recommended that children at all levels should be more enlightened on the issues of child-rights to awaken them to their rights. Parents or guardians should be more enlightened on child-rights laws through other channels of communication.

**Keywords:** Perceived, Influence, Social Media, Use Child-Right, Advocacy, Ondo State

## Introduction

One major theme that attracts the attention of social commentators is the influence of social media on every facet of life. As products of information and communication technologies, social media will long be utilized for development communication despite the fact that they are often used negatively in society. The emergence of social media platforms such as blogs, wikis, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and TikToks has marked a significant change in how people communicate and interact with their surroundings. A growing number of individuals are using these platforms to create online personas and connect with others by sharing their interests and dislikes. Consequently, social media have evolved to become not only a main staple in our daily technological diet but a valuable source of supply and demand of information and knowledge. This shows that social media can tremendously transform life in all its manifestations (Olayemi, 2022).

The rights of children have garnered significant international interest in recent times. As a result, numerous organizations have undertaken initiatives to advance these rights in various countries. Bhandari (2005), advocates for significant media mobilisation in advancing the human rights agenda, particularly in promoting the rights of children. Despite these efforts, the approaches employed to promote these rights are not proving to be entirely effective. The researcher felt the need to focus on use of social media for the advocacy since most educated individual's use of the new media for many hours on daily basis. This study is an attempt to investigate possibility and challenges of using social media to advocate child rights as much as possible.

Social media can serve as highly effective instruments for advocating for the rights of children. This is due to the fact that social media platforms come in various forms, which can be employed to persuade individuals from diverse backgrounds and raise their consciousness about a range of issues, along with potential solutions. For example, TikTok or Facebook series show that problems such as drug addiction and domestic problems can be directed at the advocated class to obtain their views on how the problems can be dealt with headlong (Social Bakers, 2011).

Utilising social media to advocate for children's rights can be highly influential given the global interconnectedness facilitated by current technology such as satellites, the internet, and mobile phones. Utilising social media provides us with the chance to highlight the challenges that children encounter in their communities and advocate for their rights, both domestically and globally (Bhandari, 2003).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Child-rights violations are widespread in Ondo State, with cases often reported to traditional rulers, police authorities, and occasionally resolved in customary or magistrate courts, some resulting in convictions. In Akure, a prevailing cultural belief encourages harsh treatment of children, under the assumption that it builds intelligence and resilience, contributing to the frequency of violations. These acts of abuse—ranging from over-flogging and starvation to body mutilation and even death—are frequently reported in traditional media, highlighting the urgent need for more effective advocacy channels. Although conventional media such as radio, television, and newspapers frequently cover child abuse issues and promote awareness, there is limited research on how social media is used for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State. Library visits revealed a scarcity of scholarly work focusing specifically on this aspect, with most existing studies addressing broader topics like domestic violence against women and children in traditional media. This study, therefore, seeks to fill that gap by exploring the role of social media in advocating for child rights in the state.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions stated below guided the study:

- i. To what extent are individuals in Ondo State aware of child-rights advocacy through social media platform?
- ii. What are the opportunities in utilizing social media for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State?
- iii. What are the impacts of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State?
- iv. What are the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State?
- v. How can the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State be addressed?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following research objectives:

- i. To ascertain the extent to which individuals in Ondo State are aware of child-rights advocacy through social media platforms.

- ii. To find out the opportunities in utilizing social media for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State.
- iii. To examine the impacts of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State
- iv. To identify the challenges of social media usage for child-right advocacy in Ondo State.
- v. To establish how the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State can be addressed.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Child and Its Nature**

According to Hornby (2015), a child is defined as "a young human who is not yet an adult." The Child Rights Act 2003 of Nigeria, as cited by UNICEF (2007), defines a child as anyone below the age of eighteen. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended, also includes stepchildren, lawfully adopted children, children born out of wedlock, and any child for whom an individual acts as a parent as part of its definition of a child. Therefore, a child is someone who is not yet capable of meeting their own needs and requirements. According to the Ondo State Child Rights Law (2007) Child Rights Laws are the rights, privileges and responsibilities of children vis-à-vis their protection and development into a single legislation. It puts a child as a person under the age of eighteen (18) years. In biological science, the term "child" is typically used to describe an individual from birth until puberty or throughout the developmental period of infancy and puberty. From a legal standpoint, the term "child" may refer to anyone under the age of majority or a specific age limit.

#### **Rights and Human Rights**

Although children are valued in all human societies and universally regarded as the symbol of procreation, there is no consensus on exactly what constitutes child rights. It is necessary to explain the term "right" and "human rights" before defining "child rights". The reason for this is to avoid misconstruing the fact that a child is immature "not yet an adult" (Hornby, 2015) as he or she is below the age of eighteen. This could be interpreted to mean that a child has no rights, particularly given a situation in which a child and his or her belongings are classified among the possessions of an adult, perhaps implying that such placement of children under the authority of adults deprives them of all their rights or makes their rights an appendage of the rights of their parents.

#### **Child Rights**

Because human rights are the inalienable rights of all human beings, UNICEF and other child-friendly agencies emphasize that "children and young people have all the rights of adults (UNICEF and Federal Ministry of Information, Nigeria).

However, because in many nations (including Nigeria), children are obligatorily placed under their parents, guardians or other adults/mature persons, child rights become more or less a sensitive issue or matter of special concern. Child rights could simply be defined as the inalienable or fundamental rights which every child is entitled to fully enjoy as a human being. Also, child rights are the rights that each child is permitted morally, legally and officially to have his/her capacity as a human being.

#### **Rights of Nigerian Children**

The two major legal instruments that provide the framework for child rights and protection of those rights in Nigeria are the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended which specifies the age of a child and places all

children under the tutelage of their parents/guardians, and the 2003 Child Rights Act (CRA) which prescribes the right and responsibilities of the child in the Nigerian context. In order to protect and the defend rights of children, the Nigeria's Child Rights Act was formulated and reviewed below.

**Nigeria's Child Rights Act (CRA):** This Act was derived extensively from the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – an international instrument which was put in place in 1989, and which Nigeria is a signatory to. UNICEF (2007) points out that the Child Rights Acts of Nigeria is a law “which incorporates all the rights and responsibilities of children, and which consolidates all laws relating to children into one single legislation, as well as specifying the duties and obligations of government, parents and other authorities, and bodies”. As a follow-up to the above, provisions for child rights are included in the nation's Constitution.

### **Importance and Role of Social Media in Child Right Advocacy**

Social media plays a crucial role in child rights advocacy by promoting awareness, education, and engagement. According to the International Federation of Journalists (2003), media platforms—social media included—should create content that educates children about their rights, allow children's participation in rights-related discussions, and serve as tools for public mobilization and clarification on policies concerning child welfare. These platforms are also essential for raising consciousness, enabling debate, and providing visibility for child rights issues, both among children and the wider public.

In practical terms, social media platforms support advocacy by enabling users to post relevant content, promote child rights-related issues, and organize awareness events. Platforms like Facebook allow users to create events and engage their network, while others provide avenues for direct advocacy through interactions with policymakers. Sharing photos, videos, and commentaries on child rights helps spread information quickly, encouraging community engagement and action. Social media, therefore, serves as both a communication and activism tool in advancing the protection and promotion of child rights.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Social marketing theory, which emerged in the early 1970s, is a theoretical framework that promotes socially beneficial behaviours and information through the application of marketing principles and techniques. This theory can be seen as an extension of persuasion and diffusion theories. It is a collection of "middle range" theories that focus on the promotion of socially valuable information, and as such, it can be considered a working theory in the area of information campaign design and evaluation. One of the key features of social marketing theory, as identified by Baron and Davis (2003:303), in Folarin (2006) is its focus on overcoming social and psychological barriers to the effectiveness of mass-mediated information. This may involve the use of scientifically derived techniques of persuasion, as well as strategies such as saturation advertising. The main goal of social marketing theory is to promote socially beneficial behaviours and information through the use of marketing principles and techniques, ultimately benefiting society as a whole.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a survey research design with a population of 1,440 academic staff from three tertiary institutions in Ondo State, one from each senatorial zone. A sample of 360 was selected using purposive and cluster sampling techniques, ensuring representation from all faculties or schools within each institution: 24 from each of the five faculties at OASUSTCH, at least 10 from each of the 11 schools at FUTA, and 20 from each of the six faculties at RUGIPO. Data was collected through a researcher-designed questionnaire divided into two sections—demographic

data and the core study issues. Of the 360 questionnaires distributed, 345 were retrieved. The data was analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages for ease of summarization.

#### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Data generated from the field study was analyzed, using frequency table and percentage as statistical tools. A total number of 360 questionnaires were distributed, while 345 were retrieved, representing 95% return rate.

**Table 1: Examining respondents' awareness of child-rights advocacy**

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	345	100%
No	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

The table 1 above shows the responses of the respondents to the question on whether they are aware of child-rights advocacy. All the 345 respondents, representing 100% agreed that they were aware of the child-rights advocacy in Ondo State. This may be largely because majority of the respondents are learned people who were drawn from tertiary institutions.

**Table 2: Examining respondents' extent of awareness**

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high extent	189	54.7%
High extent	156	45.3%
Low extent	0	0%
Very low extent	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

Table 2 above shows the extent to which the respondents are aware of child-rights advocacy in Ondo State. As indicated above, 189 respondents, representing 54.7% showed that they are aware of child-rights advocacy to a very high extent, while 156 respondents representing 45.2% are aware of it to a high extent. None of the respondents chose Low Extent and Very Low Extent as options.

**Table 3: Indication of channels of communication through which respondents were aware of child-rights advocacy**

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Radio	85	24.6%
Television	79	22.8%
Newspaper	75	21.7%
Social media	106	30.7%
Traditional media	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

The table 3 above, 85 respondents representing 24.6% became aware the child-rights advocacy through radio; 79 representing 22.8% got to know about it through television; 75 representing 2.7% were aware of the advocacy through newspaper, 106 representing 30.7% were exposed to child-right advocacy through social media, while no respondents got to know about it through traditional communication system. From the table it indicates that majority of the respondents were aware of the child-rights advocacy through social media.

**Table 4: Examining the social media that made respondents aware of child-rights advocacy**

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	148	42.8%
X	80	23.1%
Instagram	75	21.7%
WhatsApp	28	8.1%
All	14	4.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

Table 4 above shows social media that made the respondents aware of child-rights advocacy. As it appears on the table, 148 respondents, representing 42.8% were made aware of the advocacy through Facebook, 80 representing 23.1% were aware through X, 75 representing 21.7% became aware through Instagram, 28 representing 8.1% got to know through WhatsApp, while 14 representing 4.1% were aware through all the social media platforms. It can be drawn from the table that majority of the respondents became aware of the advocacy through Facebook which is believed to be the most used social media platforms.

**Table 5: Finding out whether respondents do contribute to reports, debates or issues on child-rights advocacy on social media platforms**

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	299	86.6%
No	46	13.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

The table above shows that 299 respondents, representing 86.6% opted for Yes option which indicates that they (the respondents) contribute and respond to reports, debates or issue that have to do with child-rights advocacy whenever they come across it on social media platforms, while only 46 representing 13.3% opted for No option.

**Table 6: Finding out how deep respondents contribute to reports, debates or issues on child-rights advocacy on social media**

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very deep	197	57.1%
Deep	102	29.5%
Not Deep	46	13.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

Table 6 above shows how rich or deep are the responses or contributions of respondents to reports, debates or issues on child-rights advocacy on social media. It indicates that 197 respondents representing 57.1% opted for Very Deep as an option, 102 representing 29.5% choose Deep as an option and 46 representing 13.3% opted for Not Deep as an option. The table indicates that the contributions of majority of the respondents to reports, debates or issues on child-rights advocacy on social media are deep to a high extent.

**Table 7: Examining the opportunities in utilizing social media for child-rights advocacy**

S/N	Variables	SA	A	SD	D
1	Social media allows all interested literate persons to participate in discussion on child-right advocacy.	209 (60.5%)	130 (37.6%)	4 (1.1%)	2 (1%)
2	Child-rights advocacy on social media do expose children to their rights.	50 (14.4%)	30 (8.6%)	146 (42.3%)	119 (34.4%)
3	More social media users are being enlightened about the crime relating to child rights abuse through social media.	199 (57.6%)	140 (40.5%)	3 (1%)	3 (1%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, SD: Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree

Table 7 above describes opportunities in utilizing social media for child rights advocacy. From the table, majority of the respondents with 60.5% agreed to the proposition “Social media allows all interested literate person to participate in discussion on child-rights advocacy”. Also, on the proposition that “Child-rights advocacy on social media do expose children to their right”. It can be established from the table that a vast majority of the 146 representing 42.3% strongly disagreed with the proposition. On the proposition that “More social media users are being enlightened about the crime relating to abuse through social media”. It can be drawn from the table that vast majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the proposition that more social media users are being enlightened about the crime relating to child abuse through social media.

### Research Question 3: The impacts of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State

**Table 4.13**

S/N	Variables	SA	A	SD	D
1	Child-rights advocacy on social media have made children to know their rights.	28 (8.1%)	41 (11.8%)	169 (48.9%)	107 (31%)
2	More parents now know that children have rights through social media.	210 (60.8%)	106 (30.7%)	18 (5.2%)	11 (3.1%)
3	Incidents of child abuse have reduced in some homes through regular child-rights advocacy on the social media.	163 (47.2%)	155 (44.9%)	6 (1.7%)	21 (6%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, SD: Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree

Table 4.13 above describes the impacts of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State. Majority of the respondents, 169 representing 48.9% strongly disagreed that child-rights advocacy on social media have made children to know their rights, 107 of the respondents representing 31% disagreed with the proposition. 41 respondents representing 11.8% agreed to the statement, while 28 respondents representing 8.1% strongly agreed to the statement that child-rights advocacy on social media have made children to know their rights. As regards whether more parents now know that children have rights through social media, a vast majority of the respondents, 210 representing 60.8% strongly agreed with the proposition, 106 of the respondents representing 30.7% agreed with the proposition, 18 of the respondents representing 5.2% strongly disagreed with it, while 11 of the respondents representing 3.1% disagreed with

it. In relation to the proposition that “Incidents of child abuse have reduced in some homes through regular child-rights advocacy on the social media”, majority of the respondents 163 representing 47.2% strongly agreed to it, 155 of the respondents representing 44.9% agreed to it, 21 of the respondents representing (6%) disagreed with the proposition, and 6 respondents representing 1.7% strongly disagreed with the statement that “Incidents of child abuse have reduced in some homes through regular child-rights advocacy on the social media”.

**Research Question 4: What are the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State?**

**Table 4.14**

S/N	Variables	SA	A	SD	D
1	Cost of smart phones, data purchase and maintenance are taking tolls on social media users.	165 (47.8%)	170 (49.2%)	3 (1%)	7 (2%)
2	Frequent power outages often deny social media users from charging their phones, leading to not having access to child-rights advocacy on social media.	163 (47.2%)	171 (49.5%)	8 (2.3%)	3 (1%)
3	Internet service failure sometimes blocks media users from accessing child-rights advocacy on social media.	180 (52.1%)	153 (44.3%)	7 (2%)	5 (1.4%)
4.	Some website owners or bloggers do not show interest in child rights advocacy in social media.	196 (56.8%)	50 (14.4%)	73 (21.1%)	26 (7.5%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, SD: Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree

Table 4.14 above proposes the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State. In response to the proposition, 170 of the respondents representing 49.2% agreed that cost of smartphones, data purchase and maintenance are taking tolls on social media users, 165 of the respondents representing 47.8% strongly agreed to the statement; 7 of the respondents representing 2% disagreed with statement, while 3 of the respondents representing 1% strongly disagreed with it.

On the proposition that “Frequent power outages often deny social media users from charging their phones, leading to not having accessing to child-rights advocacy on social media”, 163 of the respondents representing 47.2% strongly agreed to the statement, 171 of the respondents representing 49.5% agreed to the statement, 8 of the respondents representing 2.3% strongly disagreed with the statement, while 3 of the respondents representing 1% disagreed with the proposition.

Furthermore, on the proposition that “Internet service failure sometimes blocks media users from accessing child-rights advocacy”, a vast majority of the respondents, 180 representing 52.1% strongly agreed, 153 of the respondents representing 44.3% agreed with the statement; 7 of the respondents representing 2% strongly disagreed with the statement, while just 5 respondents representing 1.5% disagreed with the statement.

Majority of respondents, 196 representing 56.8% strongly agreed with the proposition that “Some website owners or bloggers do not show interest in child-rights advocacy in social media”, while 50 of the respondents representing 14.4% agreed to the proposition, 73 respondents representing 21.1% strongly disagreed with it and 26 of the respondents representing 7.5% disagreed with the proposition that some website owners or bloggers do not show interest in child-rights advocacy in social media.

**Research Question 5: How can the challenges of social media usage for child rights advocacy in Ondo State be addressed?**

**Table 4.15**

S/N	Variables	SA	A	SD	D
1	Child rights advocates should not limit their advocacy to only social media.	209 (60.5%)	120 (34.7%)	10 (2.8%)	6 (1.7%)
2	There should be reduction on import duties on smartphones and their accessories.	201 (58.2%)	135 (39.1%)	4 (1.1%)	5 (1.4%)
3	Federal government should address the problems of power failure which limits smartphones users to re-power their devices.	190 (55%)	146 (42.3%)	3 (1%)	6 (1.7%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, SD: Strongly Disagree, D – Disagree

Table 4.15 above proposes how the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State be addressed. On the proposition that “Child-rights advocates should not limit their advocacy to only social media, a total number of 209 respondents, representing 60.5% strongly agreed; 120 of the respondents, representing 34.7% agreed with the statement; 10 of the respondents representing 2.8% strongly disagreed with the statement, while 6 of the respondents representing 1.7% disagreed with the statement.

Furthermore, on the proposition that, “There should be reduction in import duties on smartphones and their accessories”, a vast majority of the respondents, 201, representing 58.2% strongly agreed, 135 of the respondents, representing 39.1% agreed 4 respondents, representing 1.1% strongly disagreed, while 5 respondents, representing 1.4% disagreed with the proposition that there should be reduction on import duties on smartphones and their accessories.

Reacting to the proposition that “Federal government should address the problems of power failure which limits smartphones users to re-power their devices”, 190 respondents, representing 55% strongly agreed. The number also forms the majority of the respondents, 146 of the respondents, representing 42.6% agreed with the proposition; 6 respondents, representing 1.7% disagreed; while just 3 respondents, representing 1% strongly disagreed with the proposition.

**Discussion of Findings**

This study investigated “Perceived Influence of Social Media Use on Child-rights Advocacy in Ondo State”. Five (5) research questions guided the study, and they are reviewed one after the other in the following paragraphs where the findings are discussed.

**Research Question One: To what extent are individuals in Ondo State aware of child-rights advocacy through social media platforms?**

Findings from this research question revealed that all respondents, 345 representing 100% opted for ‘Yes’ option when asked if they were aware of child-rights advocacy. This may be unconnected to the fact that majority of the respondents are learned people who were drawn from tertiary institutions. The extent to which the respondents were aware of child-right advocacy. Due to the fact that the respondents were learned people and teachers of tertiary institutions, they claimed to be aware of child-rights advocacy. This result is a through reflection of the fact that majority of the respondents use or are familiar with social media than other channel of communication. (Kamchedzera, 1999).

supported the fact that social media have crucial roles to play in enhancing the awareness of human rights among the general community, particularly in advocating for children's rights. It also indicates that the respondents use Facebook more than other social media like Facebook, X, Instagram and WhatsApp. The Facebook is believed to be the most used social media which allows users, who sign up for free profiles to connect with friends, work colleagues or people they don't know online. Posting of pictures, videos, articles as well as thoughts and opinions and child-rights issues may have necessitated the use of Facebook over other social media.

Table 4.10 reveals how the respondents respond or contribute to reports, debates or issues on child-rights advocacy on social media platforms. Due to the fact that they are well aware of the child-rights through various social media, 299 of the respondents, representing 86.6% stated that they respond or contribute to reports, debates or issues that have to do with child-rights advocacy on social media platforms whenever the issues come up.

**Research Question 2: What are the opportunities in utilizing social media for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State?**

There are some of the opportunities in utilizing social media for child-rights advocacy, according to the data supplied. As found out, most of the respondents, who are social media users do participate in discussion on child-rights advocacy whenever related issues are posted on social media platforms. Also, social media have, in no small measure, enlightened the respondents on crime relating to child abuse with about 199 respondents, representing 57.6% opted for Strongly Agree option. This confirms the position of International Federation of Journalists (2003) which stresses that social media offer more opportunities for publicity and conscientization on child-rights as well as opening windows to discourse on child-right issues.

But, on the contrary, some respondents believed that social media platforms have not done enough in exposing children to their rights. This is in testament to the fact 146 of the respondents; representing 4.2% opted for Strongly Disagree option when asked if child-rights advocacy on social media do expose children to their rights.

**Research Question 3: What are the impacts of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State?**

According to the study and available data, the social media have not lived up to its responsibilities in making the children aware of their rights. Table 4.13 shows that a vast majority of the respondents representing 48.9% strongly disagreed with the proposition that social media platforms had not in any way raised the awareness of the children to their rights.

But some parents, guardians, according to the available data, indicated that they were made aware of the children rights through social media, an analysis that depicts 210 respondents, representing 60.8% to strongly agreed that they fully know about child-rights advocacy through social media platforms. This is in agreement with the opinion of David (2024) when analyzing the functions of social media. To David, social media provide wide education and orientation on child-rights, and in effect, many learnt more on what constitutes child abuses and other indicators of child-rights violations. This also agrees with the tenets of the Social Marketing theory on which this study is anchored.

The respondents also believed that through vigorous campaigns of child rights in some social media, incidents of child rights and child abuse had, to some extent, reduced, as the majority of the respondents, 163, representing 47.2%, signified that they strongly agreed that incidents of child-abuse have reduced in some homes through regular child-rights advocacy on the social media.

**Research Question 4: What are the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State?**

There are some challenges weakening the potential of social media platforms as multi-channels advocate for child rights. Some of the challenges, according to the respondents, are that the cost of smartphones, data purchase, and

maintenance are very high. They constitute problems for the respondents as they have to bear the financial burden regularly. Also, some respondents believed that frequent power outages often deny them access to social media platforms. Thus, they do not have access to child-rights advocacy on social media for days, weeks, months, if not years. Still, the respondents believed that Internet service failure sometimes blocks some media users from accessing child-rights advocacy on social media, apart from the fact that some website owners or bloggers lack interest in child-rights advocacy issues. A large number of the respondents claimed that all the challenges mentioned above had contributed to the ineffectiveness of the social media platforms and inconveniences to its users regarding having adequate access to campaigns for child rights. All the findings under the treatment of this research question are additions that are missing from what the International Federation of Journalists (2003) listed as constraints and challenges of social media use for child-right advocacy in Nigeria.

**Research Question 5: How can the challenges of social media usage for child-rights advocacy in Ondo State be addressed?**

A huge majority of the respondents accepted the propositions that:

- a. Child rights advocacy should not limit its advocacy only to social media.
- b. There should be a reduction in import duties on smartphones and their accessories.
- c. The federal government should address the problems of power failure, which limits smartphone users from re-powering their devices.

On the first proposition that child-rights advocates should not limit advocacy to only social media, there is a need for child-rights advocates to carry the campaigns to other channels of communication such as radio, television, and newspapers, among others, since not all parents, guardians, children that have access to social media, radio and television will go a long way in reaching them if child-rights are regularly advocated for.

The second proposition is that there should be a reduction in import duties on smartphones and their accessories. If indeed there is a reduction or removal of import duties on smartphones and their accessories, their users, such as parents, guardians, and all those who subscribe to or believe in child rights will have access to them, thereby promoting child rights advocacy without financial burden.

The third proposition is that the federal government should address the problems of power failure, which largely limits smartphone users to re-power their devices. There have been calls, in recent times from different quarters, on the federal government to address the issue of power failure in Nigeria as most of the nation's sectors depend on it. If the government can address this challenge, individuals in society, including child-rights advocates, will not only have more unaltered access to regular social media platforms, but they will also be able to usefully respond and contribute to issues that are related to child rights locally, nationally and globally. These assertions are in consonance with provision created by Chapter IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended as the Child Rights Act of Nigeria (CRA) and what Ademola, (2023) emphasized as what responsibilities of Government should be in protecting Child Right in Nigeria

**Summary Findings**

The findings of the study revealed that:

- i. Respondents are well aware of the child rights advocacy on various social media.
- ii. Social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc., raised the respondents' awareness about child rights advocacy more than other traditional channels of communication such as radio, television, newspaper, etc.

- iii. Facebook platform, the most used social medium, is more active and prominent in its child-rights advocacy and campaign than other social media platforms.
- iv. Majority of the respondents do respond or contribute to reports or issues on child-rights advocacy whenever they come across any in social media.
- v. Social media gives users opportunities to participate in discussions. They expose children to their rights and enlighten adult on crime relating to child rights abuses. Parents know that their children have rights under the law, and this has reduced the incidents of child abuse in some homes.
- vi. The challenges of social media on child-rights advocacy include the cost of smartphones, data purchase, maintenance, frequent power outages, internet service failure, and the fact that some website owners or bloggers have no interest in child-rights advocacy. All these have been posing great barriers to and setbacks for child-rights advocacy.
- vii. Import duties on smartphones and their accessories should be reduced, and the federal government should address the problems of power failure so that social media users can re-power their devices.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of the study, one could, therefore, conclude that the people of Ondo State are fully aware of child-rights advocacy through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp. It was established that many of the child-rights topical issues are discussed, analysed and given fair judgment whenever they appear on social media platforms. Child-rights advocacy has enlightened many respondents about what constitutes child abuse, and it has also exposed children to their rights.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

- i. Children at all levels should be more enlightened on the issues of child rights to awaken them to their rights.
- ii. The justice system created for children within the law should be more effective in order to bring to book any child-abuser or child-rights violator to serve as a deterrent to other offenders.
- iii. Parents or guardians should be more enlightened on child-rights laws through various channels of communication. Cases of child-abuse or violation of child-rights law should be reported to the police by parents.
- iv. Government and non-governmental agencies like the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), Children Parliamentary, Children Advocates and Human Rights Groups and others should prioritise child-rights advocacy so that it would be more effective.
- v. Social media owners or bloggers should, as a matter of necessity, get committed to issues that have to do with child rights and also devote more time and space to child rights issues to make children, parents and social media users get more information on the subject matter.
- vi. The government, on its part, should reduce the cost of smartphones, address frequent power outages in order for people to always have access to social media platforms and re-power their phone devices so that they can contribute more to issues that have to do with child-rights.
- vii. Child-rights advocates should also carry their advocacy to other channels of communication like radio, television, and newspapers so that people who could not access social media would be enlightened by these.

## REFERENCES

- Bhandari, N. (2005). *Regional capacity building workshop on advocacy for realising child rights*. Kathmandu: Save the Children.
- Child Rights Act (2003)
- Child Rights International Network (2018)
- Child Rights International Network (CRIN) (2009). MEDIA: Representations of Children in News Media: Revisiting the Oslo Challenge. Retrieved February 24, 2014 from <http://crin.org/en/library/publications/mediarepresentations-children-news-media-revisiting-oslochallenge>.
- Child Rights International Network (CRIN, 2009).
- Committee on the Rights of the Child Report (2014). Say of General Discussion on “Digital Media and Children’s Rights” at <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CRC/Discussions/2014/DGD-report>. Pdf accessed on 17 Aug.
- Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended (1999).
- Convention on the Rights of Child Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. November 1989, a UNICEF Publication.
- CRC, (1989). *Convention on the rights of the child*. New York: UNICEF.
- Daramola, E. (2005). *Mass media and society*. Lagos: Rothan Press Limited.
- Daramola, I. (1999). *Law & ethics of media practice*, Lagos: Rothan Press.
- Daramola, I. (2003). *Introduction to mass communication*. Lagos: Rothan Press.
- David, A. (2024). *Social media, culture, characteristics and communications*. Lagos Bendlam Publications.
- Fayoyin, A. (2011). Promoting Children’s Rights Through the New Media. The Nigerian Experience. *Journal of J. Communication*, 2(2): Pg. 57-65.
- Folarin B. (2006). *Theories of mass communication: An introductory text*. (3rd edition) Ibadan: Stirling: Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd.
- Heitz, K. (2009). “Children’s Rights and the Media” *Journal of Communication Research Trends*: Volume 28.
- Hornby, A. S. (2015). *Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary*. Oxford University Press.
- <https://truehost.com.ng>.
- <https://en.m.wikipedia.org>.
- International Conventions and Protocols on Children.
- International Federation of Journalists (2003, January 31). Putting Children in the Right: Guidelines for Journalists and Media Professionals. Retrieved from: <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/latin-america/article/regional-focus-media-and-childrens-rights-in-africa.html>.
- Jones, N. & et al., (2012). Promoting Synergies between Child Protection and Social Protection in Nigeria. A Research Project Carried out by ODI and EPRI in Partnership with GADA and CEWHIN as Funded by UNICEF and UNFPA. Retrieved June 11 2024. From <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publication-opinionfiles/7579.pdf>.
- Kadiri, K. K., Muhammed, Y. A., Raji, A. & Sulaimon, A. L. (2015). Constraints and Challenges of the Media in the Development of Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 17(1), 44-60.
- Mayor, M. & Fox, C. (Ed.) (2009). *Longman dictionary of contemporary English advanced learners* (5<sup>th</sup>ed.) Pearson Education Limited.

- Mediawise (2010). The and Children's Rights. Retrieved from <http://www.mediawise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/The-Media-and-Children-Rights-2005.pdf>.
- Ndukwe, E. (2005). ICT Infrastructure: An Essential Foundation Presented at Nigeria Annual National Conferences, Abuja, Nigeria, 28-30 June 2005.
- Nehaluddin Rose, A; Nurasmah, D. (2018). "The Impact of Social Media on Children: An Overview". *Journal of Internal Journal for Studies on Children, Women, Elderly and Disabled*, Volume 5.
- Okunna, C. S. (eds.) (2018). *Communication and media studies multiple perspectives*. Evans Brothers Nigeria Limited.
- Olayemi, O. M. (2022). "Perceived Influence of Social Media Usage Among Youth: A Survey", *Journal of Nigerian Institute of Medical Research*, Lagos.
- Oyero, O. (2010). Children as Invisible and Voiceless as Ever in the Nigerian Media. *Estudo em comunicacao*, 2(7), 25-41.
- Oyero, O., & Salawu, A. C. (2018). Building Media Capacity for Children Sustainability in Africa: Educational and Partnership Imperative *SAGE Open*, 8(1), 1-10.
- Oyesomi, K; Oyero, O., Okorie, N. (2014). Media Advocacy, Development Journalism and Child Rights Issues in Nigeria. *Scholars Journals of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences*. 2(2B): Pg (261-265).
- Social Bakers (2011). Social Bakers: Heart of Facebook Statistics. From <http://www.socialbakers.com> (Retrieved on 30 June, 2024).
- Syed, M. R. & Dhriti, S. G. (2011). *Role of social media in facilitating awareness of child-rights*. Kaziranga University Press.
- The Ondo State Child right Law
- UNESCO (1978). Declaration on the Fundamental of Human Rights.
- UNICEF (2016). Convention on the Rights of the Child. <http://www.unicef.org/ewe/ewe/-58701.html>. Browsed on 25 Aug. 2018.
- UNICEF (nd). A Simplified Version of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. <https://www.unicef.org.au/upload/UNICEF/Media/our%20work/childfriendlyere.pdf>
- United Nations (nd). Human Rights. <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/human-rights/>