

Celebrity Cyberactivism On Social Advocacy Participation Among University Of Lagos Undergraduates During The #Endsars Protest In Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to look into the impact of celebrity cyberactivism on social advocacy participation among Lagos youths during the #EndSARS protest in Nigeria. A quantitative research design was used for the study. Three hundred and eighty-one respondents took part in this study using the multistage sampling technique. The study discovered that celebrity cyberactivists had no influence on UNILAG undergraduates' participation in social advocacy because it did not lead UNILAG undergraduates to participate in social media movements against bad governance or protests against police brutality. In order to achieve greater success, the study recommends that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other social advocacy groups in Nigeria develop a social media strategy to drive their campaigns rather than relying solely on celebrities.

Keywords: Youths, celebrity cyberactivism, fundamental rights, social advocacy, #EndSARS, social media movement.

Introduction

The democratic process is such that it allows citizens to voice their opinions when they feel repressed or marginalized. This process of social movement entails activists collectively organizing their opinions, interests, and grievances and criticisms to demand a suitable solution to identified challenges and issues in society by engaging in different and varied collective responsive actions and reactions (Cammaerts, 2015).

Social movements are brought about by a political or social issue that is not addressed by the government of a country (Porta & Diani, 2006). Humans have over the years been involved in advocacy to implement change through the utilisation of physical protests, letters to authorities, boycotts, strikes, and so on. Some examples of social movements are: Black Lives Matter in the

United States; the #Me Too movement against sexual harassment. There have been different social movements in Nigeria. For example, the #OccupyNigeria movement, which marked the dawn of cyberactivism in Nigeria, the #BringBackOurGirls campaign, and also the EndSARS protests, which Eke-Okocha (2021) says, is the largest in Nigerian history.

The EndSARS protest that took place in Nigeria in October 2020 is an example of a movement that resulted from the negligence of the government to listen to the deafening pleas of the citizenry against police brutality in the country. This movement led to physical protests around the country, with discussions and mobilization on social media. The internet has become the core and has diversified for the use of cyberactivism, or online activism (Milošević & Žeželj, 2016). Like the Black Lives Matter movement, the EndSARS protests were organized on social media (Eke-Okocha, 2021) to

garner the support of the citizenry either to be at a physical protest site or to continue the discussions online. This online activism gave people a voice and a platform to air their views on the issue of police brutality in the country.

Nigerian celebrities, influencers and other important people from different walks of life took to the streets of the country and the streets of social media to lend their voices to the issue of police brutality, which has gone on for years without any intervention from the government. Celebrities influence or have an impact on young people's lifestyle and perception of life. Younger generations may be most impacted by celebrity culture because they are still largely in their periods of reflection, uncertainty, and discussion of goals and aspirations for the future. With the glamourisation by the media of famous personalities, youths have had to make decisions based on the way of life of these individuals who are sometimes regarded literally as influencers.

The EndSARS protests were popularized by the involvement of some Nigerian celebrities. This social influence led by celebrities through the use of social media gave many youths the support they needed to speak up and fight for their rights as a united front. While some youths took to physical protests, others took to social media with the necessary hash tags to post, retweet or share posts made by celebrities. While the efforts of celebrities were largely noticed during the protest, Tsaliki (2015) explains that the activist causes of celebrities are under-researched. This study thus examines the influence of celebrity cyberactivism during the EndSARS protests on social advocacy participation among University of Lagos undergraduates.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be carried out they include:

1. How exposed are UNILAG Undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the End SARS protest?
2. What is the perception of UNILAG Undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the EndSARS protest?
3. What is the attitude of UNILAG Undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the EndSARS protest?
4. What is the influence of celebrity cyberactivists during the EndSARS protest on UNILAG undergraduates' participation in social advocacy?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: UNILAG undergraduates attitude is not significantly influenced by their exposure to celebrity cyberactivism during the EndSARS protest.

H₀₂: UNILAG undergraduates' perception is not significantly influenced by exposure to celebrity cyberactivism during the EndSARS protest.

Celebrity Cyberactivism during #EndSARS

Young people have a natural affinity for celebrities. This could be because of the likeness they attract and the power they possess. Celebrities as influential people get involved in different programmes either for monetary reasons, more popularity or as volunteers for a cause. This was the case in the EndSARS movement that took place in October 2020 in Nigeria. Nigerian celebrities were active in the protests across Nigeria both physically and online.

While people are attracted to celebrities, this however is not generalized because people also criticize their involvement in causes as a result of not being able to know the motive behind their alliance and sincerity attached to the movement and their opportunistic behaviour (Samman et al. 2009). According to Akomolafe (2020), celebrities' involvement in the #EndSARS campaign can be interpreted as a request to the government to put an end to police brutality and the illegal activities carried out by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). As the protests started, celebrities were called out to participate and some were threatened with losing their fan base on social media. It is worthy of note that the call for celebrity involvement was very important to drive and sustain the process (Abimbade et al, 2022).

According to Obia (2020), the #EndSARS protest on social media platforms, particularly on the Twitter platform, has given people all over the world access to online activism for protest and campaign sites. He continued by outlining Twitter's role in cyberactivism in three compelling ways: i. It helped to organize the demonstrations; ii. It helped the campaign's voice be heard more widely; and iii. It also disparaged various companies and celebrities who were seen as being against the movement and its campaign.

Different celebrities participated in the protests both offline and online. A lot of them took to Twitter to make their feelings known. Some of such tweets are:

Wizkid tweeted that "Donald Trump is not your business! Old man! Police/Sarz still killing Nigerian youth on a daily! Do something! Nothing concerns u for America! Face your country!! <https://t.co/thxmoYb7VE> _ " - Wizkid (@wizkidayo, 2020) over his concern for the Nigeria nation. He further tweeted to the governor of Lagos State his Excellency Babajinde Sanwo Olu stating that "Governor! I met you December 2019! You expressed how proud you are of the music entertaining industry and all we do. Please do something, let's be proud of you too abeg! #EndSARS!!".

Top Boy also known as DJSPINALL tweeted "woke up to this SARS headache again today. We protested when Kolade Johnson was murdered and not we back at the same shit again". #EndSARS (Top Boy, 2020)

Mercy Eke (@real_mercyeke) also tweeted " how long will young people have their human rights abused by the same agencies that are meant to protect them. It is high time the government listens to the people" #EndSars (Mercy Eke, 2020).

Rudeboy also went to tweet his opinion that "it's about time #EndSARS tagging the president and vice president stating for how long". (@rudeboyssquare 2020).

Peter Okoye also tweeted that "Who did we offend? tagging the president and vice president. How many more people do you want them to kill before you act as a commander in chief? #EndSARS. (Peter Okoye 2020).

Olamide who tweeted that "police brutality is skyrocketing by the day and the Nigeria government if not dead nor blind, they see all the trends and tag along with whichever one they like. You don't have to like this one to do the right thing. The hashtag is becoming tiring, the people are sick of it." (Olamide, 2020).

Davido also tweeted on his timeline saying "#EndSARSnow!!! If we all come together as brothers and sisters and also as citizens of this country we can end Nonsense!" (Davido, 2020).

DonJazzy also tweeted that "they are doing more of killing us than protecting us. You have lost control of your men. Take these touts in uniforms off our streets. #EndSARS" (DonJazzy, 2020).

Yemialadee also tweeted her opinion saying "I know you see these tweets...you can monitor big brother from Government House..oya #EndSars

now, innocent Nigerian youth are being killed every day." (Yemi Alade, 2020).

Democratic-Participant Media theory

The Democratic-Participant Media theory is such that advocates liberty, equity and decentralization of the media. Though normative theories like the libertarian theory and social responsibility theory advocated for freedom and freedom with responsibility. Uzochukwu and Ekwughu (2014) asserted that what led to the failure of such theories was a result of their components and features being unable to meet the social benefit required for the growth of the communication world. The theory advocated liberty from monopolization of the media, equality and free participation of everyone in the process of communication through the media.

The democratic-participant theory is a flexible one and with the proliferation of the internet, more people are involved in dissemination of information through the social media. Social media has transformed human society as it opens a system of popular participation to everyone who engages in its use. This theory advocating for grassroots participation spell out that the audience can participate in the media and get alternatives if dissatisfied with one media (Bajracharya, 2018). Through the social media, audiences and more specifically Nigerian youths exercised their democratic rights by calling for accountability from the government on issues of police brutality. This flexibility of the theory has made it easy for Nigerian youths to advocate social and political change in the nation.

Empirical review

The influence of celebrities in social activism causes is largely under-researched as most articles reviewed for this study only mentioned celebrity influence in passing. It is worthy of note as stated in The Guardian that "Causes are to celebrities what corporate social responsibility is to business" (Who really benefits from celebrity activism?, 2015). This study sought to find out if celebrity activism online can influence youths to participate in social advocacy programmes. Literatures on similar studies were perused but there were hardly studies on the influence celebrities can exert on youth participation in social advocacy programmes.

In order to understand how people in developing nations like Nigeria have started to use their online presence to participate in political discussion, Uwalaka (2021) looked at the impact of social media use in digitally organized protests on long-term political participation and efficacy formation. Findings show that social media has created a safe space for debate and protests and that it is related to young people's involvement in politics. In their study, Cortés-Ramos et al (2021) discovered that youths' participation in online activism has a significant relationship with their use of social media platforms. It was discovered that social media users use unique communication systems that instill a specific language for social activism. This was also the case in Nigeria as social media posts were made using some hashtags like #EndSARS, #EndPoliceBrutality, #Sorosoke, among others. Cortés-Ramos et al (2021) further stated that a high percentage of youth participate in social change and causes as a result of motivation from their school environment and personal interests in social movements.

Uba and Bosi (2021) came to the conclusion that rather than contrasting radical individuals who are thugs with youths who are radicals for social change through the use of social activism and movements, the need for radical youth participation can be seen in economic experiences, democratic rights and elections, and political activism.

In their study of Kazakhstan, Kumar et al. (2021) found that the society responded to the call to address the issues of rape and sexual abuse by adopting social media activism. According to the study, social media can serve as a free forum for individuals to express their urgent needs. Adekoya (2021) investigated the role of social media in the dissemination of information and misinformation surrounding the #EndSARS protest in Nigeria, as well as the impact of misinformation on social media during the #EndSARS protest on Nigerian society. According to the findings of the study, social media was used to gather and disseminate information. It was also noted that, while misinformation urging the protest spread on social media, the ills associated with it were not intended to deceive, but instead played a role in diverting attention away from the true cause of the issue.

Social media is a potent tool that can shape perceptions and motivate young people to participate in physical protests, according to research by Abimbade, Olayoku, and Herro (2022). They found out that the protest had no clear leader and faced its own difficulties. Additionally, it was

discovered that although famous people and social media influencers participated in actual protests, their voices were not long-lasting.

In their study, Maradun, Yar'Adua, and Msughter (2021) discovered that social media are interactive platforms that allow people to engage and stage protests about issues that are important to them. Greijdanus et al. (2020) contend that social media facilitate online activism by capturing and aggregating personal experiences, social inclusion, standard construction, and the formation of global perceptions. However, they did state that "while online action may theoretically stifle offline protests, practical evidence for slacktivism is varied." Online and offline behavior may be unrelated in some cases because people behave differently online than offline or limit their actions to a single domain.' They also agreed that online and physical activism are inextricably linked and intertwined, claiming that social media content can mobilize others for physical protests, implying that the internet expands the voice of activism and thus encourages suppression in oppressive situations.

Rogers, Kovaleva, and Rumshisky (2019) evaluated social media calls to action during social movements, as well as the possibility of predicting real-world protest events. According to the data, the number of CTAs shared on social media has a moderately positive relationship with rally attendance. Benjamin (2018) examined and discussed how grassroots activists and anarchists frequently use social media activism to disseminate information not available in mainstream media or to publish suppressed news articles. The author emphasized that the goal of media activism is frequently to change media and communications policies, and that the use of social media is becoming more popular.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey design as its method of inquiry. It was accomplished by gathering the opinions and viewpoints of the respondents regarding their awareness, attitude, and the impact that celebrity cyberactivism has on their involvement in social advocacy.

The population of this study was restricted to University of Lagos undergraduate students, who as of the 2019/2020 enrollment totaled 35,436. 399 respondents were selected as the sample using the Cochran (1997) formula. To account for the potential for a low return rate, five percent (5%) was added to the first sample that was derived. The

simple random sampling technique was used to select 50% of the 12 faculties in the University of Lagos. On slips of paper that had been folded were the names of the 12 faculties. One paper was selected at random without replacement until six papers were selected. Social sciences, clinical sciences, arts, engineering, environmental science, and sciences were the faculties chosen. Departments were also chosen from each faculty. Additionally, departments from each of the six faculties were listed on slips of paper, and these were randomly chosen until each faculty was represented. Finally, the chosen departments were: Chemical Engineering, Philosophy, Medicine and Surgery, Mathematics, Quantitative surveying, and Mass Communication. The survey's Google form was made and distributed to respondents in the specified departments.

Using Cronbach's Alpha reliability Coefficient, the instrument's reliability was tested. The questionnaire was administered via Google forms to 40 Babcock University students. It was 0.74 for the reliability coefficient.

Result and Discussion

A total of 399 respondents filled the questionnaire but 381 forms were valid for analysis. Data was analysed in descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 1: Demographic Features of Participants

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	
Age	16 to 20	167	43.8
	21 to 25	175	45.9
	26 to 30	31	8.1
	31 & above	8	2.1
	Total	381	100.0
Gender	Male	128	33.6
	Female	253	66.4
	Total	381	100.0
Department	Chemical Engineering	47	12.3
	Mass Communication	165	43.3
	Mathematics	23	6.0
	Medicine & Surgery	82	21.5
	Philosophy	46	12.1
	Quantity Surveying	18	4.7
	Total	381	100.0

Table *1 depicts that most of the participants were between the ages of 21 to 25 (45.9%), and the study was dominated by females (66.4%), while males had 33.6 percent representation in the study.

Research Question One: What is the level of exposure of UNILAG Undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest?

Table 2: Level of exposure of UNILAG undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest

Level of exposure to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest	Yes	No
Awareness of the EndSARS protest of October 2020	99.5%	0.5%
Awareness of the EndSARS protest through social media	95%	5%
Exposure to posts made by celebrities in support of the EndSARS protest	97.4%	2.6%
	100%	100%

Table 2 shows that majority of the participants were aware of the #EndSARS protest of October 2020 (99.5%). Out of these, 95 percent of them were aware through the social media. It is also seen that 97.4% of respondents noticed posts made by celebrities in support of the EndSARS protest. This connotes that Nigerian celebrities were instrumental in promoting and garnering support for the EndSARS protest.

Research Question Two: What is the perception of UNILAG undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest?

Table 3: Perception of Undergraduates on Celebrity Cyberactivism during #EndSARS Protest

Items	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	N Freq. (%)	Mean (x̄)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Celebrity involvement in the online protest was very impactful.	214 (56.2)	143 (37.5)	16 (4.2)	4 (1.0)	4 (1.0)	4.47	0.72
Celebrities need to speak up more and engage in more activism to hold the government accountable.	227 (59.6)	123 (32.3)	15 (3.9)	1 (0.3)	15 (3.9)	4.43	0.90
I believe celebrities greatly used their social media platforms to drive more youth participation.	211 (55.4)	138 (36.2)	20 (5.2)	5 (1.3)	7 (1.8)	4.42	0.81
Celebrities joined the protest as an avenue to further gain public acceptance among Nigerian youths.	85 (22.3)	126 (33.1)	130 (34.1)	17 (4.5)	23 (6.0)	3.61	1.07
The protest would have still been very much impactful without the involvement of celebrities.	60 (15.7)	118 (31)	148 (38.8)	31 (8.1)	24 (6.3)	3.42	1.05
Most of the celebrities were just twitter warriors that chickened out of the physical protest.	60 (15.7)	122 (32)	136 (35.7)	39 (10.2)	24 (6.3)	3.41	1.07
Average Overall Mean						3.96	0.94

Table 3 depicts that the perception of UNILAG undergraduates on celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest was positive (x̄= 3.96). This analysis implies that the perception of UNILAG undergraduates on celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest was positive because they strongly agreed that: celebrity involvement in the online protest was very impactful, and this calls for the need for them to engage in more activism to hold the government accountable.

Research Question Three: What is the attitude of UNILAG Undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest?

Table 4: Attitude of Undergraduates towards Celebrity Cyberactivism during #EndSARS protest

Items	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	N Freq. (%)	Mean (x̄)	Standard Deviation (SD)
I used the like button on posts relating to #EndSARS that celebrities published.	172 (45.1)	153 (40.2)	33 (8.7)	8 (2.1)	15 (3.9)	4.20	0.97
I shared/retweeted content on #EndSARS made by celebrities actively involved in the protest online.	150 (39.4)	129 (33.9)	62 (16.3)	17 (4.5)	23 (6.0)	3.96	1.13
I engaged with celebrities' online content promoting the #EndSARS protest.	137 (36)	144 (37.8)	60 (15.7)	12 (3.1)	28 (7.3)	3.92	1.14
I commented on posts relating to #EndSARS that celebrities published.	137 (36)	111 (29.1)	80 (21)	18 (4.7)	35 (9.2)	3.78	1.24
I made posts to support the #EndSARS movements based on what celebrities posted.	116 (30.4)	111 (29.1)	94 (24.7)	26 (6.8)	34 (8.9)	3.65	1.23
Average Overall Mean						3.90	1.14

Table 4 indicates that the attitude of UNILAG undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest was favourable (\bar{x} = 3.90). This suggests that the attitude of UNILAG undergraduates to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest was favourable because they engaged the posts by liking, sharing, retweeting, commenting and also making their own posts based on celebrities #EndSARS posts.

Research Question Four: What is the influence of celebrity cyberactivists on UNILAG undergraduates' participation in social advocacy?

Table 5: Influence of Celebrity Cyberactivism on Undergraduates' Participation in Social Advocacy

Items	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	N Freq. (%)	Mean (x̄)	Standard Deviation (SD)
I partake in social media movements against bad governance because I saw celebrities do so during ##EndSARS.	72 (18.9)	79 (20.7)	161 (42.3)	44 (11.5)	25 (6.6)	3.34	1.11
I engage in general social media movements against ills in the society because I saw celebrities do so during ##EndSARS	67 (17.6)	79 (20.7)	155 (40.7)	52 (13.6)	28 (7.3)	3.28	1.13
I partake in social media protest against police brutality because I saw celebrities do so during ##EndSARS.	60 (15.7)	82 (21.5)	164 (43)	52 (13.6)	23 (6.0)	3.27	1.07
I go on any online forum to display understanding of my fundamental rights because I saw celebrities do so during ##EndSARS.	56 (14.7)	73 (19.2)	167 (43.8)	57 (15)	28 (7.3)	3.19	1.09
Average Overall Mean						3.27	1.10

Table 5 shows that celebrity cyberactivists did not influence UNILAG undergraduates' participation in social advocacy (\bar{x} = 3.27). This implies that celebrity cyberactivists did not influence UNILAG undergraduates' participation in social advocacy because they did not; partake in social media movements against bad governance or ills in the society due to celebrity activism online, neither did they partake in social media protest against police brutality and attend online forums to display understanding of their fundamental rights because

celebrities did them. In sum, they could be motivated by other factors like the state of the country or peer influence.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho1: UNILAG Undergraduates attitude is not significantly influenced by their exposure to celebrity cyberactivism

Table 6: Influence of Exposure to Celebrity Cyberactivism on Attitude Towards Celebrity Cyberactivism

Variable	Coeff	Std. Error	β	t-stat.	Prob.	R ²
C	15.994	2.258		7.085	.000	0.006
Exposure to Celebrity Cyberactivism	1.207	.769	.080	1.569	.117	

Dependent Variable: Attitude Towards Celebrity Cyberactivism

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 6 indicates that exposure to celebrity cyberactivism does not significantly influence undergraduates' attitude towards it (β = 0.080, t = 1.568, p> 0.05). Consequently, the hypothesis was accepted. This suggests that exposure to celebrity cyberactivism does not significantly influence undergraduates' attitude towards cyberactivism.

Ho2: UNILAG undergraduates' perception is not significantly influenced by exposure to celebrity cyberactivism

Table 7: Influence of Exposure to Celebrity Cyberactivism on Perception of Celebrity Cyberactivism

Variable	Coeff	Std. Error	β	t-stat.	Prob.	R ²
C	19.321	1.622		11.912	.000	0.020
Exposure to Celebrity Cyberactivism	1.520	.553	.140	2.750	.006	

Dependent Variable: Perception of Celebrity Cyberactivism

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 7 indicates that exposure to celebrity cyberactivism positively significantly influence undergraduates' perception of it (β = 0.140, t = 2.750, p< 0.05). Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. This suggests that as exposure to celebrity cyberactivism increases, perception of celebrity cyberactivism improves among UNILAG undergraduates. The regression model also indicates that exposure to celebrity cyberactivism predicts 2 percent variance in perception of celebrity cyberactivism (R²= 0.020). This also connotes that exposure to celebrity cyberactivism is a tool that can be used to drive positive perception of celebrity cyberactivism.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the influence of celebrity cyberactivism on social advocacy participation among UNILAG undergraduates during the #EndSARS protest in Nigeria. There were 381 participants in this study, of which the majority of them were between the ages of 21 and 25 (45.9%), followed by 16 to 20 (43.8%). The study was dominated by females (66.4%), while males had 33.6% representation in the study. The key findings of this study are further discussed below.

Exposure to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest

According to the findings of this study, social media was instrumental in raising awareness of the #EndSARS protest in October 2020. This is due to the fact that the majority of participants were aware of the October 2020 # ENDSARS protest. Maradun, Yar'Adua, and Msughter (2021) reported that social media platforms are a suitable setting for people to hold protests regarding issues that concern them and that social media is an interactive medium in which people may engage and have a discussion. Their findings corroborate the findings of this study. According to Adekoya (2021), social media was utilized during the #EndSARS protest, and respondents reported using Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp most frequently to gather and disseminate information. Furthermore, according to Uwalaka (2017), protesters use social media and mobile social networking apps to plan, organize, and mobilize for the protest as well as to record their participation. The findings of this study appear to be supported by Melki and Mallat's (2014) assertion that social media platforms appear to offer a variety of perceived benefits for activism activities and that digital activism is on the rise. According to Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia (2013), cyber activism is declining, traditional electronic media's dominance is waning, and social media is encouraging accountability and better communication. They also discovered that social media was a catalyst for change in real-world circumstances.

Perception on celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest

This study found that UNILAG undergraduates had a favorable impression of celebrity cyberactivism

during the #EndSARS protest because they firmly believed that celebrity involvement in the online protest had a significant impact and that, as a result, they should speak out more and take part in more activism to hold the government accountable. This study proved that undergraduates' perceptions are significantly and positively influenced by exposure to celebrity cyberactivism. This implies that exposure to celebrity cyberactivism can be used as a tool to promote a favorable perception of this type of activism. According to Thakur and De (2016), social media played a significant role in sparking social movements and protests. Similar findings were made by Zestanaki (2019), who found that the political nature of social media acts as an organizing force that can affect people's capacity to demonstrate real and effective counterpower. In contrast, while Greek social media users are familiar with the term 'cyberactivism' and understand that it is typically done for a 'good cause,' they are skeptical of its effectiveness (Dimitrakopoulou, 2015). According to Cortés-Ramos et al. (2021), young people's involvement in social movements has gained more significance in today's hyperconnected world. They outlined how this platform might work as a powerful tool for social change.

Attitude to celebrity cyberactivism during the #EndSARS protest

Seeing as they liked, commented on, shared, and even made their own posts based on celebrities' online posts about the #EndSARS protest, this study proved that UNILAG undergraduates had a positive attitude toward celebrity cyberactivism during that time. Additionally, it was found that undergraduates' attitudes toward cyberactivism are not significantly influenced by exposure to celebrity activism ($= 0.080$, $t = 1.568$, $p > 0.05$). This suggests that the perception of cyberactivism among undergraduates is not significantly influenced by celebrity cyberactivism. According to Uwalaka (2021), having a positive attitude has a greater influence on one's intentions to participate in politics. Additionally, it was reported that there is a connection between social media and political engagement among youth and that this relationship can serve as a predictor of future political engagement. Laouni et al. (2020) concur that internet-based protests allow for a variety of actions to be carried out, including planning, organizing, and mobilizing supporters across the nation to take to the streets in support of demands for political

institution democratization; transparency of dysfunctional and out-of-touch political parties; increased freedom of expression; tighter restrictions on royal power; and an end to corruption, nepotism, and favoritism. This brings up the fact that Moroccan political participation and social discourse have been redefined by young activists and youth organizations.

Influence of celebrity cyberactivism on UNILAG undergraduates' participation in social advocacy

The study discovered that famous cyberactivists had no bearing on UNILAG undergraduates' involvement in social advocacy; this suggests that there may be other influences, such as peer pressure and the state of the country, among others. Anderson (2021), in contrast to the results of this study, discovered a strong positive correlation between pro-environmental behavior and the use of altruistic social media. On the other hand, Maradun, Yar'Adua, and Msughter (2021) reported that as social media usage increases, Nigerians will continue to put pressure on the government to address pressing issues. Greijdanus et al. (2020) also established that online and offline activism are positively related and intertwined, and that social media posts can inspire people to participate in offline protests. This suggests that as activism becomes more visible online, repression in oppressive environments becomes easier to carry out. According to Ibrahim (2019), advocacy has elevated social media to the top of the list of effective strategies for requesting social change that can also produce change in the real world. Stetka and Mazak (2016) claimed that people who were politically active online during the campaign were more likely to vote and take part in other traditional participatory activities. This assertion connected online activity to real-world action. According to Afouxenidis (2014), a higher level of technical skill as well as prior offline experiences have an impact on people's capacity to actively participate in online protests. In contrast to this goal, Valenzuela's (2013) research shows that using social media for activism and opinion expression moderates the association between general social media use and protest behavior. Additionally, Rogers, Kovaleva, and Rumshisky (2019) discovered a moderately positive relationship between social media posts and actual rally participation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Since the majority of University of Lagos undergraduates were aware of the #EndSARS protest of October 2020 through social media, this study concludes that social media played a crucial role in raising awareness of the protest in question. Even though celebrities were at the forefront of these online and offline protests, UNILAG undergraduates were unaffected and it did not lead them to take part in online forums, campaigns, virtual protests, etc. They did, however, show a favorable inclination toward and engagement with the messages.

Therefore, it is advised that celebrities and influencers take a stronger stance against social issues and push for more benevolent policies since exposure to celebrity cyberactivism positively impacts perception. Also, in order to achieve greater success, the study recommends that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other social advocacy groups in Nigeria develop a social media strategy to drive their campaigns rather than relying solely on celebrities.

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