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SOCIAL MEDIA, ILLEGAL OIL BUNKERING AS PREDICTORS OF NATIONAL INSECURITY AMONG YOUTHS IN RIVERS STATE

¹Hero Nwaniwe Eze-Uzuke and ²Jiachi Eustace Ezinna

Tel. 08136062090, **Email:** eustacej1122@gmail.com **Tel.** 07068568729, **Email:** herowaniwe@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study investigated social media, illegal oil bunkering as predictors of national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State. Three research questions and three corresponding hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The research design for this study was correlational design. The estimated population for this study was 50,000 youths in Rivers State. This estimation was because as at the time of this study there was no accurate figure in any government department housing the population of youths in Rivers State. The sample size of this study comprised 400 youths in Rivers State. Statefied random sampling technique was adopted for the study. Two instruments titled: "Social Media and Illegal Oil Bunkering Inventory" (SMIOBI) and "National Insecurity Accessment Scale" (NIAS) was used for data collection. The instruments (SMIOBI) and (NIAS) were validated based on face and content validities by experts. Cronbach alpha reliability statistics was used to compute the general reliability coefficient of (SMIOBI) to be 0.76 and (NIAS) to be 0.79. Simple regression was used to answer research question 1-3 and their corresponding hypotheses was also tested at 0.05 Alpha level of significance. The findings of the study show that: Social networking sites, viideo sharing and hosting sites, and illegal oil bunkering significantly predicted national insecurity in Rivers State. Based on the findings of this study conclusion, recommendations and implications for counselling were made.

Introduction

Nigeria as a country has witnessed crises that are politically, socially and religiously motivated, these actually laid the foundation for her economic depression which has further metamorphose into incessant insecurity (i.e. misuse of social media, illegal oil bunkering, banditry, terrorism, armed robbery, militancy, kidnapping, ethnic

¹Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Ignitius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State

²Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Ignitius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State

and eligious violence, farmer and herder's conflicts etc). Nigeria insecurity, challenges are similar to countries such as Kenya, Sumalia, Sudan and others on the African continent. According to Nsudu and Onwe (2017), ethno-religious and political con □ict in Nigeria between 1999 and 2005 has occurred more than 90 times. Divers forms of conflicts have occurred from the year 2005 to date, with a notable increase in oil theft and illegal bunkering in Rivers State and the Niger Delta region at large. Social media has direct or indirect influence to conflict as insurgents and aggrieved groups use social media platforms to broadcast their greiviances and announce their antisocial activities (The Associated Press, 2017). In the present day Rivers State, youths have been observed to engage addictively in social media and illegal oil bunkering, these activities which has enormous benefits are believed to be detrimental to national development because but may foster national insecurity. There is a notable increase in crude oil theft, illegal bunkering in Nigeria. Piracy seems to be a pertinent aspect of it as over 300,000 barrels of crude oil are stolen daily from Nigerian pipelines Okere, 2013). While kidnapping and abduction for exobitant ransom are increasing persistently in Rivers state, Illegal oil bunkering has been an economic and security problem in not only in Rivers State but in Nigeria. It is very much obvious that the government measures that were put in place to curb these has died a natural death (Nwanosike, 2013). Oil theft or illegal oil bunkering refers to the act of pilfering crude oil from the pipes or flow stations, as well as the addition of extra crude oil to legitimate cargos that are not accounted for. Illegal oil theft includes illegal acquisition and transportation of crude oil which is later refined or sold abroad (Ugwuanyi, 2013). Oil theft also known as illegal oil bunkering has been the major means of stealing crude oil for both domestic and export consumption in the Niger Delta region (Wilson, 2014). It is an illegal trade that involves the theft of crude oil and other products derived from crude oil through numerous techniques or channels. Katsouris and Sayne (2013) asserted that illegal oil bunkering is the "process of illegally siphoning crude oil or other refined petroleum products from pipelines and are sold to interested unsrupulous Individual or dealers that are waiting on the high sea. Puncturing the pipeline, conveying the product from one point to the other and tapping crude oil from the point where it had been punctured or ruptured is the most popular method for pilfering crude oil (Adegbite, 2013). Crude oil bunkerers can also tap directly into pipelines that are far away from oil company facilities and connecting from these pipelines to barges that seem untraceable in creeks and mangrove forest (Odalano, 2016). Katsouris and Sayne (2013) buttressed that there are three pupular operational methods of illegal bunkering, these methods are; little or small-scale siphoning of crude oil and petroleum product situated at local markets, a direct pricking of pipelines or tapping with a hose from wellheads via the removal of an object called the 'Christmas tree'; and the haphazard lifting of crude oil beyond the amount that was licensed via the use of untrue bills of lading. Oil bunkering activities are very popular and lucrative, it has not only spurred on a high level of insecurity in Rivers State, it had made many youths to drop from school to engage in it (Umar and Uthman, 2017). The proceeds, gains or dividends from the illegal refineries are aiding the importation of illegal arms and ammunition. The result of these activities has resulted in kidnapping, armed robbery, assassinations, rape, insecurity and other form of violence (Akpan 2016). Oil bunkering has made the oil communities in Rivers State to be infiltrated with armed security men. On the roads in Rivers State, security operatives and outfits are often sighted collecting money from people in their illegal checkpoints in the name of checkmating oil bunkering activities. It is appauling that lives have been lost due to confrontations between security personnel or outfits and illegal oil bunkerers in Rivers State (Dagogo, 2022). Odeigwu (2013) asserted that the Federal Government has indeed contributed to the curbing of illegal oil bunkering in Rivers State. However, constraints such as corrupt security

officials, not enough and malfunctioning equipment to checkmate oil bunkering, insincere oil surveillance companies among others has made the task to be abortive.

National insecurity may also be predicted by social media. Nigerian insecurity is increasing and lives and properties are threatened on a daily basis. This insecurity is affected by the penetration, wrong use and diffusion of social media. Chukwuere and Onyebukwa (2018) asserted that social media (SM) platform has reengineered social interaction among peers, career men and women, business men and women, as well as the government. Social media platforms are used in advancing and instilling social and national insecurity, such as the situation of insurgency and social media in the northern and southeastern parts of Nigeria. Trottier and Fuchs (2014), posited that social media is cumbersome to define as a result of its encompassing nature. It is a tools and applications that allow connection between two or more people. Social media like any other computer technology, facilitates cognitive system that low users to share and acquire collective individual and societal values (Trottier and Fuchs, 2014). Social media are not easily censored or controlled thereby allowing the general public to socialize freely (Nsudu and Onwe, 2017). Social freedom of speech that is associated with social media enables users to generate contents at any time and post them online. Social media are not only leveraged by terrorist groups to challenge the peace and stability of a country, the citizens of various contries are using using social media to unleash terror on others by spreading fake news and postings unreal events that accelerate rancor, choas, propaganda and fear. John (2020) also stated that social media is an internet basedservices that enables account owners to generate contents for that will benefit them and others. Various forms of social media networking platforms, ranging from Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Google Plus, Yahoo Messenger, Instagram, Wikipedia etc have negative and positive effect on the social, economic, cultural and political aspects of all human endeavours. Social networking sites are used by terrorist, aggrieved and insurgent groups with unique servers and specially designed websites to spread their propaganda (Nsudu and Onwe, 2017). They use social media platforms for recruitment, appraisal, fund raising, training and retraining of new recruits and other forms of cybercrime. Social media platforms helps in promoting local and international terrorist groups and the insecurity associated with it. Groups that are bent on causing national insecurity uses social media sites to organize or strategize pattern to attack and ways of escape (Nsudu and Onwe, 2017). It is in the light of the forgoing background that the researchers saw the necessity to investigate social media, illegal oil bunkering as predictors of national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Review of Literature

National security is greatly entwined with the facilitation of governance, which is the effective management of national affairs of a country at all levels. The functioning and execution of national security is aimed at maintaining the integrity of the nation and the security of its people (Abraham, 2012). Governments worldwide have adopted the use of social media platforms in their operations including interactions and dessemination of information to their citizens. Therefore, the link between social media as a tool and objective of achieving national security has called for concern on who should control this tool and how it can be used to attain national security (Dalhatu et al., 2019). Illegal oil bunkering on the other hand has resulted to insecurity in Rivers State as it is not uncommon to hear or witness cases of communal clash, kidnapping, armed robbery, arson, assassinations, rape and other form of violence in oil exploration and exploitation regions (Akpan 2016). The paper is hinged on the technological determinism theory. Technological determinism theory was coined by an American social scientist named Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929) and popularized by Marshal McLuhan in 1964, The technological determinism theory posits that social media technologies shapes the thought and

feeling of every human in the society. The theory explains the impact of ICTs on information and how information is digested and communicated in contemporary societies.

Dahiru and Mohammed (2021) examined the use of new media in enhancing national security in Nigeria. The researchers employed a qualitative research design and purposive sampling technique was employed in the study. Premised on the technological determinism and structural functional theories, the researchers employed indepth interviews conducted among communications and security experts in Nigeria to examine the use of new media in enhancing national security in Nigeria among the respondents. Findings of the study revealed that there is a link between ineffective use of new media and the spread of security threats in the country.

Chukwuere and Onyebukwa (2018) in their study investigated the impact of social media and national security. The researchers adopted a qualitative research method using online questionnaire to generate data through social networking platforms. The study found that social media is not a threat to Nigeria national security, The findings prove that SM contributes towards various kinds of rumor attacks, promoting hate speech, tribal clashes and terrorism attacks which lead to high levels of insecurity and threats to lives and properties in the region and country at large. Nsodu and Onwe (2017) in their study analyzed social media and security challenges in Nigeria. The researchers employed a descriptive and analytical approach and anchored on the study on Technological Determinism Theory. The paper revealed that the social media have contributed highly to security challenges in Nigeria. Mmahi and Chibueze (2018) conducted a study at Igbo-Olomu community where violent acts were perpetrated by restive youth who have been involved in illegal oil bunkering in the community for years. Data were gathered via in-depth interview, findings showed that insecurity was on its increase as jobless youth with differing ethnic background who engage in illegal oil bunkering unleashes attack on the community. Anyio (2015) examines the Impact of Illegal oil bunkering and theft which has continued to threaten the survival of the nation's economy. The paper adopted a qualitative/content research approach using secondary sources Findings revealed that the nation has incurred an increase in the acquisition of light arms and ammunition.

Statement of the Problem

National insecurity is now a nationwide delinma in Nigeria. Youths activities in Rivers State, like social media usage and illegal oul bunkering have been observed to affect or influence national Insecurity in the region. Social networking sites, video hosting sites are now used to transmit information on where to attavk and time to attack. Youths in the region had been observed to belong to one or more social media groups that perpetrate all manner of havoc or social unrest. Youths have also been observed to incite problems and controversy among other youths via social media platforms, these platforms are most times used to transmit inappropriate and incredible information that may deter national seccurity.

Also, oil bunkering activities have been observed to foster disunity among yourhs, their leaders and community heads. Proceeds gotten from illegal bunkering are oftentimes used to procure minor and sophisticated amunitions. Youths in their bid to continue enjoying the proceeds from oil bunkering has created groups, subgroups or rivalry group that helps them to challenge the decisions of the government and community heads. Oil bunkering has also been observed to be responsible for school drop-out level amongst youths as many of them stopped going to school so they can benefit hugely from illegal oil bunkering activities. Controversy that spring up between the community and oil bunkering youths has been observed to result into choas that ends up leaving the community uninhabited as everything that has life will be seen fleeing for their own safety. In other to contribute towards the control of national Insecurity perpetrated by youths the researcher therefore

deemed it necessary to examine social media, illegal oil bunkering as predictors of national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate social media, illegal oil bunkering as predictors of national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State. Specific objectives includes:

- 1. To Investigate the extent social networking sites predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.
- 2. To Investigate the extent video sharing and hosting sites predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.
- 3. To Investigate the extent illegal oil bunkering predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide this study.

- 1. To what extent does social networking sites predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State?
- 2. To what extent does video sharing and hosting sites predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State?
- 3. To what extent does illegal oil bunkering predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance were used to guide this study.

- 1. Social networking sites does not significantly predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.
- 2. Video sharing and hosting sites does not significantly predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.
- 3. Illegal oil bunkering does not significantly predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Methodology

The research design for this study was correlational design. The estimated population for this study was 50,000 youths in Rivers State. This estimation was because as at the time of this study there was no accurate figure in any government department housing the population of the entire youths in Rivers State. The sample size of this study comprised 400 youths. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted for the study. Two instruments titled: "Social Media and Illegal Oil Bunkering Inventory" (SMIOBI) and "National Insecurity Accessment Scale" (NIAS) was used for data collection. The (SMIOBI) and (NIASI) equally comprised 25 items. All items were structured based on the four point modified likert rating scale of Very High Extent= VHE, High Extent b = HE Low Extent= LE and Very Low Extend = VLE which were assigned numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 for positively keyed items and 1, 2, 3 and 4 for negatively keyed items. The instruments (SMIOBI) and (NIAS) were validated based on face and content validities by experts; one in guidance and counselling and two others in measurement and evaluation. To establish reliability a sample of 30 youths from Bayelsa State who were not part of the sample for this study were administerd the questionnaire, Cronbach alpha reliability statistics was used to compute the general reliability coefficient of (SMIOBI) to be 0.76 and (NIAS) to be 0.79. The researcher engaged the services of two trained researchers who were properly guided on what to do and the instruments were retrieved immediately after administration. Simple regression was used to answer research question 1-3 and their corresponding hypotheses was also tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results of this study were presented in the tables as follows:

Research Question One: To what extent does social networking sites predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State?

Hypothesis One: Social networking sites does not significantly predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Table 1: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Prediction of social networking sites and national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State?

Model	R R Square		Std. Error of Estimate	Decision	
1	.559 ^a	.467	6.59928	Mid Prediction	

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

Table 1 shows that there is a moderate positive relation between social networking sites and national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State R=0.559. The adjusted R square value=0.467. This implies that 46.7% of national Insecurity among youths can be explained by networking sites while the remaining 53.3 % can be due to other factors not included in this model.

Table 2: Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Social networking sites predict National Insecurity among Youths in Rivers State

Source	Sum of Squares (SS)	Df	Mean Square	F. Ratio	P-value	Remark
Regression	426.979	1	426.979	8.492	.003	S
Residual	17833.113	398	43.551			
Total	18260.092	399				

Linear R $(r_p) = .559^a$

R. Square $(r^2) = .467$

Standard Error of Estimate =6.59928

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 2: shows that for every increase by 1SD in the social networking score, there will be an increase of 0.15 SD in the scores of national insecurity among youths in Rivers State

- a. Dependent Variable: National insecurity
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Social networking

The coefficient table shows that the prediction is significant (F=8.49, DF=1, 398, p<0.05), hence HO1 which state that social networking sites does not significantly predict national Insecurity among youths therefore is rejected.

Research Question Two: To what extent does video sharing and hosting sites predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Two: Video sharing and hosting sites does not significantly predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Prediction of Video sharing and hosting sites and national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State

Model	R R Square		Std. Error of Estimate	Decision	
1	.876 ^a	.087	6.60654	High Prediction	

Source: SPSS Output, 2023 a. Dependent Variable: national insecurity b. predictors: (constant), video sharing and hosting sites

Table 3: Shows that there is a very high relationship between video sharing and hosting sites and national insecurity (R= 0.876). The adjusted R square value= 0.87 shows that only 87% of national insecurity among rivers state youth can be explianed by video sharing and messaging sites. The remaining 13% in the national insecurity among youths can be attributed to other factors not included in the model.

Table 4: Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis on the Prediction of Video sharing and Hosting sites and National Insecurity among youths in Rivers State

Source	Sum of Squares (SS)	Df	Mean	F.	P-value	Remark
			Square	Ratio		
Regression Residual	476. 979	1	476.979	8975.2	.004	S
Residual	18333.113	398	43.551			
Total	18810.092	399				

Linear R $(r_p) = .876^a$

R. Square $(r^2) = .087$

Standard Error of Estimate = 6.60654

Source: SPSS Output, 2023. a. Dependent Variable: national insecurity b. Predictors: (Constant), video and image sharing site

The coeficient table shows that the prediction is significant (F= 8975.2, DF=1, 398, p<0.05). Therefore, HO2 is rejected, implying that image and video sharing site significantly predicts national insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: To what extent does illegal oil bunkering predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three: Illegal oil bunkering does not significantly predict national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Table 5: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Prediction of Illegal oil Bunkering and National Insecurity among Youths in Rivers State.

Model	R	R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Decision
1	.644 ^a	.597	5.20843	Moderate
	.044	.391	3.20043	Prediction

Source: SPSS Output, 2023 a. Dependent Variable: national insecurity b. Predictors: (Constant), illegal oil bunkering

Table 5: shows that there is a positive moderate relationship between illegal oil bunkering and national insecurity among youths in Rivers State (R= 0.644). With an adjusted R-square value of 0.59.7, it implies that 59.7% of the threat to national insecurity can be explained by illegal bunkering activities among youths in Rivers State while the remaining 36.3% can be due to other factors not included in this model.

Table 6: Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis on the Prediction on Illegal oil bunkering and National Insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Source	Sum of Squares (SS)	Df	Mean	F. Ratio	P-value	Remark
			Square			
Regression	8947.539	1	8947.539	317.575	.002	S
Residual	90793.560	398	27.117			
Total	99741.099	399				

Linear R $(r_p) = .644^a$

R. Square $(r^2) = .597$

Standard Error of Estimate = 5.20843

Source: *SPSS Output*, **2023.** a. Dependent Variable: National insecurity scores b. Predictors: (Constant), illegal oil bunkering

Table 6 shows that for every increase by 1 SD in the illegal oil bunkering scores there will be an increase of 0.15 SD in the national insecurity score among youths in Rivers State.

Table 6 shows that the prediction is significant (F= 317.58, df=1, 398, p<0.05), hence HO3 is rejected. This implies that illegal oil bunkering significantly predict national insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study are summarized as shown below:

- 1. It study revealed that social networking sites significantly predicted national insecurity among youths in Rivers State.
- 2. It was found that video sharing and hosting sites significantly predicted national insecurity among youths in Rivers State.
- 3. The study showed that Illegal oil bunkering significantly independently predicted national insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings was based on summary of the findings of this study: The finding of research questions one and hypothesis one revealed that social networking sites significantly independently predicted social national insecurity among youths in Rivers State. This means that social networking sites like facebook Instagram etc may trigger national insecurity via the decietful information that are disseminated to the Youths. This finding is in line with Chikwere and Onyebukwa (2017) who found out that social media contributes towards various kinds of rumor attacks, promoting hate speech, tribal clashes and terrorism attacks which lead to high levels of insecurity and threats to lives and properties in the region and country at large.

The finding of research question two and hypothesis two showed that video sharing and hosting sites significantly independently predicted national Insecurity among youths in Rivers State. This means that video sharing and hosting sites illicit worrisome vidoes and images that may propel the youths to react violently and extinguish national peace. This finding is in line with that of Nsodu and Onwe (2017) who revealed that the social media have contributed highly to security challenges in Nigeria. The findings is also in line with, Dahiru and Mohammed (2021) who revealed that there is a link between ineffective use of new media and the spread of security threats in the country.

The finding of research questions three and hypothesis three indicated that illegal oil bunkering activities significantly independently predict national insecurity among youths in Rivers State Nigeria. This means that illegal oil bunkering which is an illegal oil rifining activity leads to the accumulation of ammunitions and the

exhibition of antisocial behaviour that can trigger national insecurity. This finding is in line with that of Mmahi and Chibueze (2018) who found out that national insecurity was on its increase as jobless youth with differing ethnic background who engage in illegal oil bunkering unleashes attack on the community. It also in line with the findings of Anyio (2015) who found out that the Nigeria as a nation has incurred an increase in the acquisition of light arms and ammunition as a result of illegal oil bunkering.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that social networking sites, image and video sharing sites and illegal oil bunkering significantly predict national insecurity among youths in Rivers State. Therefore, social media and illegal oil bunkering play an important role in the emergence of national insecurity among youths in Rivers State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.

- Despite the fact that social networking sites are not the only factor that predict national insecurity among
 youths, the researcher encourages that teachers, gaurdain, parents, and counselors in all setting to watch
 out for the kind of sites and information that their children and wards engage in. Bearing on mind that
 wrong sites and wrong information that are disseminated in social networking sites can lead national
 insecurity.
- 2. The researchers recommended that parents, lecturers as well as the guidance counsellors in all setting should help to sensitize and re-sensitize youths on the need to verify every image and video they see online, they should also be encouraged not to take any action without consulting appropriate personnel and agencies. This will enable them to react properly to social media videos and images.
- 3. Counsellors in all setting should pay more attention to the plight of youths and also advocate for youths to be heard, trained to have utility skills and also to be employed in various parasatals. This will enable the youths to shun illegal bunkering activities.

Implications for Counselling

The following are the counselling implications of this study:

- 1. There is a need to provide the youths with personal social counselling programs that will address the issue of social networking sites and national insecurity by the guidance-counsellors in our society.
- 2. Counselling services at all setting should be tailored towards helping the youths to effectively use social media sites and platforms. How these sites and the information shared on these sites or app can affect the security of every Nigerian should be disseminated.
- 3. Counselling services in all counselling settings should always be provided to youths who engage in illegal oil bunkering activities.
- 4. Counselling services should be provided to members of the general public on the best ways to help address issues of social media, illegal bunkering as it relates to national insecurity. Members of the general public should also be educated on how to prevent the spread of false or conflict driven social media information as well as illegal oil bunkering activities in Nigeria's macro environment.

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