



SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

**SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND
PARTICIPATION IN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREATER
ACCRA: A CASE OF AYAWASO WEST MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY, ACCRA**

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SEPTEMBER 2024

CANDIDATES' DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my original research, and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this institute or elsewhere. I am solely responsible for any shortcomings.

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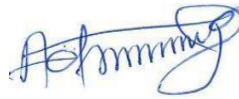
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SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the preparation of this dissertation was supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of dissertation laid down by Ghana Institute of Journalism.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to God Almighty for His strength and guidance throughout my academic journey. I also dedicate this work to my lovely mother, Mrs. Rebecca Afram, who first taught me the value of education and has been my pillar and rock during this wonderful journey. Her endless love, sacrifices and belief in my potential have been the foundation of all my achievements.

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ACRONYMS

TPB:	Theory of Planned Behaviour
UGT:	Uses and Gratifications Theory
LEAP:	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
MMDAs:	Metropolitan, Municipal And District Assemblies
RCCs:	Regional Co-ordinating Council

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the pivotal role of social media platforms in fostering community engagement and participation in infrastructure development within the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly (AWMA) of Greater Accra, Ghana. Historically, an inadequate public engagement has frequently plagued infrastructure development plans, which may have resulted in projects that don't fully address community needs. The way communities communicate and participate in local governance processes has significantly changed because of the widespread use of social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and X (Twitter). The purpose of this study is to ascertain the role social media plays in infrastructure and developmental projects within the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. This study employed a quantitative approach using questionnaires administered to residents and government representatives. Findings revealed the patterns of social media usage and engagement within the (AWMA) community, including the frequency and types of interactions related to infrastructure development projects. The efficiency of social media platforms in distributing information, encouraging conversation, and getting resident input are among the themes that emerged from the questionnaires. Furthermore, issues like digital literacy, unequal access, and the reliability of information found online were observed. The outcomes of this investigation contributed to enhance comprehension of the relationships among social media, community involvement, and infrastructure advancement inside local governance frameworks. The Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly and other local decision-making bodies can benefit from the successful use of social media should the community increase openness, diversity, and public involvement in the decision-making process.

Keywords: Greater Accra; Ghana; social media; community engagement; infrastructure; development

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The debate over the relevance of communication in the realisation of development is analogous to the discussion over the media's impact on audiences. Communication is the foundation of growth; development is centred on man, and man constitutes society. This means that man communicates with and influences the evolution of communities, which are all interconnected. According to Akpan (2012), communication for development is community-specific, thus, it respects local contexts, values, and customs while also facilitating participatory processes to address negative aspects.

Social media has quickly become an essential component of how people network and communicate with one another, transcending age divisions and demographics. People now widely recognise what was once considered a form of fun or entertainment as a tool for producing and delivering more serious content. The 21st century has seen the rise of a global community that spans geographical divides. While traditional recruitment approaches (flyers, newsletters, and traditional newspaper advertisements) remain effective, social media has the potential to reach a larger and more diversified population. With over a billion Facebook users, a similar number of YouTube viewers, and millions on X (Twitter), there is no longer a need to rely on traditional means.

The modern digital age has significantly altered how individuals engage with one another. Individuals can use a number of digital platforms to create, share, and exchange information, as well as network, share experiences, and express their ideas. With the introduction of these many platforms, social media has become incorporated into many facets of daily life. This integration reflects the move from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0. Web 1.0 is a one-way communication system in which

a website provides readers with information but does not allow for responses or detailed engagement without the use of additional software. In contrast, Web 2.0 is distinguished by its interactive features; bloggers can communicate with their audience and allow them to post responses.

Community engagement in infrastructure development entails the active participation of community members in the planning, decision-making, and implementation of initiatives that impact their lives. This engagement guarantees that infrastructure projects fulfil the community's actual requirements while also instilling residents with a sense of ownership and responsibility. Social media, with its extensive use and accessibility, has emerged as a vital instrument for increasing engagement.

Akpan (2012) defines community development as the procedures and practices that involve the engagement and participation of various interest groups, stakeholders, and actors, including those whose livelihoods these programmes aim to improve. Man is both the subject and the recipient of progress, according to Aneato and Solo-Aneato (2010). This indicates that in order for any development programme or idea to be perpetuated, the people must recognise the need for it and notify the government or development agency of its implementation.

Development is a multi-social, economic, and political well-being that aims to improve human living standards while also giving people complete autonomy over their lives and property. According to Aneato and Solo-Aneato (2010), development entails personal, community, or societal progress or advancement. This entails enhancing the economic, political, and socio-cultural sectors of society. According to Banba (2004) in Okon (2018), the notion of development is always characterised in terms of improving the standard of living, organisation, industrialisation,

principle adoption, and modernisation. These upgrades enhance a community's identity and reflect its developmental values. Community development refers to the active participation of community members in topics and challenges that affect their lives. The initiative aims to enhance the lives of neighbourhood members by providing basic facilities and educating them.

1.1. Statement of Problem

In recent years, social media has emerged as a significant instrument for increasing community engagement and participation, particularly in infrastructure construction. The Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly (AWMA), in Ghana, is no exception. This municipality, like many others, has seen substantial changes in the way information is distributed and individuals interact with local government systems. The rise of platforms like Facebook, X (Twitter), WhatsApp, and Instagram has transformed conventional patterns of community contact, providing new avenues for residents to express their views, mobilise resources, and participate in decision-making.

Despite the potential benefits of social media for community engagement, there has been little empirical research on its impact on infrastructure development in the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. Traditional forms of community interaction, such as town hall meetings and public forums, can have limited reach and participation. There is a need to understand how social media might supplement traditional techniques of infrastructure construction, resulting in a more inclusive and participatory approach.

1.2. Research Questions

The study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of social media on community participation in infrastructure projects at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly?
2. What challenges do residents at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly face when using social media for community engagement?
3. How widely used are social media platforms among the residents of Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly?
4. How effective is social media in informing the communities in the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly about infrastructure development projects?

1.3. Research Objectives

The primary goal of this study is to assessing social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development in the Greater Accra, Ghana using Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly as a case study. However, the precise objectives include to:

1. Determine the extent to which citizens of Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly use social media platforms to facilitate infrastructure development.
2. Assess the efficiency of social media in conveying information about infrastructure projects.
3. Ascertain how social media affects community participation in infrastructure project planning and implementation at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly.

4. Examine the obstacles and limitations of using social media to engage communities in infrastructure construction at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly.

1.4. Scope of the Study

The study will focus on the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly and will primarily examine the role of popular social media platforms such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, and WhatsApp. The research will be conducted through surveys and interviews with residents and local authorities.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study is significant in both practical and theoretical terms. The primary goal is to give evidence-based information to the government and the community for use in identifying and implementing best practices in the use of social media to improve development and citizen participation. Policy Makers and Local Authorities: The findings will help policymakers and local governments understand how to use social media to improve community engagement in infrastructure development. Community Members: Understanding the importance of social media can help community members become more involved in local governance and development activities. Researchers and academics: The research will add to the scholarly literature on social media and community engagement, particularly in the context of urban development in Ghana. This has numerous potential benefits for local governments, including providing a more robust evidence base for planning and policy development, allowing them to build trust-based relationships with local citizens, and improving the overall efficiency and cost-effectiveness of public service delivery.

1.6. Organisation of the Study

This paper is divided into five chapters. The first chapter covers the general introduction, which discusses the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the research and the research questions, the significance of the study, and also the organisation of the study. The second chapter covers the relevant literature review. Chapter three outlines the methodology employed in this paper, focusing on the research design, data collection sources, and processes, as well as the procedure and sample size. The study's findings are analysed and discussed in Chapter 4. The data is now given and examined, and the findings are based on the chapter one research objectives. The final chapter summarises the entire study with a summary, conclusions, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature to understand the role of social media in facilitating community engagement and participation in infrastructure development within the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. It provides a theoretical foundation and basic assumptions, reviews contemporary works, defines key terms, and discusses the importance of the study.

2.1.0 Theoretical Foundation

Theoretical foundation plays a crucial role in helping the reader to appreciate the nature and scope of the research problem and also provides guidance and support for the direction of the research study as theory always seeks to uncover solutions to fundamental inquiries. This theoretical exposition provided in this section is a structure that offers a comprehensive approach to the problem of this study. This study is grounded in mosaic of prominent theories that have shaped reader's understanding of a general overview of the theories and principles often discussed in the context of community engagement in the participation of infrastructure development literature by providing insightful research findings on some main assumptions about the role of social media in facilitating community engagement and participation in infrastructure development. The study takes a close look at some main assumptions about the role of social media in facilitating community engagement and participation in infrastructure development. The theories include the following

The assumption that Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly inhabitants utilize social media is based on the growing prevalence of internet and mobile technology in metropolitan Ghana. Urban areas,

especially Ayawaso West, often have greater rates of social media adoption due to improved internet infrastructure and literacy rates. The extensive usage of social media platforms such as Facebook, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp allow for real-time communication and involvement, making them a solid tool for community interaction and mobilisation.

The second assumption here is that, when used correctly, social media has the ability to greatly increase community engagement and participation. This is based on social media's participatory nature, which enables two-way communication between municipal authorities and residents. Comments, shares, likes, and live streaming allow citizens to express their views, ask questions, and participate in conversations about infrastructure projects and other community issues.

Lastly, this assumption is based on the belief that Ayawaso West inhabitants are eager and willing to participate in conversations and decisions concerning infrastructure development that impacts their lives. Social media offers a simple and accessible medium for such involvement, allowing locals to contribute without the necessity for physical presence, which many people find prohibitive.

2.1.1 Social Capital Theory

Sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988), and Robert Putnam (1993, 2000) pioneered Social Capital Theory, which emphasizes the value of social networks, norms, and trust. According to this theory, social capital can help a society coordinate and cooperate for its mutual benefit. Social capital is frequently divided into three types: bonding social capital (inside a group), bridging social capital (between groups), and linking social capital (connections with institutions or authorities). In the context of community participation, particularly with the rise of social media, the theory expands to explain how digital interactions and online networks

can develop and increase social capital. Social media platforms like Facebook, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp provide virtual venues for community members to communicate, share information, and work on projects such as infrastructure-building initiatives.

Enhancing Social Capital through Social Media

Connecting Community Members: Social media allows community members to connect beyond geographical boundaries. This relationship has the potential to foster the construction of online communities in which people share common interests, concerns, or goals for infrastructure development. Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) discovered that social media use is positively connected to the establishment and maintenance of social capital. Their study of Facebook users found that the platform helps people maintain existing offline contacts while also forming new ones, strengthening bonding and bridging social capital.

Fostering Trust: Trust is an important component of social capital, as it promotes cooperation and reduces the need for formal agreements. Social media can boost trust by providing open communication channels and instant feedback systems. Valenzuela, Park, and Kee (2009) found that social media use is linked to improved civic participation and trust among users. Their findings revealed that social media platforms allow users to engage in meaningful discussions and share credible information, creating community trust.

Encouraging Participation: Participation in community activities is an important indicator of social capital. Social media reduces obstacles to participation by making it easier for community members to engage in debates, express their ideas, and mobilise for collective action on infrastructure development issues. Hampton, Lee, and Her (2011) investigated the influence of

social media in promoting civic engagement and community participation. Their findings showed that social media encourages more participation in local issues by offering forums for discussion, information dissemination, and mobilisation.

2.1.1.1 Key Concepts of the Social Capital Theory

Bonding Social Capital: these are the strong bonds and close relationships that exist within a homogeneous group. These relationships are generally created between people with similar backgrounds, such as family members, close friends, and community members who share interests or identities. Characteristics: Homogeneity occurs when individuals in a group share comparable social, economic, or cultural roots. Mutual Support: There is a high level of trust and reciprocity, with members offering emotional and practical assistance to one another. Solidarity: a strong sense of belonging and loyalty within the group.

Role in Community Engagement: Enhancing Cooperation: Bonding social capital can boost intra-group cohesion, making it simpler to mobilise members for community activities and initiatives such as infrastructure development. Resource Sharing: It makes it easier to share resources and information within a group, which can be critical for collaborative issue solving and project implementation. Emotional Support: Creates a supportive environment that promotes involvement by mitigating individual risks and uncertainties. Residents in a neighbourhood with a strong sense of community may bond together to address local issues like enhancing park facilities or organising community clean-up days. WhatsApp groups, for example, can help these folks communicate and coordinate more effectively.

Bridging Social Capital Bridging social capital brings diverse groups together, building partnerships between people from various backgrounds. This type of social capital is required for accessing fresh knowledge, opportunities, and resources that are not available to a homogeneous group.

Characteristics

Diversity brings together people and groups from various social, economic, and cultural origins. Broader Networks: These are large networks that allow access to a variety of perspectives and resources. Innovation and possibilities: Promote the flow of new ideas and possibilities, which can lead to innovation and social advancement.

2.1.1.2 Role in Community Engagement

Information Exchange: Bridging social capital facilitates the interchange of information between diverse groups, which is critical for informed decision-making and inclusive participation in community projects. **Building Trust:** Promotes trust and understanding among all elements of the community, resulting in a more inclusive and cooperative environment. **Resource Mobilisation:** Access to a larger network enables the mobilisation of resources and assistance from many sectors, hence increasing the potential for large-scale infrastructure development. Social media platforms such as Facebook and X (Twitter) can help Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly inhabitants communicate with people from various backgrounds, local companies, and non-governmental organisations. These linkages might let communities collaborate on projects like building new schools or repairing road infrastructure.

Institutional Support: By linking social capital, community initiatives receive the backing and resources of official institutions, which is critical for the success of large-scale infrastructure projects. **Policy Influence:** Allows community members to advocate for their needs and objectives, hence influencing policy decisions and budget allocation. **Enhanced Legitimacy:** Projects and efforts backed by institutional players are frequently perceived as more genuine and credible, enabling greater community participation. The Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly can use social media to build and strengthen relationships with local government officials, development agencies, and other stakeholders. Platforms such as LinkedIn and official government pages on Facebook can enable direct connection and collaboration, ensuring that community infrastructure projects acquire the necessary support and approval.

Linking Social Capital: The relationships that individuals have with institutions or authorities are referred to as linking social capital. Vertical connections allow community members to obtain resources, information, and influence from formal institutions.

Vertical Connections: Connects individuals, communities, and organisations or power systems. **Access to Resources:** Allows for easier access to resources and support from institutional players such as government agencies, non-profits, and commercial sector organisations. **Influence and Advocacy:** This enables communities to influence decisions and policies that impact them.

2.1.1.3 Application in Infrastructure Development Initiatives

Information Sharing and Communication

Social media platforms facilitate the quick broadcast of infrastructure project information, such as updates, plans, and progress reports. Transparency can boost community trust and inspire active

engagement in development projects. Manetti, Bellucci, and Bagnoli (2017) highlighted the use of social media to promote stakeholder engagement in public infrastructure projects. They discovered that social media facilitates communication between project managers and community members, resulting in more inclusive and transparent project management.

Crowdsourcing and Feedback

Social media can be used to get community comments and input on infrastructure projects. This participatory method guarantees that projects reflect community needs and preferences, boosting the chances of successful implementation and acceptance. Brabham (2013) investigated crowdsourcing in public planning and infrastructure development, emphasizing how social media platforms may help gather useful community thoughts and comments.

Mobilisation and Advocacy

Social media networks allow communities to mobilise quickly in response to infrastructure challenges, lobbying for improvements, or voicing concerns. This collective action has the potential to influence decision-making and hold authority accountable. Kahne and Bowyer (2018) investigated how social media promotes civic and political involvement, demonstrating that these platforms are effective at organising community activities and influencing governmental decisions on infrastructure and other public issues.

Challenges and Considerations

While social media has enormous potential for increasing social capital and allowing community participation in infrastructure development, numerous obstacles must be addressed: Unequal

access to social media can result in unequal engagement and representation, misinformation can weaken trust and hinder meaningful engagement, balancing transparency and privacy is key when using social media for community interaction.

Conclusion

Social Capital Theory is a useful paradigm for comprehending the impact of social media on community participation and infrastructure growth. Social media can dramatically boost social capital by linking community members, creating trust, and encouraging involvement, resulting in more successful and inclusive infrastructure development efforts. To fully reap the benefits of digital interaction, however, the problems connected with it must be addressed.

2.1.2 The democratic-participant media theory

The hypothesis was proposed in response to criticism of private or public monopolies' domination over mass media. According to the Virtual University of Pakistan (2012), Asemah et al. (2016), the theory supports the right to new forms of communication for community interest groups in small-scale settings, challenging high-cost, commercialization, and state control. It is believed that everyone should have access to the media to express their views on society. Local communities were encouraged to build their own media to fulfil their requirements. This theory developed because of the audience's lack of active participation. The theory explains how citizens actively participate in information dissemination rather than simply receiving it. According to Okunna and Omenugha (2012), democratic-participant media theory applies to the growth of liberal democratic countries. The goal is to prevent the concentration of media information in the hands of a small group of individuals. The production and spread of ideas, information, and messages should not be solely controlled by a few individuals. This means that anyone can report or cover situations or

events and share them on social media platforms such as Facebook, blogs, WhatsApp, X (Twitter), e-mail, and YouTube. This approach allows for fast feedback from government and development entities.

Principles of democratic-participant media theory

Collaborative Communication: The democratic-participant media theory emphasises the value of participatory communication, in which community members actively create and share material. This technique differs from the traditional model, which relies on a few gatekeepers to govern information flow. Carpentier (2011) emphasises that participatory communication enables more varied views to be heard, resulting in more democratic and inclusive media settings. This is especially true in the context of social media, where platforms like X (Twitter) and Facebook allow users to create and share material, participate in discussions, and mobilise for social issues.

Localism: Localism is a central tenet of democratic-participant media theory. It emphasises the need for the media to focus on local issues, culture, and concerns in order to ensure that the information is relevant and useful to the community. According to Lewis (2019), local media can improve community bonds and provide a forum for local views that would otherwise be ignored in national or global media narratives. Social media platforms have made it easier for local communities to share news and information, therefore promoting localism.

Participation at the grassroots level: The theory promotes grassroots involvement in media processes. This suggests that ordinary people, rather than professional journalists or media producers, should be able to engage in media development and dissemination. According to Fuchs (2020), grassroots involvement democratises media production by allowing for a diversity of

opinions and cultivating a more involved citizenry. Social media exhibits this notion by allowing users to participate in content creation and delivery, ranging from blogging to video production.

2.1.2.1 Applications in Infrastructure Development

The principles of democratic-participant media theory can be successfully applied to community infrastructure development efforts like the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. Communities can improve participative communication, localism, and grassroots participation in infrastructure projects by using social media.

Enhanced Communication and Participation: Social media platforms provide direct communication between municipal authorities and residents, resulting in more inclusive and transparent discussions about infrastructure projects. Mattoni and Treré (2019) discovered that social media may be used for participatory governance, allowing citizens to contribute ideas, express concerns, and participate in development projects.

Focusing on Local Issues: Local communities can use social media to identify specific infrastructure needs and priorities, ensuring that development initiatives are in line with their interests and expectations. Hampton et al. (2020) explain how social media enables local communities to organise around local concerns by offering a forum for information sharing and resource mobilisation for local infrastructure initiatives.

Empowering Grassroots Movements: Grassroots movements can use social media to lobby for infrastructure upgrades, rally support, and hold authorities accountable. Jenkins et al. (2016) show how grassroots movements use social media to shape policy and support community-driven development efforts.

Conclusion

Democratic-participant media theory lays out a framework for understanding how media can be utilised to increase community involvement and participation in infrastructure development. This philosophy is well-suited to social media platforms since it emphasises participatory communication, localism, and grassroots involvement. These platforms can enable communities, such as the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly, to actively shape their infrastructure and development projects.

2.1.3 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

Ajzen (1991) established the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which is a psychological theory that connects beliefs and behaviour. It proposes that three major elements influence an individual's intention to engage in a behaviour: attitudes towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. This idea can be used to better understand how social media impacts community engagement and participation in infrastructure construction. According to Tagoe and Abakah (2014), individuals' willingness to participate in community development through online media is influenced by their belief and faith in the crowdsourcing process. In its basic form, "the Theory of Planned Behaviour is guided by three considerations: beliefs about likely consequences of the behaviour (behavioural beliefs), beliefs about the normative expectations of others (normative beliefs), and beliefs about the presence of factors that may further or hinder the performance of the behaviour (control beliefs).

2.1.3.1 Key Components of TPB

Attitudes Towards the Behaviour: Attitudes describe how positively or negatively a person perceives the behaviour in question. In the context of social media and community involvement, this refers to users' favourable or negative opinions of utilising social media to participate in infrastructure development. According to research, good attitudes towards social media use for community engagement are linked to higher levels of participation (Ham et al., 2016). Social media platforms provide easily available, real-time information and communication channels, which can develop positive views towards their use in community initiatives.

Subjective Norms: Subjective norms refer to perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a behaviour. This covers the impact of family, friends, peers, and the larger community on a person's decision to use social media. Yang and Wang (2019) discovered that when community members feel high levels of social support and encouragement from their network, they are more inclined to participate in infrastructure development conversations on social media platforms.

Perceived Behavioural Control: Perceived Behavioural control relates to an individual's sense of the ease or difficulty of carrying out a behaviour, which is impacted by previous experiences and future challenges. In the context of social media, this refers to how easy it is to connect with community activities via social media platforms. Alomari et al. (2020) found that perceived ease of use and self-efficacy with social media technologies dramatically increase people's desire to join in online community building projects.

Application of TPB in Social Media-Facilitated Community Engagement

Enhancing Positive Attitudes: To improve community engagement through social media, it is critical to foster positive views towards its use. Municipal governments can use social media to highlight success stories of community-driven infrastructure projects, demonstrating their effectiveness and advantages. For example, Alharbi and Drew (2019) argue that displaying visible results of social media-facilitated projects might positively influence community sentiments and inspire increased engagement.

Leveraging Subjective Norms: Building a supportive community climate that normalises and encourages social media activity can have a major impact on participation rates. This can be accomplished through campaigns including community leaders and influencers who can encourage and model social media usage for community involvement. According to Venkatesh et al. (2016), important community members shape subjective norms and motivate others to join in online activities.

Improving Perceived Behavioural Control: Making social media platforms more user-friendly and providing training sessions might help enhance perceived behavioural control. This will boost community members' confidence in their abilities to engage effectively through social media. According to Zhao et al. (2018), training programmes and seminars can considerably improve users' skill and confidence in using social media technologies for civic involvement.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour offers a thorough framework for understanding how social media might help communities interact and participate in infrastructure development. Social media

platforms have the potential to empower communities and improve participatory government by altering attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

2.1.4 Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is a well-known theory for explaining why people actively seek out specific media channels and material to meet a variety of requirements. According to UGT, media users actively choose media to meet their psychological and social requirements, which include information, personal identity, integration and social contact, and entertainment. Applying UGT to the study of social media's role in community involvement and infrastructure development can provide light on how and why community members use these platforms to take part in local development activities.

One of the main concepts of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is Information Seeking, one of the key reasons people use social media is to obtain information. Residents use social media for timely updates, news, and extensive information about local initiatives as part of their community engagement and infrastructure development. Whiting and Williams (2013) discovered that information seeking is a strong motivator for social media use, as users rely on these networks to stay up to date on local and worldwide happenings. Social Media enhances social interaction by allowing users to connect, communicate, and work with one another. This interaction is critical for community participation because it allows residents to discuss issues, share perspectives, and plan collaborative actions. According to Chen (2011), social media acts as a virtual community in which users engage in conversations, promoting social cohesiveness and collective action. According to Joinson (2008), the primary benefits of social media are self-expression and identity creation, since individuals curate information that represents their personal and societal identities. Users can

utilise social media platforms to express their identities and align with causes and groups that share their values. In infrastructure development, community members can utilise social media to advocate for projects that align with their own ideas and community identity.

UGT Applied to Community Engagement in Infrastructure Development

Improving the dissemination of information: Social media allows local governments and community leaders to efficiently spread information about infrastructure initiatives. These platforms enable the rapid distribution of project information, schedules, and input possibilities. Lovejoy, Waters, and Saxton (2012) highlighted that social media is an important tool for organisations to exchange information and engage stakeholders in two-way communication, hence increasing transparency and involvement.

Mobilising Community Action: Social media can help community people get involved in public meetings, online forums, and collaborative infrastructure development efforts. It is an organising tool for advocacy groups and community movements. Meraz (2015) emphasised social media's significance in mobilising political and social movements, emphasising its ability to rally community support for local initiatives and infrastructure projects. Developing Community Identity and Support According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), social media platforms contribute to the development of social capital by linking individuals with similar interests and values, enhancing community identification and collective support for local activities. Community members can use social media to show their support for infrastructure initiatives that are consistent with their shared identity and values. This collective support can improve community relationships and establish a sense of control over local issues.

Mensah (2020) found that social media engagement in Ayawaso West increased community participation and openness in local government projects, resulting in more successful infrastructure outputs. Residents in the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly have been engaged in numerous infrastructure initiatives through the use of social media. Project updates, public consultations, and feedback mechanisms can now be shared more easily thanks to platforms like Facebook and X (Twitter).

UGT offers a useful paradigm for comprehending the role of social media in promoting community engagement and participation in infrastructure development. Social media platforms can effectively engage community people and increase engagement in local development activities by meeting their demands for information, social contact, personal identity, and enjoyment. To fully reap these benefits, municipal governments must proactively harness social media, guaranteeing inclusive and open communication that is responsive to the needs and values of their communities.

2.2 Review of Literature

The definition of "Social Media" varies amongst users, ICT experts, and authors. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media refers to internet-based apps that enable the creation and sharing of user-generated content, building on the conceptual and technological roots of Web 2.0. Web and mobile technologies facilitate interactive communication between individuals, organisations, and communities. Examples of social media platforms include websites like Facebook, X (Twitter), Flickr, and YouTube, as well as participatory features like retweeting on X (Twitter).

Social media tools, such as X (Twitter)'s re-tweeting and Facebook's comment options, allow users to interact with them, unlike traditional media such as television and radio. According to Sweetser

and Lariscy (2008), social media is a "read-write Web," where users actively contribute to material rather than passively watching it. Most definitions of social media emphasise user-generated content as a key component.

Social media's ability to facilitate user-to-user interaction sets it apart from traditional media, which relies on top-down news distribution (Clark and Aufderheide 2009). Social media distinguishes itself from traditional media by providing people with more choices. Choice allows individuals to learn about their interests through social media, bypassing traditional media's gatekeeping role. Social media decreases the shared experience of traditional media outlets, but also fosters a network of persons with similar interests and tastes.

In recent years, social media has influenced political communication in four significant ways. The growth of network television channels, specialised periodicals, and websites has led to increased audience segmentation. According to Stroud (2008), audience segmentation in social media relies on two factors: variety of coverage and selective exposure to material that matches individuals' preferences. Social media allows users to read and discuss certain subjects while connecting with others who share their ideas. Individual voters may become concentrated on specific concerns, making it difficult for them to relate to the larger issues of a general election. Various media and information platforms can divide political communication into multiple sectors, each addressing the same topics from a unique perspective.

Social Media Tools

Online technologies connect people through networks and communities, which can be narrow or broad in scope. Facebook is the most popular social networking platform globally, whereas

LinkedIn focuses on business, education, and interest connections. The most effective social networks enable users to search for members based on "friends," group associations, interests, and background, providing unlimited opportunities to connect. Social networking has become so prevalent in our daily lives that many Web 2.0 platforms, including photo sharing sites like Flickr and Snapfish, wikis like Wikipedia, and media sites like The New York Times, offer links to Facebook or their own social networking features. According to the Federal Web Managers Council, government agencies can benefit from social networking by using platforms like Facebook to create issue-specific communities, recruit employees, and foster collaboration among workers from various agencies (Antil, 2009; Riely, 2010; Rogstad, 2009).

Blogging. Blogs are intended for a specific readership and are frequently updated with new content. Blogs aim to foster engagement and dialogue between contributors and readers through informal communication. The Federal Web Managers Council recommends using blogs in government to engage citizens on specific issues and provide a more approachable image (Hernandez, 2011; Smetanka, 2011).

Microblogging. Microblogging involves brief, fast bursts of blogging that allow for rapid exchange of ideas among linked individuals. X (Twitter) is a popular microblogging platform with a 140-character limit for posts. "Tweets" can be viewed online or sent as text messages to mobile devices. Microblogging fosters a dialogue amongst tweeters, who respond to each other's rapid posts, Eg. **X (Twitter).**

Visual social media. Facebook's capacity to share information in various formats, including photographs and videos, is one of its key benefits. Other visual social media platforms, such as Instagram and Snapchat, are also being discussed for their potential benefits to local government.

YouTube's growth highlights the power of video as a social media platform. Almost everyone with an email account has received a link to a "viral" video, which receives hundreds of thousands of "hits" (views) in a couple of hours. According to Shark (2015), video tools are increasingly used to improve transparency and engagement in government operations. High-definition (HD) video and sound allow for virtual interaction between citizens and government representatives.

Wikis. Wikis are a collection of online pages that share information and offer a virtual workplace for users.

Wikipedia is a popular wiki site with dynamic material created, shaped, contributed to, and modified by multiple users. Wikis can be open, enabling anyone to contribute and view content, or closed, restricting access to specific community members. Wikis are effective tools for information sharing, and government organisations can utilise them to design policies with contributor input and access to a shared library of documents.

2.2.1 Role of Social Media in Democracy

Recently, social media has played a big influence in global politics. Social media caused a significant shift in global politics. Revolutions and social media campaigns have led to the downfall of long-standing dictatorial regimes. As the Internet became more ubiquitous, faster, and accessible to non-technical societies, social networking and mutual services grew rapidly, allowing people to communicate and share interests in a variety of new ways. Oyesomi, et al. (2014). Modern attitudes and technological advancements appear to be diminishing the prestige of mainstream media. Conversations are important to social media, which replicates the real world.

Social media allows users to communicate with their social network, other users, and the public by creating and commenting on information. (Surjit, Manpreet, 2013).

This shows that, Social media has become a valuable platform for citizens to discuss both personal and national issues. Facebook and X (Twitter) have become powerful influencers and opinion makers in the 21st century, beyond being mere online technologies. The use of social media in politics has increased in recent years. Since Barack Obama's record-breaking use of social media for political purposes in the 2008 US presidential election, nations and politicians worldwide have embraced the platform to engage citizens and candidates in the political process.

Similarly, Donald Trump's presidential election campaign in 2016 revolutionised political communication by utilising social media platforms, rather than the traditional one-way communication approach with limited feedback. This event drew attention to social networks, particularly Facebook, which has become a popular platform for Ghanaian politicians to learn from.

2.2.2 The Concept of Community and Community Development

Many authors have defined community in various ways. However, both definitions communicate the same meaning. Fortmann and Roe (2013) describe communities as occupying a specific geographical place, albeit this is not always the case. However, communities can be characterised by shared traits such as culture, language, custom, law, geography, class, and race. According to UNDP (2005), a community is a group of people who live in a physically defined area or interact because they share common social, economic, or political goals. Communities do have interest groups and are made up of individuals, but they are more than just that. The existence of

community cannot be shown; it is a philosophical starting point accepted, however implicitly, by the majority of essential players (Schouten & Moriarty, 2003).

According to Shaeffer (2008), communities are either homogenous or heterogeneous groups of people that may be united or in conflict, and are controlled and managed by democratically elected leaders who function largely autonomously from other levels of government. Shaeffer (2008) also contended that certain communities are governed by leaders imposed from above who represent central powers. In contrast, Bray (2006) divided communities into three groups. The first is a geographic community, which is defined by the members' place of residence, such as a village or district. The second category is ethnic, racial, and religious, in which membership is based on ethnic, racial, or religious identification and frequently crosses geographical boundaries. The third type is communities based on common family or educational issues, which include parent groups and other organisations centred on families and a shared concern for each other's well-being. Zenter (2002) defined a community as having three aspects. A community is a formally or informally organised group structure where members perform roles to solve challenges related to communal occupation and habitational space. Second, certain people of the community identify collectively with the occupied space.

Community development in Africa is a complicated process involving a variety of players, including governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), and communities themselves. The primary purpose is to improve community members' quality of life by implementing sustainable development programmes that address social, economic, and environmental issues. Community development is becoming increasingly important in meeting the basic needs of urban/rural communities and improving their living

conditions to meet acceptable norms. Community development encourages people to develop themselves with minimal government intervention. Community participation involves identifying and empowering individuals to organise, manage, control, and review collective actions in collaboration with those who can help.

In Ghana, both governmental and non-governmental activities have prioritised community development. Ghana's approach to community development parallels general patterns observed throughout Africa, with special adjustments to the local situation. Ghana has adopted decentralisation strategies to empower local governments and communities. This has enabled more localised decision-making and enhanced the responsiveness of development activities to community demands (Asiedu & Agyei-Mensah, 2018). A number of programmes have been launched to alleviate poverty, enhance health, education, and economic empowerment. The Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme, for example, provides cash transfers to poor households in order to improve their economic stability (Mensah, 2021).

Infrastructure development has received significant investment in the last 10-15 years which including roads, healthcare facilities, schools, and water supply systems. These initiatives are frequently carried out with community participation to ensure that they fulfil local needs (Adjei 2019). Information and communication technologies (ICT) have played an important role in community development. Digital tools are employed in education, healthcare, and economics to improve access to information and services (Boateng, 2020). Environmental sustainability is a vital component of Ghana's community development. Initiatives such as reforestation, garbage management, and renewable energy projects seek to safeguard the environment while also supporting economic development. Community development activities revolve around

improvements in health and education. Priority has been given to programmes that promote mother and child health, disease prevention, and excellent education (Gyamfi, 2023).

Challenges: Despite development, obstacles such as insufficient financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, political instability, and socio-cultural hurdles remain. Addressing these issues demands collaborative efforts and long-term commitment from all stakeholders (Kwasi, 2019).
prospects: The increased use of technology, greater international backing, and growing understanding of the necessity of sustainable development all present substantial prospects for promoting community development in Ghana and across Africa (Adusei, 2023).

2.2.3 The Concept of Social Media as Communication Tool

Murthy (2013) defines social media as the ease with which anyone may utilise the internet to share knowledge, cooperate, and develop relationships. Agichtein et al. (2008) and Graham (2011) distinguish social media from traditional media in terms of quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy, and permanence. It uses a dialogic transmission system with multiple sources and receivers, as opposed to traditional media's monologist transmission model with a single source and several receivers. Social media platforms include Facebook, X (Twitter), WhatsApp, blogs, LinkedIn, Instagram, and more (Aichner and Jacob, 2015). Communication is at the heart of social media's defining framework. Although internet penetration varies globally, social media is widely used as a communication tool due to its viral nature and ability to spread messages quickly (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Access to social media is limited in underdeveloped nations due to insufficient internet connections and low power supply (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Zhou et al., 2015). Poverty, ignorance,

intermittent power supply, and lack of awareness of social media use (e.g., smartphones) might hinder the efficiency and efficacy of internet-connected devices. Social media can lead to "depoliticization" by allowing individuals to plan their own activities without relying on political officials. People with strong opinions on social media may nonetheless be hesitant to vote in elections (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). Social media users, even if they do not vote, can spark protests and uprisings like the Arab Spring and Occupy Movements, thereby destabilising the state and making it unmanageable.

Concept of Community Participation

Community participation involves engaging residents in decision-making to address communal problems and concerns. Cavaye (2010) defined engagement in development as community people' involvement in pre-planned programmes with outside support. Community participation refers to community involvement in interventions or projects by governmental, philanthropic, non-profit, or civil society organisations. Community participation refers to the active involvement of community members in project planning and execution, where the main objectives are based on the community's ideas in decision-making (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2018; Mansuri & Rao, 2004; Wang et al., 2016). According to Ahiabor (2017) and Ratanavaraha and Jomnonkwao (2013), community participation involves designing and executing programmes with deliberate collaboration to address concerns. According to Grant (1979), community participation involves individuals taking on decision-making responsibilities. To summarise, the preceding concepts demonstrate the diverse definition of "participation" in terminology.

Traditional Ghanaian societies rely heavily on chiefs and elders to play important roles. They wield enormous power and are frequently regarded as keepers of culture and tradition. Their support and

participation are critical to the success of any community endeavour. In traditional settings, decisions are often reached through consensus. Community meetings, or "durbars," are popular places for members to debate concerns, express their viewpoints, and form collective agreements. Community members traditionally engage in communal labour, also called as "nnoboa" or "communal labour." This entails combining labour and resources to achieve common aims, such as constructing infrastructure or organising events.

2.2.4 Social Media and Community Development

Social media provides information needed for community development. According to Aneato and Solo-Aneato (2010), it helps bridge the gap between development experts and the community by encouraging connection and communication. It's changed how people engage and communicate globally. According to Igbozuruckwu, Iwuchukwu, and Tubo (2017), people now have the freedom to generate their own news and access various perspectives through social media, which is perceived as free from control. social media is a valuable instrument for community development practitioners because to its ability to reach a large audience (Mukhtar, 2020). Community development practitioners use social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram to raise awareness and solicit funding for their projects (Hoffman et al., 2018). Mass media plays a crucial role in enhancing community development work due to its impact on outreach, support, and awareness.

The role of social media in community development

In the digital world, social media has emerged as a potent weapon for discussing any public issue, and individuals are sometimes eager to participate and express their opinions. Social media plays

an important part in developing an online community since it allows you to discuss all of these topics on a single platform. On a community forum, you can add thousands of people to one group because it was difficult to stand half a dozen people in one place to collect their opinions; however, with the help of social media, you can learn the perspectives of many people at once.

Social media and community are not interchangeable concepts. Social media facilitates communication and connection. We all have groups of friends, relatives, co-workers, and others with whom we communicate on a daily basis, and social networking sites assist in connecting them. You are connected with some people you already know through the social networking platform, but the social community allows you to communicate with a variety of people in one location. The most significant distinction between social media and communities is that communities are made up of people from various backgrounds and histories who, while they have never met before, are on the same page because they share an interest.

People join or build social communities to debate public issues. In general, a business owner wants to receive feedback on their product from a variety of people. The social media community functions as a debate forum. On this portal, people rarely know one another. Social media communities are comprised of social networking sites. The social networking software is constantly gaining popularity among users. Microblogging, messaging apps, forums, and other media sharing platforms are opening up new avenues of opportunity.

The spread of social media has had a tremendous impact on the level of interaction between citizens and governments. Representatives, city leaders, entire departments, and even cities themselves have official accounts on Facebook, X (Twitter), and other social media platforms. As a result, residents and community members can provide real-time feedback on city operations and

decision-making. And, because the most popular social media sites are all free, they provide a low-to no-cost means of direct communication between governments and residents.

Engage with residents directly: One advantage of adopting social media is that the public may observe, comment, ask questions, and receive direct responses about local operations and decision-making in real time. Public trust in government has long been an issue, and many people want to see more transparency and responsibility from their elected authorities. Social media is an easy tool to share local news and events with citizens, humanising government officials and staff while also displaying the actual work that is done on a daily basis.

Community participation: Communities play an important role in fostering participation by providing a solid foundation for social and civic engagement. They serve as incubators for shared interests and ideals, allowing people to join together, collaborate, and confront local concerns as a group. Various community-based projects and programmes, such as neighbourhood watch groups, food banks, and cultural festivals, actively promote participation by providing chances for individuals to get involved. Success stories abound, with several examples of communities banding together to effect positive change, ranging from revitalising public places to assisting vulnerable members via mutual assistance networks. These examples demonstrate the effectiveness of community involvement in generating a sense of belonging and driving real influence.

Whilst social media usage rises across demographics, young people continue to be the most active users on all platforms. Certain platforms may be best suited for outreach to young people; for example, Instagram usage declines with age. Understanding how different demographic groups

interact with social media platforms can assist cities in tailoring their efforts and crafting postings for specific citizens.

2.3 Contemporary works

Akpan (2012) defines community development as the procedures and practices that involve the engagement and participation of various interest groups, stakeholders, and actors, including those whose livelihoods these programmes aim to improve. Akpan further asserted that, communication for development is community-specific, thus it respects local contexts, values, and customs while also facilitating participatory processes to address negative aspects. By involving community members in the planning, decision-making, and implementation stages of development projects, communication becomes a two-way process. This participatory approach empowers residents by instilling a sense of ownership and responsibility in development initiatives. Community-specific communication builds trust and collaboration between development organisations and the community. Residents who believe their culture and beliefs are honoured are more inclined to participate actively and support development activities. This trust is required for the long-term viability of development projects.

Community engagement in infrastructure development comprises active participation of community people in the planning, decision-making, and execution of programmes that affect their daily lives. This involvement guarantees that infrastructure projects meet the community's actual requirements while also developing a sense of ownership and responsibility in people (Smith, 2015). Social media, with its widespread use and accessibility, has emerged as a critical tool for promoting participation. Platforms like Facebook, X (Twitter), and WhatsApp allow for timely

information, feedback gathering, and increased participation, improving transparency and confidence between community members and authorities (Dare, 2018; Abubakar, 2020).

2.3.1 Challenges/Limitations and Considerations in using social media

This section highlights the constraints of using social media for municipal and public activities. This article identifies key challenges and opportunities for social media as a tool for enhancing citizen engagement and municipal governance.

There are many challenges and limits prevent social media and networking from reaching their full potential in community development. Many people may be unable to afford certain technology, such as mobile devices and service contracts. Although computing costs have significantly fallen in recent years, access to social media and networking sites may still be out of reach for individuals in poverty or without broadband connection. Some individuals, particularly farmers in rural areas, may not utilise social media often due to their vocations or occupations. Another type includes urban labourers. Employees must often commute to work away from home. Although they may use social media, they rarely utilise it as they operate outdoors without internet connectivity for most of the day. They have less time to use social media compared to urban dwellers or those working in government or commercial offices. They will have increased access to social media.

Developing social media skills might be challenging for those with little time to study. Setting up accounts, learning new tools, and maintaining data might be difficult for community developers with limited experience in related technologies. Community developers may encounter resistance from community members to engage in virtual communication and connections. Virtual

technologies have the ability to alienate marginalised individuals, posing a serious issue for communities. Investing in training and skill development by community development organisations, like the Community Development Society, benefits both people and the profession as a whole. Third, there is a significant digital divide between "haves" and "have-nots" that is challenging to bridge. Access to high-speed internet connectivity is more prevalent in metropolitan areas than to rural areas. However, many people still aspire to use web-based technologies.

Social media and networking can lead to conflicts of opinion and undermine community development efforts aimed at inclusivity and diversity. New web-based technologies may lead to a more introverted, alone, and secluded population that are unable or unwilling to communicate with their neighbours in person. Fischer (2000) asserts that, citizen participation in future affairs as the "justification" of democracy. Citizen engagement not only defines the phrase but also helps legitimise policy formulation and implementation.

Despite having access to vast amounts of knowledge through social media, we have become overwhelmed by data. Web searches can be overwhelming, even for experienced community developers. Organising and managing community development information is crucial for practitioners to navigate the social media landscape. Despite current and future problems, there are numerous potential and success stories for community development organisations.

2.3.1 Social Media and Local Government

According to Wu & Crawford (2013) and Shark (2010b), municipal governments have pioneered the use of e-government and social media. In the late 1980s and 1990s, e-government initiatives focused on web-based communication. During this period, local governments, as well as some

state and federal agencies, experimented with online discussion boards and text chats to provide public services like information exchange and appointment-making (Bryer, 2010).

The Local Government Service of Ghana is a public service entity created by the Local Government Service Act of 2003 (Act 656), which has been repealed and replaced by the Local Governance Act of 2016 (Act 936). The Service exists "to provide effective administration and management of the country's decentralised local government system. Their functions summarise the roles of the LGS's various entities in ensuring local participation in mobilising and exploiting resources for development. Their mission is to Support Local Government to deliver value for money services through the mobilization, harmonization and utilization of quality human capacity and material resources to promote local and national development'.

The Local Government Service's general functions are to:

- provide technical assistance to MMDAs and RCCs to enable them to effectively perform their functions
- conduct organizational and job analysis for RCCs and MMDAs
- conduct management audits for RCCs and MMDAs in order to improve the overall management of the Service
- design and co-ordinate management systems and processes for RCCs and MMDAs, and
- assist the RCCs and MMDAs in the performance of their functions under Act 462, Act 480, and any other enactment, etc

Local governments have been early adopters of social media tools like X (Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube, demonstrating a keen understanding of their benefits (Shark, 2010b).

Local governments have more freedom to experiment with social media platforms than state or federal agencies, allowing for more inventive outreach strategies. Local governments often have limited financial resources, but the benefits of serving a smaller, well-known population allow for effective use of social media platforms to target individuals (Bollwitt, 2009). To effectively integrate social media into local government engagement efforts, clear goals must be developed. Clear goals are effective management tools, especially during times of transition (Ricucci, Meyers, Lurie & Han, 2004).

The importance of government-citizen engagement

Previous study has demonstrated that social media improves communication between local governments and citizens. If we now consider why local governments want to engage individuals in the typical processes of local government, we will see additional evidence of how social media supports this process. Some authors have already addressed the significance of social media in increasing transparency (Bonson et al 2015; Saez Martin et al 2015; Ellison and Hardey 2014). Although Royo et al. (2014) are suspicious of politicians' influence in social media adoption, they also cite the 'positive rhetoric' generally associated with social media's ability to facilitate two-way engagement with local government and the general public.

Linders (2012) mentions openness as a public benefit that can boost the value of local government. Peter John (Chapter 8, 2001) identified a number of issues confronting local governments as they entered the new millennium, including low voter turnout, a lack of public trust in government, and a disengagement with citizens in public discourse, despite Western Europe's and beyond relative economic stability. Since that moment of uncertainty for local government, we've witnessed the rise of Web2.0 technologies and the commencement of the 2008 financial crisis, resulting in a

crisis of opportunity for local governments. Linders (2012) notes how local governments have difficulty in developing cost-effective ways to deliver programmes and services while dealing with rising social demands. Adoption of social media, with its inherent co-production qualities, could thus be argued to be a requirement for local government, which needed to raise accountability and satisfy rising demands while working with limited resources. Social media is supposed to increase trust in citizens of government (Bonson et al, 2015; Ellison and Hardey, 2014; Pryor et al, 2015).

Local municipals can use these communities to provide them with a shared voice in programme implementation or service supply, giving them greater legitimacy than previously imagined. Second, the many-to-many paradigm offered by Government 2.0 projects challenges and diminishes more established or traditional elites in the design and execution of social services. Again, engagement on social media platforms aids local government efforts at inclusion and legitimisation. As a result, social media has played a critical role in building a new paradigmatic view of the connection between local government and citizens, promoting two-way communication, collaboration, and involvement among both society partners.

Conclusion

The studies indicated how citizens will communicate with local government when the government creates more interactive posts, and how citizens are more reluctant to participating with local government when information is broadcast from the inside out. As a result, the data show that approaches transplanted from traditional media are no longer relevant on social media platforms. Other studies imply that this may appeal to certain politicians who perceive social media as another function of political life that requires only a minimal amount of activity to meet transparency requirements.

2.4. Operational definitions of Terms

Throughout the study, there have been the usage of various phrases from the literature to help readers comprehend the key topic and its importance for analysis. These included the following:

Community Engagement: Involving local communities in the planning, decision-making, and implementation of development projects.

Citizen / public: They refer to all individuals or groups of people residing in the country in general.

For the purpose of this study this limited to community members. **Infrastructure Development:**

The development and enhancement of basic services and amenities like roads, water supplies, and public buildings.

Social Media: Online platforms that allow users to produce, share, and interact with content while also connecting with others.

Online Engagement: Engagement is how Internet users interact with a brand by like, commenting, sharing content or photographs, and other associated behaviours.

Governance: is defined as a government's ability to create and enforce regulations, as well as to provide services, regardless of whether the government is democratic (Fukuyama 2013).

Government: Government describes the formal organisations and processes that make binding decisions for society (Raadschelders, 2003).

Policy: refers to the government's desire to enact laws, regulations, rulings, decisions, or orders.

Public policy: refers to the government's acts and their underlying purpose.

2.5. Importance of the Study

Expanding the Knowledge Base: This study contributes to the increasing body of knowledge about digital communication and its effects on community engagement. By focusing on the specific context of Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly, it gives empirical facts and ideas that can be applied to other urban environments.

Identifying Best Practices: By analyzing successful social media use in increasing community engagement, researchers can find best practices and techniques that can be repeated in other areas.

This aids in the development of uniform ways for digital community engagement.

Literature Gaps: While there has been extensive research into the role of social media in political campaigns and general communication, its impact on infrastructure development in urban Ghana has received less attention. This study turns to fill that gap by providing a detailed understanding of how digital tools might be used in municipal governance and development efforts.

Policy Formulation: The report makes evidence-based recommendations for municipal authorities and policymakers on how to use social media to improve community engagement. This can help shape policies that include digital tools into government communication and engagement efforts.

Improving Public Participation: Authorities can use the findings of this study to create more effective public participation efforts. Understanding how different demographics use social media can assist adjust engagement tactics to encourage more diverse and inclusive participation in infrastructure development initiatives.

2.6. Conclusion reflecting gaps

The review of related studies revealed that a significant number of studies have looked at the influence of social media on elections, education and other areas as compared to the research topic at hand. The review of literature however revealed that, Social media can improve collaboration between citizens and municipalities. It will empower citizens to collaborate with municipal officials to develop and implement local public policies. This will provide citizens access to the same information as the municipality, allowing them to follow up and verify that the municipality addresses local issues and requirements. This will allow citizens to track the municipality's performance throughout the entire process. It will also encourage individuals to take more responsibility in local management, promoting equality.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the technique employed in this study to look into the function of social media in fostering community engagement and participation in infrastructure development at the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. It describes the research design, demographic and sampling methods, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and study constraints. These methodological approaches ensure a methodical approach to understanding social media's impact on community participation in municipal development programmes.

3.1 Methods

The study used a quantitative research approach to collect numerical data that could be statistically analysed to identify patterns and connections between the impact of social media on community engagement in infrastructure development in the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. Quantitative methods enable variable assessment as well as the identification of patterns and generalisations applicable to the larger population (Creswell, 2014).

3.2 Research Design

Creswell & Creswell (2018) define research design as the plan and procedures for conducting research, which range from general assumptions to precise methods of data collecting and analysis. It serves as a framework for addressing the study question in a methodical and logical manner. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016), research design is a general approach for answering research questions. It provides defined objectives drawn from the research questions, describes the sources from which data will be acquired, and discusses the study's limitations.

Kumar (2019) defines research design as a plan, structure, and method of investigation intended to provide answers to research questions or challenges. It outlines what the researcher will perform, from drafting the hypotheses and their operational implications to conducting the final data analysis.

A descriptive survey design was used to collect data from a large sample size, guaranteeing that the findings are statistically significant and applicable to the larger community. The quantitative methodology allows the study to rigorously measure variables and examine the links between social media use and community engagement levels (Creswell, 2014).

3.3. Population, Sampling Frame, Sample Size, and Sampling Techniques

Population: The term "population" in research refers to the total group of individuals or situations on whom the researcher seeks to draw conclusions. Different scholars have presented nuanced definitions of population, which are essential for developing and carrying out research. In his book "Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches," John W. Creswell defines population as "a group of individuals who have the same characteristic(s)" (Creswell 2018). This description emphasises the group's homogeneity in terms of the trait being studied, which can include demographics, behaviours, or other specific attributes. Saunders et al. describe population as "the full set of cases from which a sample is taken, this definition emphasises the comprehensive nature of a population, which includes all conceivable examples that fit the criteria established by the researcher. The target population for this study comprises citizens of the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly who are active on social media.

Sampling Frame: Lavrakas (2018) defines a sampling frame as a set of source materials or devices that allow researchers to identify and access elements of the target population, and that serves as a

bridge between the theoretical population and the actual sampling process. Groves et al. (2021) define a sampling frame as "the list of all elements in the target population that are used to select a sample. It is critical to assuring the sample's representativeness and the validity of the research findings. The target population for this study includes citizens of the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly who are active social media users.

Sample Size: The determination of sample size is an important part of research design since it affects the reliability and validity of the study's results. Scholars have offered many approaches and considerations for establishing optimal sample sizes in a variety of study areas. A sample size of 200 respondents was determined using Cochran's formula for sample size calculation, ensuring a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% (Cochran, 1977).

Sampling Techniques

Stratified random sampling is a well-known strategy in research for ensuring that subgroups within a population are appropriately represented in the sample. This technique divides the population into distinct subgroups (strata) and then randomly selects proportional samples from each segment. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016) define stratified random sampling as a method that divides the population into mutually exclusive strata and draws random samples from each. This guarantees that each subgroup is sufficiently represented, which improves the overall accuracy of the sample estimates. The strata consisted of age, gender, and social media platform usage. Respondents for the survey were picked at random from each strata.

3.4 Sources of Data

The data for this study were gathered from primary sources. Primary data are original data obtained directly from first-hand sources for the particular aim of the study. Data is obtained through direct engagement with participants, using methods like as surveys, interviews, observations, and experiments. Kumar (2019) defines primary data as information obtained directly from a source, precisely for the study subject at hand. Kumar emphasises that primary data is original and distinct because it is designed particularly to satisfy the research aims.

Structured questionnaires were used to acquire primary data from chosen respondents. The questionnaires were intended to collect data on social media usage, levels of community engagement, and participation in infrastructure development projects. To allow for quantitative analysis, the questionnaires contained both closed-ended and Likert scale questions.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis techniques have progressed dramatically in recent years, with technological and methodological breakthroughs improving the ability to extract useful insights from data. The acquired data was analysed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarise the data. Inferential statistics, such as chi-square testing and regression analysis, were used to investigate the correlations between factors and the impact of social media on community engagement and infrastructure development.

3.6. Ethical Issues

Ethical issues in research are critical for maintaining integrity, assuring participant wellbeing, and preserving scholarly work's legitimacy. The study followed ethical norms to ensure the research's integrity and anonymity. Before data collection began, participants were informed about the study's goal and given their consent. Confidentiality was preserved by anonymizing responses and ensuring that data was securely stored and only accessible to the researcher.

3.7. Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations and delimitations define the study's bounds and potential shortcomings. Understanding these notions aids in developing realistic expectations for what the research can and cannot accomplish.

Limitations: Limitations are constraints that are beyond the researcher's control and may have an impact on the study's conclusions or generalizability. These are fundamental flaws in the study design or methodology that the researcher recognises. First and foremost, due to time constraints, this study only included a tiny portion of the population sampled. To generalise the findings to larger groups, the study should have included more individuals. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias, as respondents might provide socially desirable answers. The cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to infer causality between social media use and community engagement.

Delimitations: The study focuses solely on the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions. Only active social media users were included in the sample, potentially excluding perspectives from non-users who might also engage in community activities.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREATER ACCRA: A CASE OF AYAWASO WEST MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY, ACCRA

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the data was gathered purposively and conveniently from people in the Greater Accra region specifically in Ayawaso West Municipal assembly its environs and analyzed in relation to the research objectives. This chapter discusses the result of the structured questionnaire responded by 200 respondents.

Before the initiation of the research study, the significance, rationale and purpose of the study were provided with the respondents in mind. Additionally, the respondents were also given the assurance that, all the data (responses) they will give will be used for the purpose of the research and the identities of respondents will be confidential. The charts below represent data collected from respondents on field.

4.1.0 Analysis of Key Findings

4.1.1. Demographics

Out of the total sampled respondents, 48 respondents representing 48% were females. On the other hand, 52 respondents representing 52% were males. Thus, the 52 respondents representing 52% who were males denotes the majority of respondents.

Figure 4.1.1

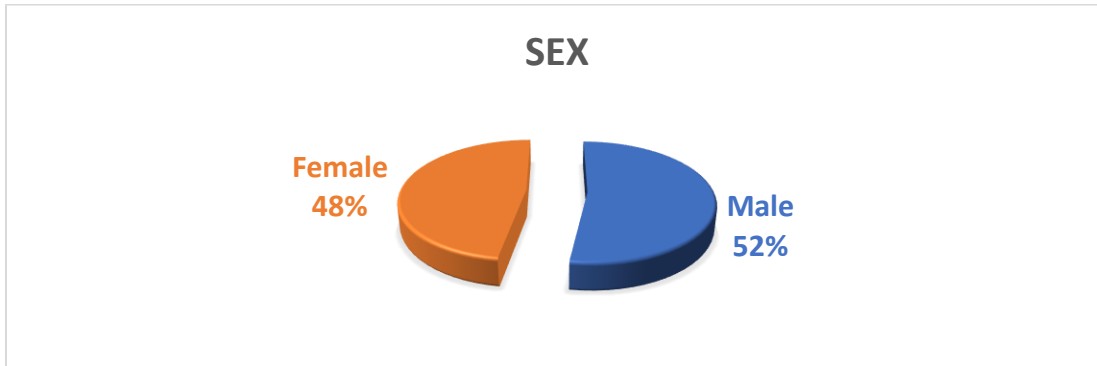
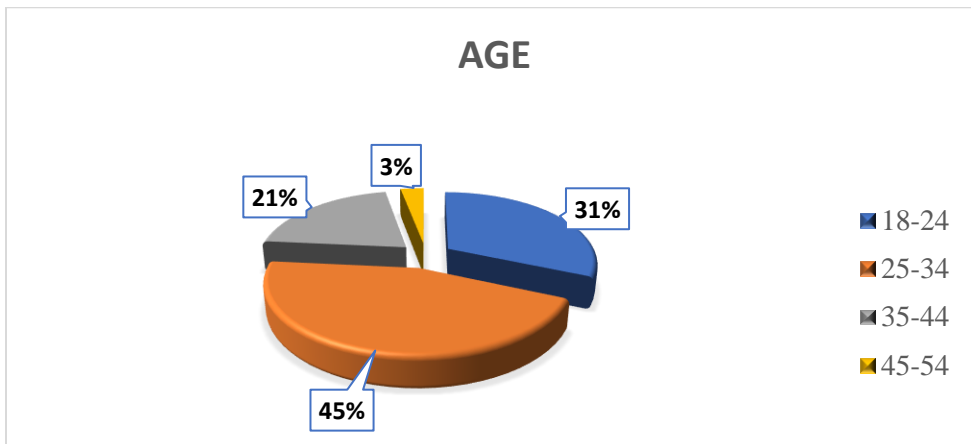
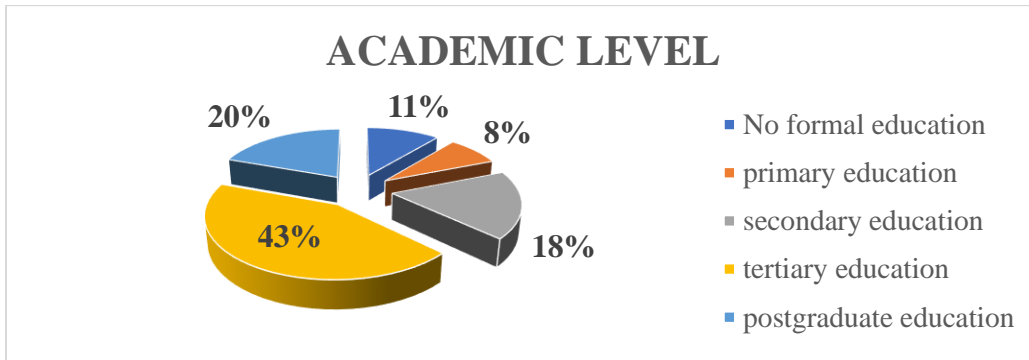


Figure 4.1.2



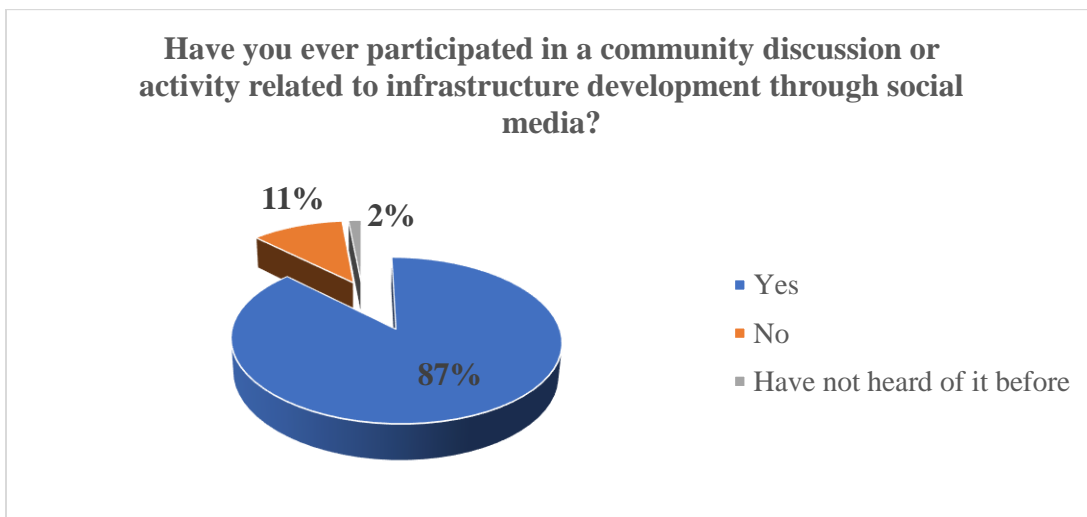
From the Figure 4.1.2, out of the total sampled respondents, 63 respondents representing 31% were in the age brackets of 18 years to 24 years. 90 respondents representing 45% were within 25-34 years of age. 41 of the respondents representing 21% were in the age brackets of 35-44 years. And 45-54 years had 6 respondents representing 3%. Expressively, the respondents who were in the age brackets of 25-34 years characterize the majority of the sampled age group.

Figure 4.1.3



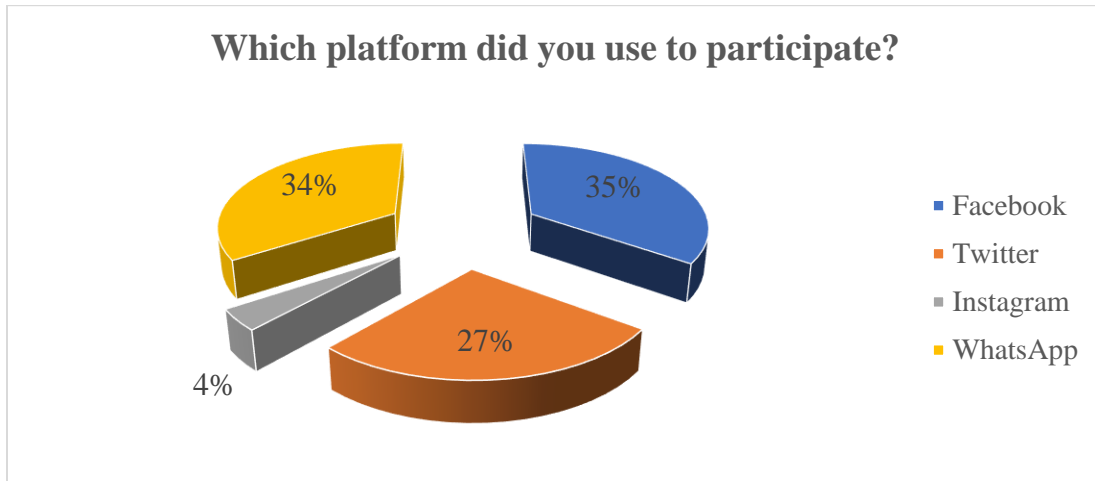
The qualifications of the respondents showed that respondents with tertiary education represented 43%. 19 respondents with secondary education represented 18%. Furthermore, 20% respondents had postgraduate education, with 8% and 11% represents primary and no formal education respondents' qualifications respectively.

Figure 4.1.4



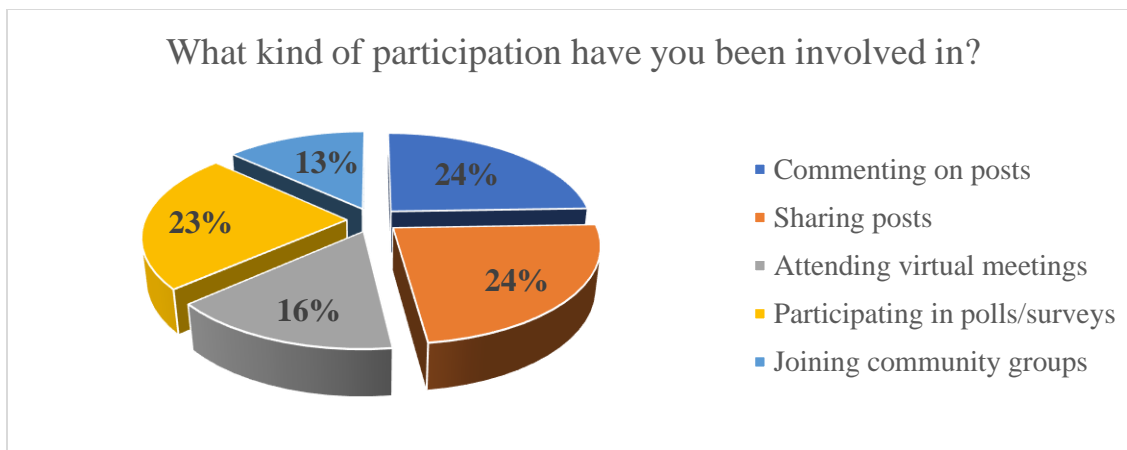
When asked if they (respondents) **have ever participated in a community discussion or activity related to infrastructure development through social media**, majority representing 87% said Yes whereas 11% and 2% said No and haven't heard of it before respectively in the chart above.

Figure 4.1.5



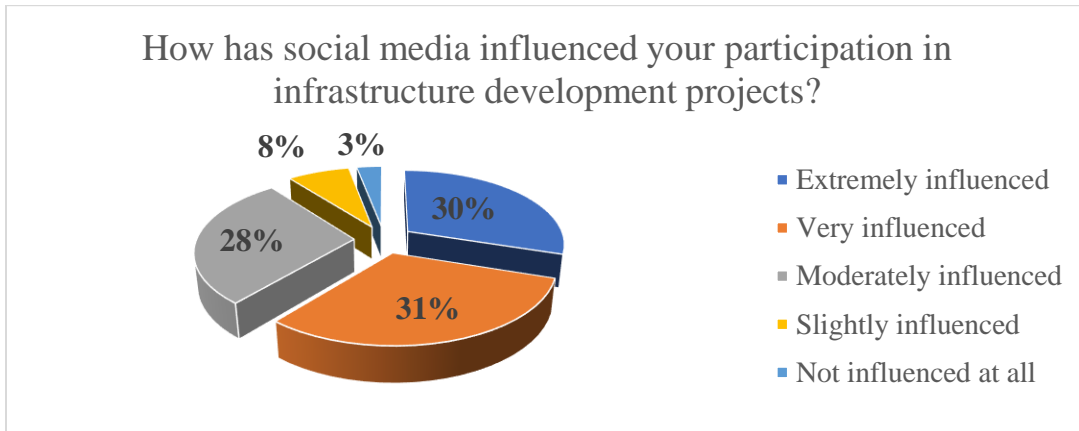
In figure 4.1.5 above, respondents who said Yes to ever participated in a community discussion or activity related to infrastructure development through social media, 34% said they did it through WhatsApp, 35% through Facebook, 27% through X (Twitter) and 4% Instagram.

Figure 4.1.6



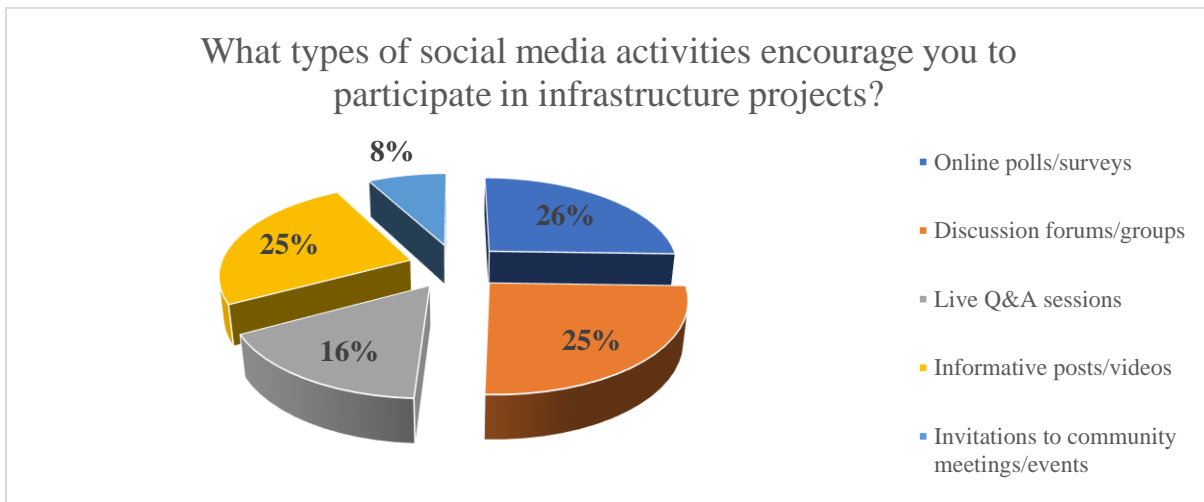
When it came to the kind participation the respondents have been involved in 24% said sharing posts, 24% commenting on posts, 23% participating in polls/surveys, 16% attending virtual meetings and 13% joining community groups.

Figure 4.1.7



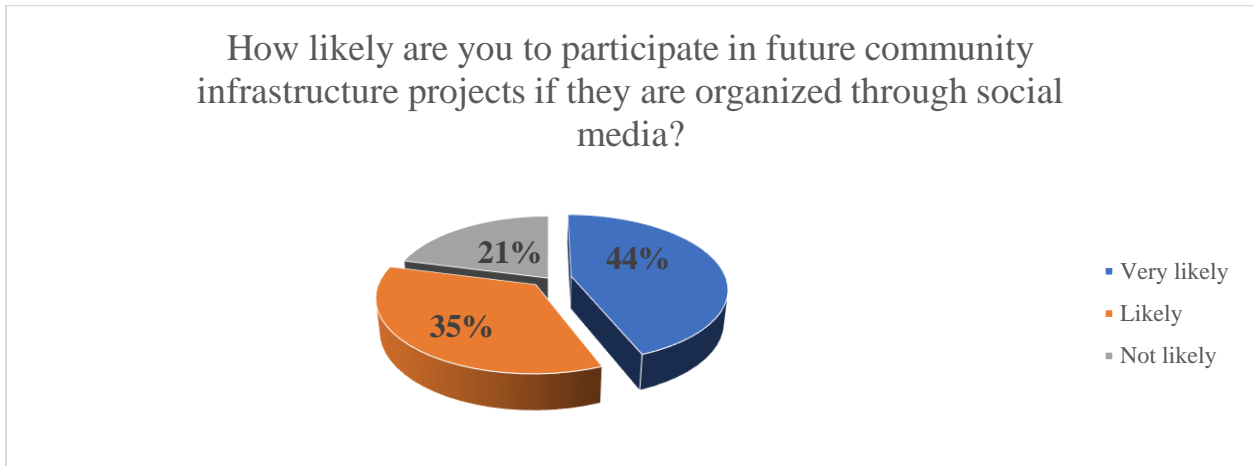
When asked how social media influenced their participation, 31% said very Influenced, 30% extremely influenced, 28% moderately influenced, 8% and 3% said slightly influenced and not influenced at all respectively.

Figure 4.1.8



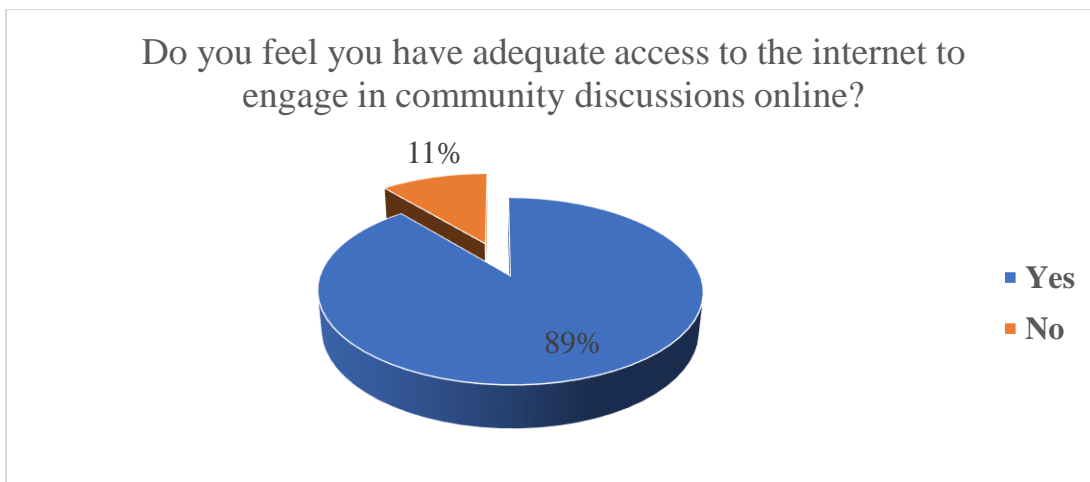
In the same way, when asked what social media activities encourage them to participate in infrastructure projects, 25% said discussion forums/ groups and informative posts/ videos respectively, while 26% online polls/surveys, 16% live Q&A sessions and 8% invitations to community meetings/events.

Figure 4.1.9



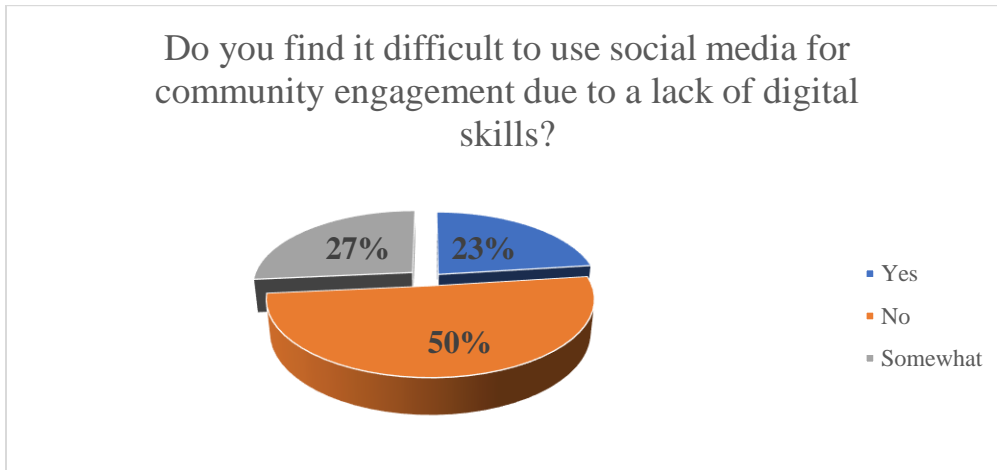
Majority of respondents responded Very Likely 44%, 35% Likely and 21% saying Not Likely when how likely they were to participate in future community infrastructure projects if they are organized through social media.

Figure 4.1.10



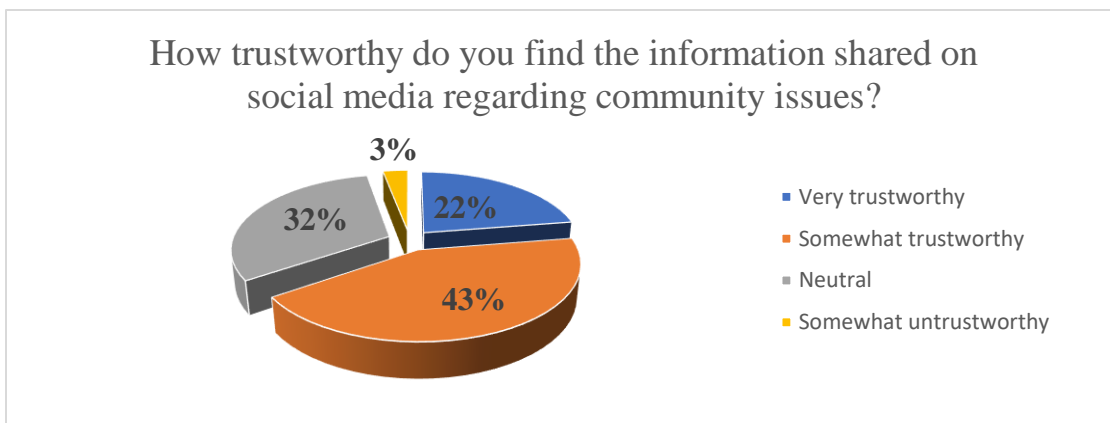
Majority of respondents responded Yes 89% and 11% responding No, when asked whether they feel they have adequate access to the internet to engage in community discussions online in figure 4.10 above.

Figure 4.1.11



When it came to how difficulty it was to use social media for community engagement due to lack of digital skills, 50% said No to having any difficulties and 23% said Yes to having difficulty and 27% saying they Somewhat have difficulties due to the lack of digital skills.

Figure 4.1.12



The majority of respondents, representing 43% said they find the information shared on social media regarding community issues as somewhat trustworthy. Figure 4.1.12 gives a breakdown of how trustworthy respondents find information shared on social media regarding community issues.

Figure 4.1.13

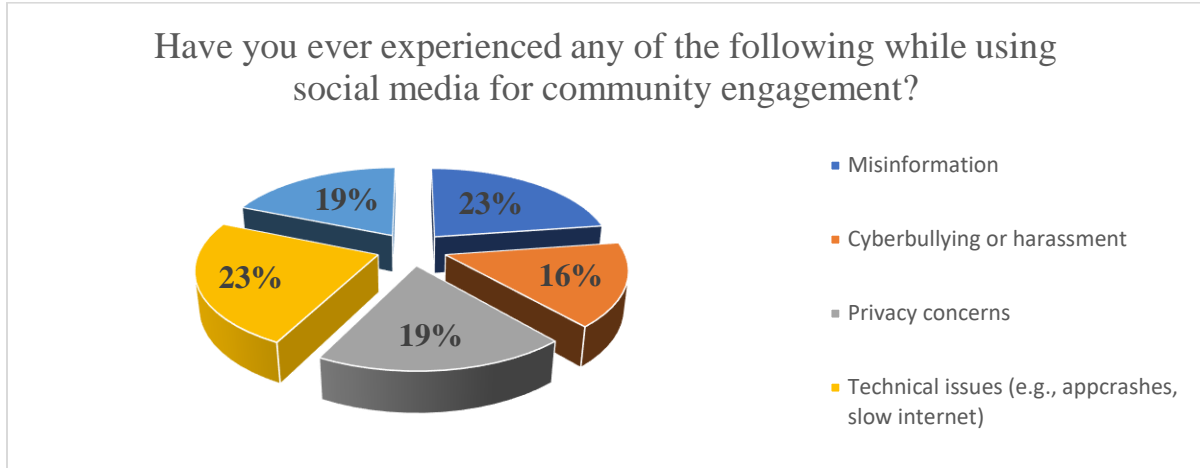


Figure 4.1.13 above gives a breakdown of responses given by respondents about their experiences while using social media. A majority of 23% said technical issues and misinformation respectively, 19% privacy concerns and Lack of responsiveness from community leaders equally and 16% saying cyberbullying or harassment.

Figure 4.1.14

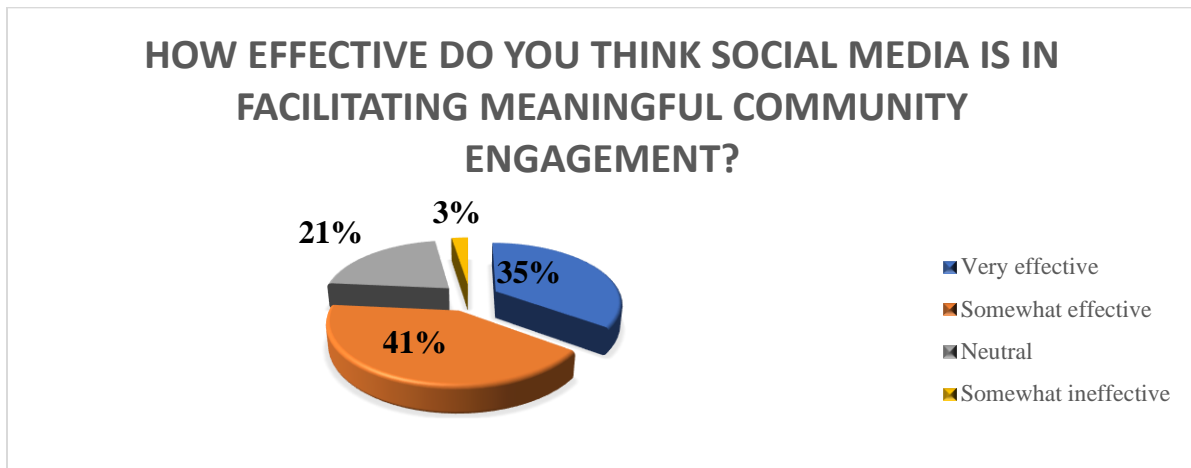
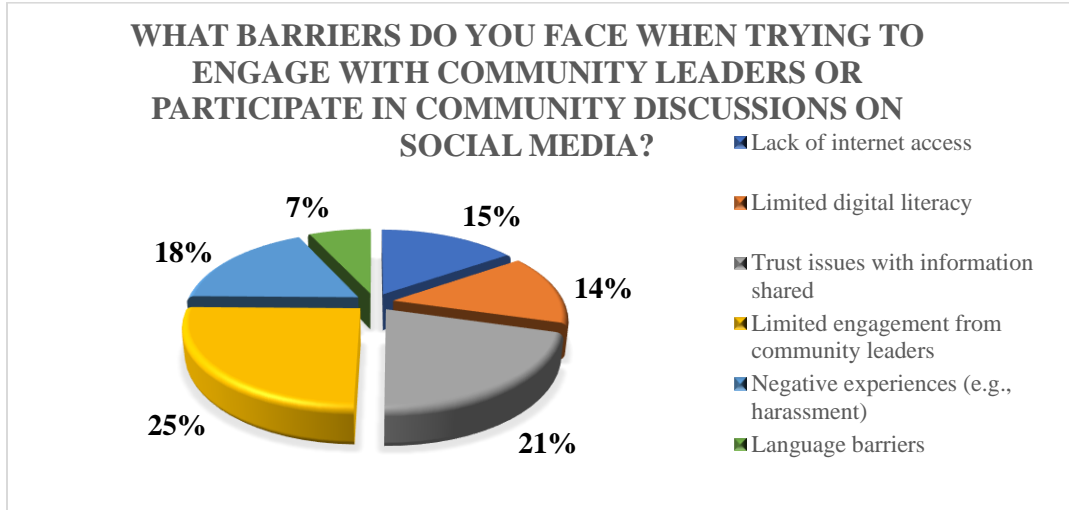


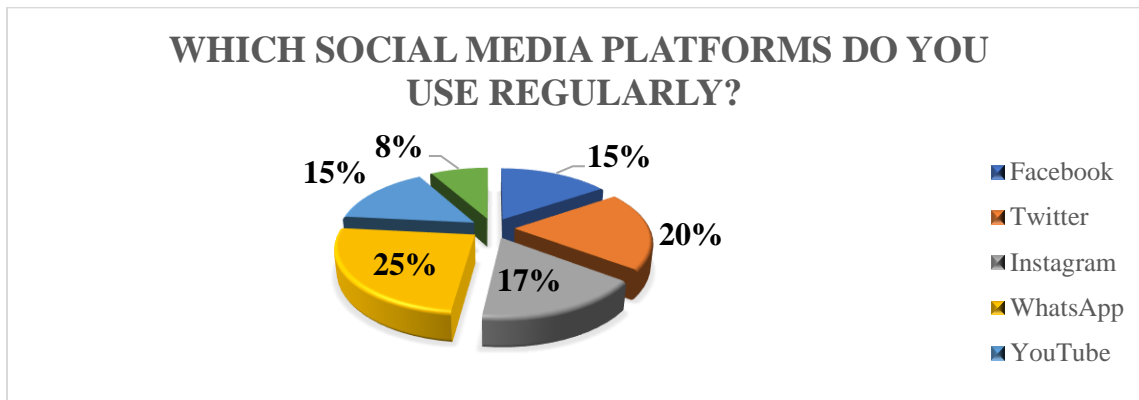
Figure 4.1.14 indicates responses given on effective the respondents think social media is in facilitating meaningful community engagement. 41% said it is somewhat effective, 35% very effective, 21% neutral and 3% somewhat ineffective.

Figure 4.1.15



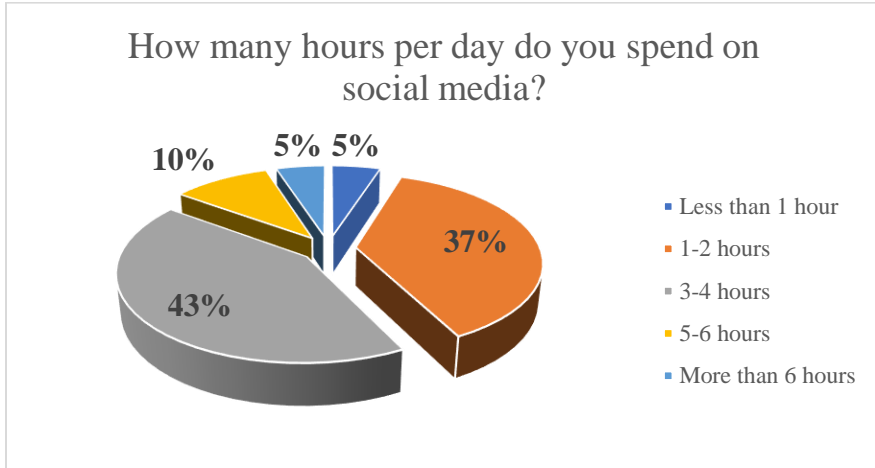
When asked what barriers they face when trying to engage with community leaders or participate in community discussions on social media 25% said limited engagement from community leaders, 21% trust issues with information shared. Figure 4.1.15 above gives the rest of the breakdown of responses.

Figure 4.1.16



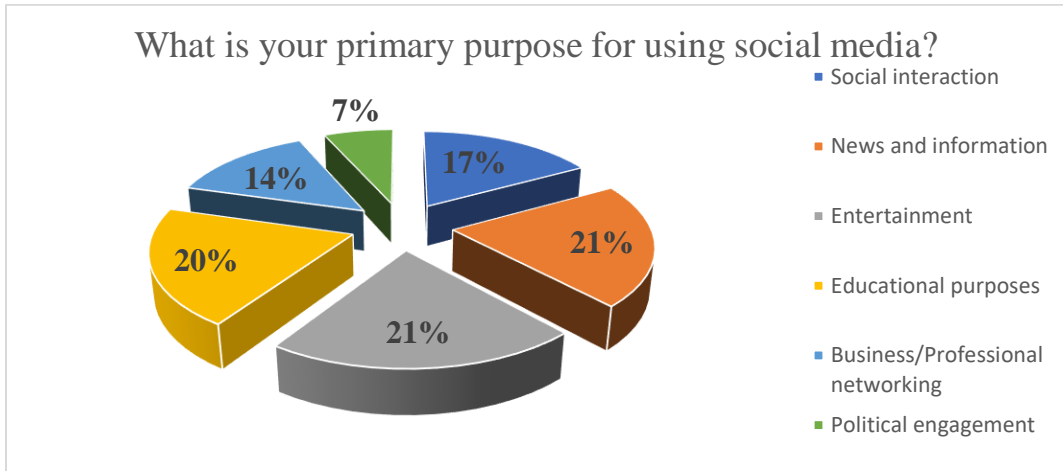
The figure 4.1.16 illustrates the breakdown of types of social media networks used by the respondents regularly with WhatsApp being used by the majority closely followed by X (Twitter). WhatsApp took the majority with 25%, X (Twitter) 20%, Facebook 15%, Instagram 17%.

Figure 4.1.17



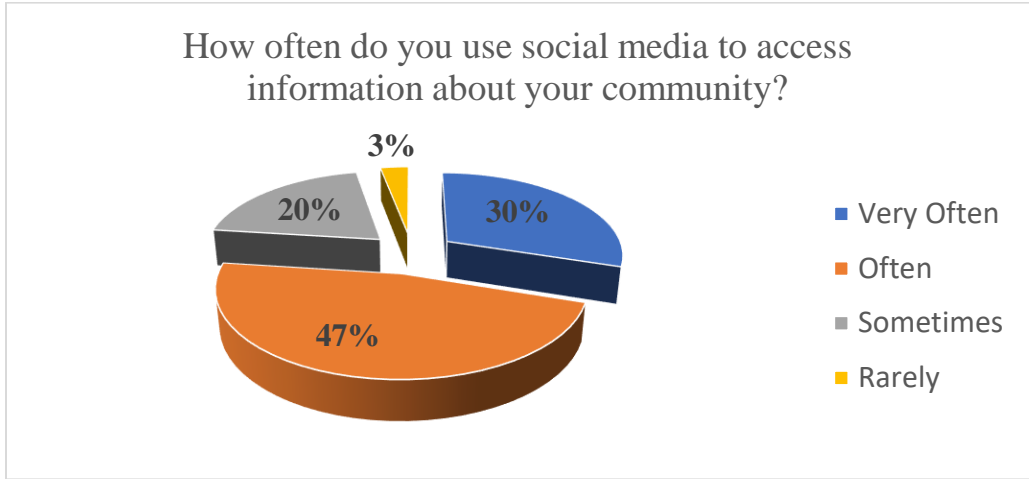
When it came to how many hours, they (respondents) spend on social media, 43% said 3-4 hours per day, 37% 1-2 hours per day. Figure 4.1.17 gives the rest of the breakdown.

Figure 4.1.18



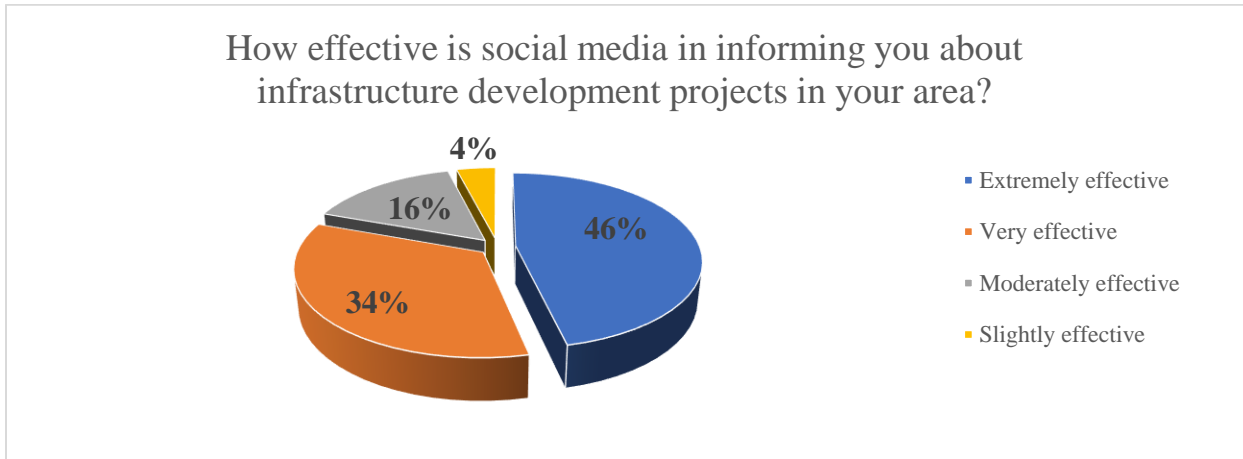
The survey also wanted to find out the primary purpose of using social media by respondents. 21% said news and information, another 21% said for entertainment, 20% educational purposes, 17% social interaction, 14% Business/Professional networking and 7% political engagement.

Figure 4.1.19



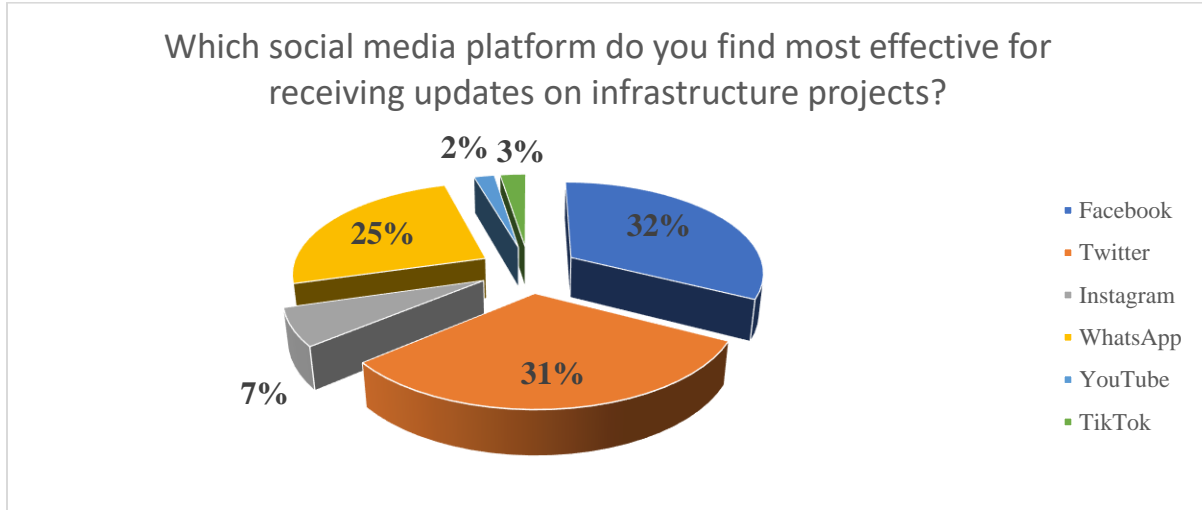
Similarly, we asked how often respondents used social media to access information about their community, 47% said often, 30% very often, 20% sometimes and 3% rarely.

Figure 4.1.20



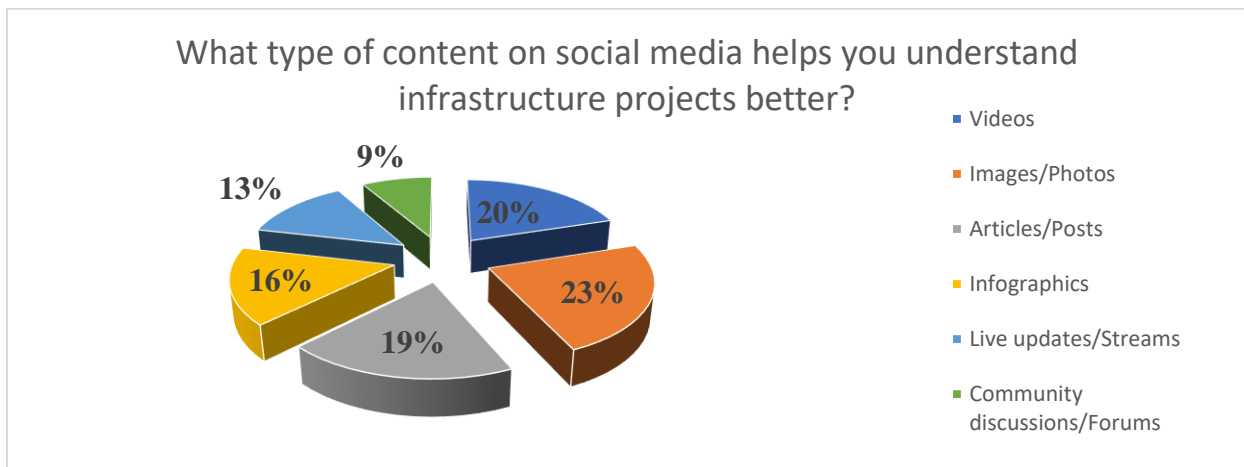
As to how effective social media is in informing respondents about infrastructural developmental projects in their area, 46% said its extremely effective, 34% very effective, 16% moderately effective and 4% saying slightly effective.

Figure 4.1.21



When asked which social media the respondents found most effective for receiving updates on infrastructure projects 31% said X (Twitter), 32% Facebook, 25% WhatsApp. Figure 4.1.21 gives the rest of the breakdown

Figure 4.1.22



23% representing majority of the respondents said images/photos are contents on social media that helps them understand projects better, the rest are 20% videos, 19% articles/posts, 16% infographics, 13% live updates/streams and 9% community discussions/forums.

4.2 Discussion of Results

In the previous chapters, i.e. chapters 1,2 and 3, this study diagnosed the research problem by providing the general overview and background to the study including statement of problem, research objectives and questions, scope of the study, justification of the study as well as the broad narrative of the study. It also examined the existing empirical literature with the intention of establishing the knowledge gaps. It provided methodological rigor, setting out the research design including methods, population and sample size and sampling techniques. However, this chapter does some prognosis in the light of the findings and the objectives to verify if the gaps in the literature have adequately or otherwise been filled. The primary goal of this study is to assessing social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development in the Greater Accra, Ghana using Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly as a case study. However, the precise objectives include to:

1. Determine the extent to which citizens of Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly use social media platforms to facilitate infrastructure development.
2. Assess the efficiency of social media in conveying information about infrastructure projects.
3. Ascertain how social media affects community participation in infrastructure project planning and implementation at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly.
4. Examine the obstacles and limitations of using social media to engage communities in infrastructure construction at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly.

Out of the total sampled respondents, 48 respondents representing 48% were females. On the other hand, 52 respondents representing 52% were males. Thus, the 52 respondents representing 52%

who were males denotes the majority of respondents. out of the total sampled respondents, 63 respondents representing 31% were in the age brackets of 18 years to 24 years. 90 respondents representing 45% were within 25-34 years of age. 41 of the respondents representing 21% were in the age brackets of 35-44 years. And 45-54 years had 6 respondents representing 3%. Expressively, the respondents who were in the age brackets of 25-34 years characterize the majority of the sampled age group. This implies that majority of the residents of the residents or respondents in Ayawaso are the youth and are mostly those who use social media frequently.

The qualifications of the respondents showed that respondents with tertiary education represented 43%. 19 respondents with secondary education represented 18%. Furthermore, 20% respondents had postgraduate education, with 8% and 11% represents primary and no formal education respondents' qualifications respectively When asked if they (respondents) have ever participated in a community discussion or activity related to infrastructure development through social media, majority representing 87% said Yes whereas 11% and 2% said No and haven't heard of it before respectively in the chart above. This infers that, majority of those who have ever participated in a community discussion or activity related to infrastructure development through social media has attended or has degree.

With regards to determine the extent to which citizens of Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly use social media platforms to facilitate infrastructure development, majority of the respondents constituting about 90% participate in community discussion or activity related to infrastructure development through social media. Facebook 35%, WhatsApp 34% and X (Twitter) 27% dominate the social media platforms used to facilitate infrastructure development. This corroborated with the UGT that is applied to Community Engagement in Infrastructure Development on improving

the dissemination of information and that social media allows local governments and community leaders to efficiently spread information about infrastructure initiatives.

In ascertaining how, social media affects community participation in infrastructure project planning and implementation at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly, the data agreed with the literature that, social media plays a crucial role in enhancing community development work due to its impact on outreach, support, and awareness, as its over 70% effective in facilitating community planning and implementation. About 60% also said social media had influenced their participation in infrastructure development projects

In assessing the efficiency of social media in conveying information about infrastructure projects, the data agreed with the democratic-participant media theory on collaborative Communication. Which emphasises the value of participatory communication, in which community members actively create and share material. 89% representing majority of the residents had access to the internet to engage in community discussions online and over 50% also did not find it difficult to use social media for community engagement due to a lack of digital skills. Thus, respondents found information shared or conveyed through social media as trustworthy.

The data alluded to the literature on the challenges/Limitations and Considerations in using social media as 15% has lack of internet access, 14% is having limited digital literacy, 21% has trust issues with information shared, 25% has limited engagement from community leaders and 18% are having negative experiences (e.g., harassment) in examining the obstacles and limitations of using social media to engage communities in infrastructure construction at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly.

4.3 Conclusion

The review of related studies revealed that a significant number of studies have looked at the influence of social media on elections, education and other areas as compared to the research topic at hand. The review of literature however revealed that, social media can improve collaboration between citizens and municipalities. It will empower citizens to collaborate with municipal officials to develop and implement local public policies. This will provide citizens access to the same information as the municipality, allowing them to follow up and verify that the municipality addresses local issues and requirements. This will allow citizens to track the municipality's performance throughout the entire process. It will also encourage individuals to take more responsibility in local management, promoting equality.

In the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly in Greater Accra, Ghana, the study evaluated social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development. Key conclusions drawn from the gathered data are as follows: People in Ayawaso West Municipality use social media extensively, with Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp being the most widely used platforms. The community uses these sites mostly for communication and information sharing. Despite social media's potential, a number of issues prevent meaningful community involvement. Some people have poor levels of computer literacy, the Municipal Assembly is perceived as unresponsive, and the digital divide restricts lower-class residents' access to social media. According to the study, social media can improve community involvement in infrastructure construction when used wisely. However, the above-mentioned difficulties and some low degree of active participation mean that the influence is now restricted.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary of key findings, provides the cumulative conclusions and makes some recommendations for stakeholders' consideration and future research and praxis. As indicated already in the penultimate chapter, that is chapter 4, this study sets out to provide the prognosis of the diagnosed research problem based on the research objectives. The subject of engagement was to investigate the use of social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development in the Greater Accra, Ghana using Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly as a case study.

This chapter summarizes and highlights key components from previous chapters. It also looks at the conclusions drawn from the research findings in chapter 4, while also suggesting recommendations by the researcher to the Information Services Department.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The central objective of this study was to ascertain assessing social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development in the Greater Accra, with Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly as the case study.

The literature review discussed key topics on social media, social media and the internet, social media and communities, Theoretical Foundation, Basic Assumption, Contemporary works in Ghana. The literature review also looked at theoretical framework, contemporary works, basic assumptions, operational definitions and others for the study was also reviewed in connection with other related studies on this topic.

A quantitative survey was used, this is because quantitative research was suitable in collecting numerical data that could be statistically analysed to identify patterns and connections between the impact of social media on community engagement in infrastructure development in the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly.

The main instrument used was a simple structured self-administered questionnaire. The findings obtained were presented in forms of pie charts.

The main objective was to assess social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development in the Greater Accra. However, the objective was broken down into four main objectives /questions; (1) Determine the extent to which citizens of Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly use social media platforms to facilitate infrastructure development, (2) Assess the efficiency of social media in conveying information about infrastructure projects, (3) Ascertain how social media affects community participation in infrastructure project planning and implementation at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly, (4) Examine the obstacles and limitations of using social media to engage communities in infrastructure construction at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly.

In determining the extent to which citizens of Ayawaso West use social media in conveying information about infrastructure projects, the finds revealed that majority of the residents participated in a community discussion or activity related to infrastructure development through social media, mainly through Facebook, X (Twitter) and WhatsApp. They data also showed that, majority of the residents participated in activities such as commenting on posts, sharing posts, attending virtual meetings and participating in polls/surveys.

With regard to the second objective which was to assess the efficiency of social media in conveying information about infrastructure projects, the findings concluded that majority of the residents had access to the internet to engage in community discussions online and also did not find it difficult to use social media for community engagement due to a lack of digital skills. However, the data also showed that though some residents had access to the internet, they had some amount of difficulty using social media for community engagement due to a lack of digital skills. Additionally, majority of the respondents said social media was or is effective in facilitating meaningful community engagement in their assembly.

The third objective was to ascertain how social media affects community participation in infrastructure project planning and implementation at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. The data analysed indicates that residents use social media often to access information about their community, and their preferred social media sites are Facebook, X (Twitter) and WhatsApp. Majority of the residents spend 3-4 hours daily on social media for news and information, social interaction, entertainment and educational purposes.

The final objective was to examine the obstacles and limitations of using social media to engage communities in infrastructure construction at Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly, residents or respondents claimed that, limited digital literacy, trust issues with information shared, limited engagement from community leaders, negative experiences (e.g., harassment) and language barriers are some of the obstacles and limitations they face when using social media to engage in community infrastructure development. Other limitations or obstacles were misinformation, cyberbullying or harassment, privacy concerns, technical issues (e.g., app crashes, slow internet) and lack of responsiveness from community leaders.

5.2. Conclusions

In the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly in Greater Accra, Ghana, the study evaluated social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development. Key conclusions drawn from the gathered data are as follows: People in Ayawaso West Municipality use social media extensively, with Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp being the most widely used platforms. The community uses these sites mostly for communication and information sharing. Despite social media's potential, a number of issues prevent meaningful community involvement. Some people have poor levels of computer literacy, the Municipal Assembly is perceived as unresponsive, and the digital divide restricts lower-class residents' access to social media. According to the study, social media can improve community involvement in infrastructure construction when used wisely. However, the above-mentioned difficulties and some low degree of active participation mean that the influence is now restricted.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings lead to the following recommendations being put forth for the stakeholder's action and for future research and praxis: That citizens should be provided with the skills they need to participate effectively on social media, the Municipal Assembly should put digital literacy initiatives into place. This would promote more inclusive engagement and aid in closing the digital gap. That the Assembly should investigate additional platforms such as Instagram and YouTube in order to connect with a variety of demographics within the municipality, even though Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp are widely used. That local issue-focused social media pages or organisations run by the community should be encouraged and supported by the Assembly. Residents' sense of ownership and increased proactive engagement can be encouraged by this grassroots strategy. That the Assembly should be able to assess the success of its strategies and

make the required corrections with the assistance of ongoing social media monitoring and evaluation. Analytics tools, feedback forms, and routine surveys can all help with this.

The research underscores the possibility of social media as an instrument to augment community involvement and involvement in infrastructure development in the Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly. However, a concentrated effort is required to address current obstacles, advance digital literacy, and promote an active participation culture in order to fully realise this promise. When used effectively, social media may make a big difference in the community's efforts to construct more inclusive and participatory infrastructure.

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APPENDIX



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESIDENTS OF AYAWASO WEST

Dear Respondent,

The objective of this questionnaire is to gather comprehensive insights into the subject: “**Assessing Social Media as a tool for community engagement and participation in Infrastructure Development in the Greater Accra, Ghana: A Case of Ayawaso West Municipal Assembly, Accra**”. Your responses are crucial for academic research in Communication Studies at UniMAC-IJ. Rest assured, all information provided will be kept confidential, and your privacy will be respected.

Please tick [✓] where it may apply.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. Sex: 1. Male []

2. Female []

2. Age:

1. 18-24 []

2. 25-34 []

3. 35-44 []

4. 45-54 []

5. 55-64 []

3. Academic Level:

1. Junior high school []

2. Senior High school []

3. College []

4. Bachelor's degree []

5. Graduate degree []

SECTION B

Objective 1: Impact of social media on community participation in infrastructure

4. Have you ever participated in a community discussion or activity related to infrastructure development through social media?

1. Yes [] 2. No [] 3. Have not heard of it before

5. If yes, which platform did you use to participate?

1. Facebook []

2. Twitter []

3. Instagram []

4. WhatsApp []

5. YouTube []

6. TikTok []

7. Other (please specify) _____

6. What kind of participation have you been involved in? (**Select all that apply**)

1. Commenting on posts []

2. Sharing posts []

3. Attending virtual meetings []

4. Participating in polls/surveys []

5. Joining community groups []

6. Other (please specify) _____

7. How has social media influenced your participation in infrastructure development projects?

1. Not influenced at all []

2. Slightly influenced []

3. Moderately influenced []

4. Very influenced []

5. Extremely influenced []

8. What types of social media activities encourage you to participate in infrastructure projects?

(Select all that apply)

1. Online polls/surveys []

2. Discussion forums/groups []

3. Live Q&A sessions []

4. Informative posts/videos []

5. Invitations to community meetings/events []

6. Other (please specify) _____

9. How likely are you to participate in future community infrastructure projects if they are organized through social media?

1. Very unlikely []

2. Unlikely []

3. Neutral []

4. Likely []

5. Very likely []

Objective 2: Challenges of residents

10. Do you feel you have adequate access to the internet to engage in community discussions online?

1. Yes []

2. No []

11. Do you find it difficult to use social media for community engagement due to a lack of digital skills?

1. Yes [] 2. No [] 3. Somewhat []

12. How trustworthy do you find the information shared on social media regarding community issues?

1. Very trustworthy [] 2. Somewhat trustworthy []
3. Neutral [] 4. Somewhat untrustworthy []
5. Very untrustworthy []

13. Have you ever experienced any of the following while using social media for community engagement? (**Select all that apply**)

1. Misinformation [] 2. Cyberbullying or harassment []
2. Privacy concerns [] 4. Technical issues (e.g., app crashes, slow internet) []
5. Lack of responsiveness from community leaders []
6. Other (please specify)_____

14. How effective do you think social media is in facilitating meaningful community engagement?

1. Very effective []

2. Somewhat effective []

3. Neutral []

4. Somewhat ineffective []

5. Very ineffective []

15. What barriers do you face when trying to engage with community leaders or participate in community discussions on social media? (Select all that apply)

1. Lack of internet access []

2. Limited digital literacy []

3. Trust issues with information shared

4. Limited engagement from community leaders []

5. Negative experiences (e.g., harassment) []

5. Language barriers []

6. Other (please specify)_____

Objective 3: Social Media Usage

16. Which social media platforms do you use regularly? (Circle all that apply)

1. Facebook []

2. Twitter []

3. Instagram []

4. WhatsApp []

5. YouTube []

6. TikTok []

17. How many hours per day do you spend on social media?

- 1. Less than 1 hour []
- 2. 1-2 hours []
- 3. 3-4 hours []
- 4. 5-6 hours []
- 5. More than 6 hours []

18. What is your primary purpose for using social media? (**Tick all that apply**)

- 1. Social interaction []
- 2. News and information []
- 3. Entertainment []
- 4. Educational purposes []
- 5. Business/Professional networking []
- 6. Political engagement []
- 7. Other _____

19. How often do you use social media to access information about your community?

- 1. Never Rarely []
- 2. Sometimes []
- 3. Often []
- 4. Very often []

Objective 4 - Effectiveness of social media in informing the communities

21. How effective is social media in informing you about infrastructure development projects in your area?

- 1. Not effective at all []
- 2. Slightly effective []
- 3. Moderately effective []
- 4. Very effective []
- 5. Extremely effective []

22. Which social media platform do you find most effective for receiving updates on infrastructure projects?

- 1. Facebook []
- 2. Twitter []
- 3. Instagram []
- 4. WhatsApp []
- 5. YouTube []
- 6. TikTok []
- 7. Other (please specify) _____

23. What type of content on social media helps you understand infrastructure projects better?

(Select all that apply)

- 1. Videos []
- 2. Images/Photos []
- 3. Articles/Posts []
- 4. Infographics []
- 5. Live updates/Streams []
- 6. Community discussions/Forums []
- 7. Other (please specify) _____

24. Kindly recommend how to improve upon the use of social media as a tool for community engagement and participation in infrastructure development -----

THANK YOU.