

Economic Implications of the Twitter Suspension in Nigeria: Evidence from June 2021 to January 2022

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ABSTRACT

The study analyses the Economic Implications of the Twitter Suspension in Nigeria: Evidence from June 2021 to January 2022. The objectives of the study are to examine the effect of twitter ban on unemployment rate, the effect of twitter ban on small and medium enterprises and the effect of twitter ban on investment in Nigeria. In line with the objectives of the study, three research questions and three hypotheses were advanced for the study. The survey design was used in the study while the sample comprised 387 respondents. A structured questionnaire containing 17 items was use as instrument for data collection. The reliability index of the instrument was 0.77. The descriptive statistical tool (mean) and chi-square inferential statistics were used for data analysis and test the hypothesis. The findings of the study show that twitter ban had significant effect on unemployment rate in Nigeria, twitter ban had significant effect on small and medium businesses in Nigeria and twitter ban had significant effect on investment in Nigeria. The study therefore concluded that twitter ban in Nigeria had significant effect on the Nigerian economy. It was recommended among others that government should device a means to reassure investor especially in the tech sector that the businesses is secured and will not suffer such a drastic punishment in the future and government should ensure that the interest of majority of Nigerians should come first before personal ego.

Keywords: Twitter, Ban, Economy, SMEs, Unemployment rate, Social Media Regulations

1.0 Introduction

Twitter was a source of revenue generation for many Nigerians (content creators, ad practitioners and businesses before its ban by former president Muhammadu Buhari. Although, the ban has been lifted, many who rely on the micro blog as their source of income and advert placements could barely let go of the pains of the losses recorded while the ban lasted. In addition, the economy suffered losses from taxes and increase unemployment during the period covered by the ban. It is estimated that Nigeria lost N104.02 million (\$250,600) every hour to the ban on twitter. This shows the importance of the micro blog and the internet in general. No wonder Samur (2019) asserts that the internet has become one of the most significant technological revolutions of the 21st century, with a vast portion of the world's population having access to it. Progressively prevalent is the fact that the utilization of social media for convenient, quick, cost-effective

sharing of key information and ideas amongst individuals via online media cannot be over-emphasized. Social media like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram amongst others allows users to create a web-based identity that allows for quick communication. In this regard, Twitter in today's society has become a significant tool because of the enormous role it plays on a global scale (Santas & Ogoshi, 2016).

In Nigeria, Twitter has been used as a platform for various forms of diplomacy and for business owners and corporate organizations to market their services. Most commonly, Nigerians use Twitter to voice out their opinions and exercise their rights to freedom of speech on issues that are societally or politically inclined (Chakrabarti, 2018). However, irrespective of Twitter's enormous relevance, the federal government of Nigeria on 4th June 2021 released a news report putting a halt to Twitter service in Nigeria's media space (Enoch, 2021). The event that resulted in the federal government's decision is not within the scope of this paper.

Twitter is a significant channel for marketing and advertising to reach young people. Oso and Pate (2011) pinpointed that one of the requisites of the social media is the view that they are seen as the strategic tool for economic advancement, that is they can contribute to cultural, human, social, political and economic development of a nation. Among these social media outlets that facilitate development in an economy is the twitter. According to digitalreportal.com, the number of social media users increased by six million between 2020 and 2021. This represents a 22 percent increase. It may be difficult to establish the correct number of Twitter users in Nigeria, but facts point to the prevalence of youths who are more than 60 percent of the population.

David (2021) observed that many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have taken use of the social media, particularly twitter, to conduct commercial operations such as marketing and customer support. The large number of merchants on social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram is evidence of this. This view is further corroborated by Anyim (2021), who affirmed that millions of small and medium-sized businesses who rely on the platform to contact their consumers have already seen a reduction in their ability to access the market as a result of the suspension. While these companies may choose to use other social media sites, their postings may not get the same level of interaction as those on Twitter. This has the potential to exacerbate the difficulties that companies faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and other structural flaws. The e-commerce industry in the nation, which is estimated to be worth \$12 billion, was also impacted (Iyatse & Adepun, 2021).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

For businesses to experience growth, expansion and revenue, they need to engage in communication ads to gain existing and new customers. That is, they need brand awareness and development to reach potential customers and one way to achieve this is through the use of social media platforms. The twitter to this end has been essentially used by corporate and non-corporate businesses in Nigeria for carrying out operational activities which has led to the growth and development of those businesses. Twitter has also served as a source of income for many Nigerian youths who carry out one economic activity or the other on the platform. More so, the presence of Twitter in Nigeria has in the past years encouraged foreign investment in the country.

However, as at 5th June 2021, Nigeria joined other countries in the suspension of Twitter operations in its own country. As quoted by the Guardians (2022), the NetBlocks Cost of Shutdown Tool, Nigeria lost N104.02 million (\$250,600) every hour to the ban, bringing the daily losses to ₦2.46 billion. The cost of the seven-month shutdown of Twitter operations in Nigeria is estimated to be ₦10.72trillion (\$26.1billion) according to Netblock's Cost of Shutdown Tool.

However, empirical findings remain scanty. This paper is therefore, necessary to enlighten the Nigeria Government on the numerous economic implications of twitter ban and also appraise the economic contribution of twitter to the country and how it has offered income opportunities to many Nigerians. In light of the above, this study therefore seeks to examine the effect of the seven months (5th June 2021 to 13th January, 2022) Twitter ban on the economy of Nigeria.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study examines the economic implications of twitter suspension in Nigeria economy as the main objective. The specific objectives are as follows.

1. To examine the effect of twitter ban on unemployment in Nigeria.
2. To determine the effect of twitter ban on small and medium business in Nigeria.
3. To ascertain the effect of twitter ban on investment in Nigeria

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What is the effect of twitter ban on unemployment in Nigeria?
2. What is the effect of twitter ban on small and medium businesses in Nigeria?
3. What is the effect of twitter ban on investment in Nigeria?

1.5 Hypotheses

H₀₁: Twitter ban has no significant effect on unemployment in Nigeria.

H₀₂: Twitter ban has no significant effect on small and medium businesses in Nigeria.

H₀₃: Twitter ban has no significant effect on investment in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

Twitter is a micro blogging app widely used free social networking tool which affords people to share information, in a real-time news feed, through posting thoughts, experiences and briefs called- 'tweets' which are limited to no more than 140 characters and can include links to blogs, web pages, images, videos and all other material online. Despite the brevity imposed by this media tool Twitter is extensively used on limitless topics (Mistry, 2011; Mollett *et al.*, 2011). Academics and researchers at all levels of experience and across all disciplines engage the use Twitter daily'. Once a twitter account has been set up it can send and receive tweets, accessed through any computer or mobile networked device.

After setting up a twitter account (www.twitter.com), users establish a profile and a Twitter 'name' — for instance, @OTprofile — and can then send and receive tweets, accessed through any computer or mobile networked device. Once a tweet is sent, it appears in the user's Twitter 'feed' and in the feed of anyone who is following them. Searching can also be used to find relevant tweets. This can be by keywords, often identified by user-defined hashtags, identified by an initial '#' symbol (for example #occupation or #journal). Hashtags help to locate particular areas of discussion (Bristol et al 2010) while some hashtags that are used as professionally relevant to occupational therapy. As a communication tool, Twitter allows the free exchange of ideas

nationally and globally, between people interested in similar areas of expertise, as well as providing the opportunity to engage in critical debate.

The Ban on Tweeter

The word bans according to the Cambridge Dictionary online, is an official order that prescribe someone doing something, or something from happening. The Marriam Webster define ban as, to prohibit or forbid especially by legal means (as by statute or order) ban solicitation. Also, to prohibit the use, performance, or distribution of.

The federal of government Nigeria on the 4th of June 2021 announced an indefinite suspension of Twitter in the country. The government cited “persistent use of the platform for activities that are capable of undermining Nigeria’s corporate existence,” as reason for the ban that took effect almost immediately. The ban came much to the displeasure of many Nigerians. This is due to the fact that Nigeria being the most populous African country is widely believed to be the largest market base for the social media platform with an estimated 39.6 million users.

In addition, the government ordered broadcasters to cease their "patronage" of the platform. It labelled the broadcast stations continued use of the technology as "unpatriotic." Media and human rights activists decried the broadcast regulator's decision, calling it "illegal" and an assault on press freedom, but major broadcast stations remained off Twitter in order to comply with the order. TWith the ban, Nigeria joined the list of other countries that have banned or temporarily suspended Twitter, including China, Iran, North Korea, Egypt and Turkey. Despite the ban, many Nigerians still have access to the site using virtual private networks (VPN) and can share their opinion on other apps, like Indian-based microblogging site Koo.

According to the US embassy in Nigeria, key diplomatic and economic partners including the EU and the US all criticised the restriction as it comes at a time when the nation needed to promote open discourse and express views and to communicate critical information about the COVID-19 epidemic. According to Golubski (2021), the worldwide focus of the ban also shows the obvious inefficiency of the administration in tackling major economic, social, security and political problems. Banning systems of expression is not the answer, these measures inhibit access to information and commerce.

From the bilateral point of view, the ban once again put Nigeria under the spotlight for the wrong reasons. According to Apostolakis (2021), despite the fact that Nigeria is Africa's largest economy, the country has often lost out on significant economic possibilities, mostly as a consequence of government policies that have undermined investor trust. The ban has also hampered Nigeria's development as international investors now push businesses and finance to other African nations, threatening Nigeria's position as Africa's unofficial innovation centre. Recently, in a case where Ghana has a considerably smaller population and economy than Nigeria but was considered to have an appealing environment for foreign investors, Twitter selected Ghana for its headquarters. Many startup company concepts also demand an active presence in social media which may make attracting investors challenging for Nigerian technology entrepreneurs. With a recent World Bank Ease of Doing Business study, the nation was rated 14th in Africa overall. However, the government's growing intolerance, along with the country's deteriorating economy, has the potential to reverse much of the progress that has been made over the years.

From the socio-economic point of view, Nigeria reportedly lost N247.61bn within the first one hundred days of the ban. According to NetBlocks, a watchdog organization that monitors cybersecurity and governance of the Internet, about \$366.88m has been lost by businesses since the shutdown took effect. The toll also showed it cost Nigeria's economy \$250,600 (N103.17m) every hour. According research conducted by statista (2021), Nigeria has about 33 million social media users, with about 26% on twitter. Apostolakis (2021), posits that Nigeria is one of the world's largest rates of severe poverty, with over half its people estimated to live on less than 1.90 dollars a day. It is also tackling its worst rate of unemployment and inflation, at 18.12%, and is rated as Western Africa's second most corrupt country, according to the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index, the worst ranking since 2015. While these statistics are worrying enough, the twitter ban will only worsen things. According to Nwokoma (2021), small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are critical to the development of any economy, often supplying as much as 60-70 percent of the country's employment opportunities. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria account for 96 percent of all companies and provide 84 percent of all employment. With a population of about 117.4 million, SMEs provide 48 percent of the country's GDP and account for 96 percent of all businesses. Many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have taken use of the Internet, particularly social media, to conduct commercial operations such as marketing and customer support. The large number of merchants on social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram are evidence of this. This view is further corroborated by Anyim (2021), who affirmed that millions of small and medium-sized businesses who rely on the platform to contact their consumers have already seen a reduction in their ability to access the market as a result of the suspension. While these companies may choose to use other social media sites, their postings may not get the same level of interaction as those on Twitter. This has the potential to exacerbate the difficulties that companies have faced as a result of COVID-19 and other structural flaws. The e-commerce industry in the nation, which is estimated to be worth \$12 billion, is also impacted (Iyatse and Adepetun, 2021).

Twitter Ban and Unemployment in Nigeria

Unemployment, according to Kenny (2020) is a macro-economic problem as well as socio-economic problem which arises as a result of insufficient and non-availability of jobs to correspond with the growing population, even those who are employed sometimes live with the fear of being unemployed due to job insecurity and retrenchment of workers. In societies where most people can earn a living only by working for others, being unable to find a job is a serious problem. It is a problem because of its human costs in deprivation and a feeling of rejection and personal failure. Omitogun and Longe (2017) are of the view that the issue of unemployment is associated with some social and economic consequences such as; increase in crime rate, loss of respect and identity, reduction in purchasing power, psychological injuries, corruption among others.

Unemployment problem in Nigeria has different dimensions. There are underemployment cases in which people receive incomes that are inadequate to support their basic needs, in terms of food, clothing and shelter. There are also cases of disguised unemployment where people take up jobs that are below their educational attainment and experience (Olanipekun & Akeju, 2014). The worst case of all is that of people seeking for job opportunities but who cannot find any either in the public or the private sector. Some people are willing and ready to set up enterprises themselves and engage in one type of economic activity or the other but are constrained by the prevailing poor macroeconomic environment. All these have contributed significantly to the high level of unemployment and poverty in Africa (Urowoli & Alero, 2022).

The suspension of Twitter operations in Nigeria on businesses was condemned by experts, for triggering more job losses in the country. According to Egbesola (2022), the social media, of which Twitter is a leading platform, provides a cheaper option of advertising. He noted that SMEs were unable to advertise their products and services on Twitter during the ban. The ban disrupted tens of thousands of small businesses that create more than 70 per cent of the nation's employment. The ban also affected employers and led to the loss of jobs which worsen the unemployment woes of the country. According to Ekpu (2021), investment is a part of GDP, and once investment declines, employment will too. According to Iheanacho in TBIAfrica(2022), a lot of business transactions were being carried out on Twitter the ban resulted in temporary loss of activities there and unemployment may have occurred as companies reduced their admin expenses due to the lingering ban.

Twitter Ban and Investment in Nigeria

Real domestic investment is an expenditure made to increase the total capital stock in the economy. This is done by acquiring further capital-producing assets and assets that can generate income within the domestic economy. Physical assets particularly add to the total capital stock. Boosting economic development requires higher rates of economic growth than savings can provide. Part of the finance for investment is provided by the corporate sector, bank loans and households' savings make up the other part. With this, savings is no longer a constraint to investment demand. On the other hand, foreign direct investment (FDI) is a direct investment into production or business in a country by an individual or company of another country, either by buying a company in the target country or by expanding operations of an existing business in that country. Foreign direct investment is in contrast to portfolio investment which is a passive investment in the securities of another country such as stocks and bonds (Adeleke et al., 2014).

The suspension of Twitter, a leading micro-blogging platform, took its toll on struggling Nigeria's economy, leading to a loss of N7.5 billion within three days. Nigeria's decision to suspend Twitter, at first indefinitely and later temporarily, had grave consequence for the government and cost the country economically in terms of new investment into its technology sector. The ban threatened Nigeria's status as one of the best-performing African countries in attracting investment for technology start-up businesses (Iyatse & Adepun, 2021). Besides the financial lost, Bala Zaka, an investment expert, said the signal the ban of Twitter sent to international investment community is more worrisome to the government, who he said should have engaged Twitter diplomatically (Iyatse and Adepun, 2021). Financial experts affirmed that the decision, which has put the country in the spotlight globally, increased the investment hostility profile of the country. In the same vein, The United States, Canada, European Union, United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland in a joint statement condemned Nigeria's government for the ban, warning that it would complicate the economic hardship caused by the pandemic (Iyatse and Adepun, 2021).

Furthermore, the Gurdian newspaper (2021), Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) noted that the ban on Twitter dampen foreign investors' appetite to invest in the country and take a toll on the government's digital economy drive. The group asserts that FDI inflow greatly reduce as a result of the ban on Twitter. In addition, a lot of young people who got employment on the platform were affected, with a high unemployment rate, the government should have been more careful before taking the decision.

Twitter Ban and Tax Income

Taxation is one of the oldest means by which the cost of providing essential services for the generality of persons living in a given geographical area is funded. Globally, governments are saddled with the responsibility of providing some basic infrastructures for their citizens. Functions or obligations the government may owe her citizens include but are not restricted to: stabilization of the economy, redistribution of income and provision of services in the form of public goods (Abiola & Asiweh, 2012). Taxation is a major source of government revenue all over the world and governments use tax proceeds to render their traditional functions, such as: the provision of roads, maintenance of law and order, defence against external aggression, regulation of trade and business to ensure social and economic maintenance (Appah & Eze, 2013). The primary function of a tax system is to raise enough revenue to finance essential expenditures on the goods and services provided by government; and tax remains one of the best instruments to boost the potential for public sector performance and repayment of public debt as enunciated by (Okoye et al., 2014).

Since, Twitter is a global digital communication and content platform, it is a veritable tool to diversify the Nigerian economy and provide the youth a future to build their lives in a productive manner. It is evident that the suspension causes the government of Nigeria to lose potential tax income (Tenola, 2021). Twitter has created jobs for a huge number of people and revenue in the form of taxes for the government and when this revenue generation avenue is closed, government will definitely incur great loss (Nwokoma, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

Two theories were reviewed in this study; they are the Research and Development (R&D) Model by Romer and the Grossman and Helpman's Model. The study is however, anchored on R&D Model based on horizontal innovation: Romer (1990) Model. The reason for anchoring the study on R&D Model based on horizontal innovation: Romer (1990) Model is that the model emphasized technology and innovation which twitter represents.

R&D Model based on horizontal innovation: Romer (1990) Model

Growth model including Research and Development is also valued as the P. Romer Model. Innovation of R&D sectore constitutes fundamental force of accretion in the economy. Romer (1990) constructed his model on three foundations.

Firstly, technological improvement is at the center of economic growth. Secondly, technological improvement is made by the conscious judgments of the companies which are warned by the market incentives. The third and most substantial foundation is that there are substantial dissimilarities between the use of information in manufacture as a manufacture factor and the use of other manufacture factors. Apart from the one-off cost incurred in producing, information does not result in a remain in production costs, regardless of the extent which they are used in production. This identifies the basic character of technology in this model. The most substantial characteristic of this model is that the remain in market size through the differentiation of goods and trade between countries creates an accretion impact as well as income and wealth impacts. A wider market leads to upward of search and quicker growth. In Romer Model, the measure of market size is not the populace but person fund recruitment.

This model assumed to have four simple inputs works as follows under these hypotheses. The inputs used in pattern are physical fund, workforce, person fund and technological level indices. Technological degree index (A) has ability to grow infinitely and remains along with the newly

discovered durable goods. It is also supposed that there are three segments in the economy. The R&D sector uses the existing stock of information and human capital to generate ingoing information. The intermediate goods sector generates durable production inputs that can be promoted in ultimate products sectors by using ingoing information and designs produced by the R&D sectors. Ultimate products sectors generates final goods using durable production inputs manufactured by intermediate products sectors human capital and labor. The model predicts that the population and labor supply is stable. (Romer, 1990).

In design manufacture, labor, physical capital and the portion of total human capital allocated for this manufacture are used H_A . The manufacture function is in the style of Cobb-Douglas manufacture function and can be demonstrated as follows;

$$(H_Y, L, x) = H_Y^{\alpha} L^{\beta} \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} x_i^{1-\alpha-\beta} \quad (1)$$

The large A in the research sector has an affirmative impact on the productivity of human capital. Being taken into consideration of the employees in the whole research segment, total design stock is procured as follows;

$$A = \delta H_A A \quad (2)$$

At this place, H_A is commented as total person fund recruited in R & D sectors.

Equation (2) contains two substantial hypotheses. Primary, allocating upward of person fund to R&D sectors raises ratio of production of ingoing design. Second of all, a large total stock of data and design remains the efficiency of engineers and researchers studying in the R&D segment.

Founder of the R&D essential growth pattern, Romer added different color to economic growth in 1986 with his work "Increasing Returns and Long-Run Growth, which is seen as the beginning of internal growth models. Romer attributes R&D the most important task in his work. The human capital in R&D units and the new products or production methods resulting from the activities of these units form the basis of Romer's work. (Romer, 1990) Romer introduced R&D essential economic growth pattern for first time in his name of "Endogenous Technological Change" in 1990, which Romer described as the driving force of growth after his study in 1986. In this study by Romer, technological development is at centre of economic growth. In consequence of governments' market incentives, conscious behaviors of individuals bring innovation and technological development. Romer distinguishes new production techniques gained through R&D and innovations from normal production, which can be used repeatedly without requiring fixed costs. (Romer, 1990).

Romer drew attention to two situations in technological development. The first one is the economic aspect with the feature of increasing productivity and supporting economic growth, and the second is that the technological advancement is achieved through the economic decision making mechanisms of the state or the unit of production with the resource direction that it is revealed. According to Romer, sustainable growth can be arrived by way of accumulation of person fund in R&D units. According to Romer, technology is a non-competitive and partially restrictable use. Thanks to the power provided by the technologies that they develop, the companies operate from the weak position of the price buyer in perfect competition conditions to the companies that have technological monopoly power in the monopolistic competition market. (Romer, 1990).

As a result, economic growth in Romer's model cannot be sustained by capital accumulation alone. Innovation, knowledge and technological change are the elements that will eliminate the

differences in development between countries. The R&D sector created by knowledge, technological change and entrepreneurs is the engine of economic growth. Romer, who contributed to the literature in many ways, made significant contributions to the science of economics by remarking that efficiency rate of R&D directly affects the innovation process and that R&D is still an outstanding element for innovation production. (Romer, 1990).

Paul Romer's model emphasizes technological change, which is major weld of growth. Technological change that encourages economic units to maintain their capital accumulation also leads to an increase in productivity. (Türker, 2009) In Romer's model, which includes Scuhumpeterian ideas in his works, technological development is at center of economic growth. Technological development occurs in consequence of market incentives by individuals with conscious activities. Furthermore, since the production cost of the technology input can be considered equal to its initial fixed cost, the cost of reproducing and using, it is very low. In this model, it is stated that only one-time fixed cost is incurred as a result of the creation of new information, is not that additional cost arises as a result of reuse of the information. In this model, which also considers international economic integration, it is stated that the total human capital stock of the countries entering the integration process will increase. In this case, the human capital allocated to research activities will remain and ultimately the growth rate will increase (Türker, 2009).

Empirical Literature

Saula et al. (2022) examined the impact of social networks on company performance in the Nigerian hospitality industry, with a focus on hotel enterprises. Using a survey research approach, the goal was to determine the influence of the use of social media platforms on the performance of firms in the Nigerian hotel sector and then give suggestions for the future. Eleven five-star hotels were chosen by means of stratified and purposeful random sampling techniques. Using the Krejcie and Morgan method, a sample size of 307 was derived from a total population of 1490 managerial and supervisory personnel. The study discovered that social networking sites have a considerable influence on the performance of Nigerian hospitality firms. Further, research found that Nigerian hotels have formally implemented social networking sites to boost their sales. The study revealed that social media networking platforms in the Nigerian hotel sector have considerably impacted market share, client portfolio, turnover and profit, occupancy rate, and Nigeria's overall performance during the past five years.

Ozioma (2021) investigated the effect of social media marketing on consumer patronage decision making with specific focus on small businesses in Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria. Three specific objectives were created, such as to: ascertain the effect of social media marketing on consumer patronage intention; examine the effect of social media marketing on consumer patronage and determine the effect of social media marketing on repeat purchase. The study used structured questionnaire, which were distributed and retrieved, sorted and the correctly filled copies typed into the SPSS software for analysis. Through the regression analysis, the study found that; social media marketing significantly impacts consumer patronage intention, consumer patronage and repeat purchase.

Edet (2021) examines the impact of social media adoption on customer relationship management. The study proposed three objectives in a bid to solving the problem of the study; this includes to examine the social media adoption stages by SMEs owners in Nigeria; to ascertain whether SMEs owners in Nigeria possess the technology-know-how of social media adoption; to investigate the benefits SMEs owners in Nigeria derives having adopted social media platforms for customer relationship management. A qualitative approach was employed through a one-on-one interview

with 5 selected SMEs owners in Lagos, Nigeria. The responses of the interview protocol was analysed using a thematic approach. The result of the study showed that the SMEs in Nigeria adopt social media in managing customer's relationships; the study also revealed that SMEs owners possess adequate knowledge in utilising and fully implemented social media technologies in Managing customer's relationships; and that SMEs owners who have adopted social media platforms in managing customer's relationships benefits greatly among which includes expanded sales volume, increased customer-based, customer's loyalty and among others.

3.0 Methodology

This study was a cross-sectional survey of businesses (small and medium enterprises including content creators) in Bayelsa State. The study was a survey one meant to evaluate the ban on twitter and its effect on the Nigerian economy. The design was also used in this study in consideration of the researcher to acquire first-hand information from the respondents in formulating rational and sound conclusions and recommendations for the study. The populations for this study cut across different sector. These include registered and unregistered businesses operating within the state. In view of the large population of the study a sample was chosen from the entire population. The sample size of the above population was determined using the Slovin's formula for unknown population. From the calculation, 397 becomes the sample size for the study. The accidental sampling technique was used in selecting the participant of the study. This sample was drawn accidentally from residents and different form of businesses operating in the state and has also incorporate twitter into their business. The instrument used in this study was validated by two other experts in measurement and the reliability test shows 0.77 which confirm the instrument was reliable. The instrument was administered to 397 participants selected for the study, however, 387 were judged to be correctly filled and used for data analysis. The data analysis was carried out using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics, of frequencies tables and percentages were used to analyse the data collected for the study. Frequency distribution tables were used because they enable the reader to see the trend of the distribution more easily by simply looking at numbers in the table. The data for hypotheses were analysed using chi-square statistics.

4.0 Data Analysis

The data collected were in raw form, called raw data without which any reference cannot be made for the sake of clarity. In other to ascertain the effect of twitter ban on the Nigerian economy, the data were analysed. The results are presented in tables.

Demographic Variables of Respondents

In this section, the bio-data of the respondents is presented and analysed.

Table 1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	253	65.4
Female	134	34.6
Total	387	100

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

Table 1 indicates that of the 387 questionnaire that were properly filed and retrieved, 253 (65.4%) of the respondents were male while 134 (34.4%) were female.

Table 2 Educational Qualification of Respondents

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE	79	20.4
OND	121	31.3
B.Sc	172	44.4
Post Graduates	15	3.9
Total	387	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In terms of educational level of the respondents, the Table (2) shows that of the 79 respondents who responded to the questionnaire items, 79 (20.4%) were Senior School Certificate holder while 121 (31.3%) are Ordinary Diploma Certificate (OND). Those who had Bachelor degree were 172 (44.4%) and 15 (3.9%) had Post Graduate Degree. The result is an indication that majority of the respondents are Bachelor degree holders. Moreover, the respondents had one level of education or the other which can help make good decisions and respond appropriate to the questionnaire interview.

Analysis of Research Questions

Analysis of Research Question One: What is the effect of twitter ban on unemployment in Nigeria?

Table 3 Mean Response Score on Effect of Twitter Ban on Unemployment rate

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Decision
1	Twitter ban affected content creators from earning income within the period of the ban.	387	3.6	Agree
2	Twitter ban made young Nigerians who use the micro-blog to build career as social media managers to be redundant and jobless.	387	3.0	Agree
3	The ban on twitter affected the job of Nigerians whose main job is product photographing.	387	3.3	Agree
4	Vendors who use twitter were temporarily displaced from their job within the period of the ban.	387	3.4	Agree
5	Young Nigerians who do advert for companies on twitter were structurally unemployed within the period	387	3.4	Agree
Grand Mean		387	3.3	Agree

Source: Author's computation, 2024

Table 3 showed respondents response on the effect of twitter ban on unemployment. Five closed-ended question items were raised in respect of this research question. The result indicated that respondents agreed to item 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, with mean scores were 3.6, 3.0, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.4 respectively, which were greater than the critical value of 2.5. In addition, the grand mean score of 3.3 was also greater than the critical value of 2.5 which shows that it was generally agreed by respondents that twitter ban aggravated the unemployment rate. The significance of the effect of the ban is presented in Table 6.

Analysis of Research Question Two: What is the effect of twitter ban on small and medium businesses in Nigeria?

Table 4 Mean Response Score on Effect of Twitter ban on small and medium businesses

S/No	Items	N	Mean	Decision
6	Twitter ban reduced the revenue generation of small and medium business organization	387	3.2	Agree
7	Twitter ban disrupted business exposure to local and international customer and potential customers.	387	3.0	Agree
8	The ban on twitter affected the e-marketing practices of businesses.	387	3.2	Agree
9	The ban on twitter impeded customer complaint and quick resolution of dispute.	387	3.2	Agree
10	The ban resulted to closure of some businesses	387	3.2	Agree
Grand Mean		387	3.2	Agreed

Source: Author's computation, 2024

Table 4 revealed respondents response on the effect of twitter ban on small and medium businesses. Five closed-ended question items were also designed to elicit response with respect to this research question. The result indicated that the twitter bans adversely affected small and medium businesses. The data presented in Table 4 revealed that item 6 mean score was 3.2 and item 7 mean score was 3.0; item 8 mean score was 3.2; item 9, 3.2 and item 10, 3.2 which were all greater than the critical value of 2.5. In addition, the grand mean score of 3.2 was greater than the cut-off means of 2.5 indicating that it was the general opinion of the respondents that twitter ban severely affected small and medium businesses. A test result of the significance is presented in Table 7.

Analysis of Research Question Three: What is the effect of twitter ban on investment in Nigeria?

Table 5 Mean Response Score on Effect of twitter ban on Investment

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Decision
11	The ban on twitter raised the investment hostility profile of Nigeria	387	3.1	Agree
12	Twitter ban dampen foreign investors' appetite to invest in Nigeria	387	3.2	Agree
13	Twitter ban sent the wrong signal to international investors, making them worried about the sanity and security of business in Nigeria	387	3.1	Agree
14	Twitter ban affected new investment into the technology sector in Nigeria.	387	3.4	Agree
15	The ban on twitter alter the status of Nigeria as the best-performing African country in attracting investment for tech start-up businesses	387	3.0	Agree
Grand Mean		387	3.2	Agree

Source: Author's Computation, 2024

Table 5 revealed respondent's responses on the effect of twitter ban on investment in Nigeria. Five closed-ended question items were constructed to elicit response with respect to this research question. The result indicated that the twitter ban sent a wrong signal about Nigeria to international investors. The data presented in Table 4.5 revealed that items 11-15 had mean score that is greater than the cut-off value of 2.5. In addition, the grand mean score of 3.2 which is also greater than the cut-off value of 2.5 validated the fact that the majority of the respondents agreed that twitter ban had negative effect on foreign investment in the tech sector. The result of the test of hypothesis three determines the significance or non-significance of the effect

Hypothesis Testing

Ho₁: Twitter ban has no significant effect on unemployment in Nigeria.

Table 6 Chi-Square Tests on the significance of the effect of twitter ban on unemployment rate

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.537 ^a	16	.021
Likelihood Ratio	11.660	16	.020
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.689	1	.194
N of Valid Cases	1935		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 93.00.

Table 6 revealed the significant effect of the twitter ban on the unemployment rate in Nigeria. The top row of the output table revealed that the Pearson Chi-Squared statistic, $\chi^2= 11.537$, degrees of freedom 16, corresponding to $p = 0.021$. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis at 0.05 Alpha levels. In other words, the null hypothesis is rejected with 99.8% confidence and it is therefore, concluded that twitter ban significantly affected the unemployment rate in Nigeria. In other words, twitter ban affected to job of content creators, displaced young Nigeria whose career is to manage social media for individuals and organizations, and also affected product photographers etc.

Ho₂: Twitter ban has no significant effect on small and medium businesses in Nigeria.

Table 7 Chi-Square Tests on the significance of the effect of twitter ban on small and medium enterprises

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	205.208 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	207.410	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	34.010	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1935		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 62.60.

From the top row of the output, the result shows that the Pearson Chi-Squared statistic, $\chi^2= 205.208$, degrees of freedom 16, corresponding to $p = 0.000$. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis at 0.05 Alpha levels. In other words, the null hypothesis is rejected with 100% confidence and it is therefore, it is concluded that twitter ban significantly affected small and medium enterprises in Nigeria. The implication is that the ban on twitter reduced the revenue generation of small and medium businesses, inhibits the exposure of businesses to local and international customers, impeded customer complaint and quick resolution etc. Ozioma (2021) reported that social media marketing significantly impacts consumer patronage intention, consumer patronage and repeat purchase, this is evident that a ban on twitter possibly affected small and medium businesses that lack the resources to place television adverts.

Ho₃: Twitter ban has no significant effect on investment in Nigeria.

Table 8 Chi-Square Tests on the significance of the effect of twitter ban on investment

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	166.504 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	181.440	16	.000

Linear-by-Linear Association	23.483	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	1935		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 68.80.

Table 8 indicated that the Pearson Chi-Squared statistic, $\chi^2 = 166.504$, degrees of freedom 16, corresponding to $p = 0.000$. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis at 0.05 Alpha levels. In other words, the null hypothesis is rejected with 100% confidence and it is therefore, concluded that twitter ban significantly affected investment to Nigeria. In other words, twitter increased the investment hostility level of Nigeria, dampen foreign appetite for to invest in Nigeria, alter the status of Nigeria as the best-performing African country in attracting investment for tech start-up etc.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study indicated that the disruption of the workings of twitter resulted in loss of revenue for some businesses including content creators and advertisement practitioners in Bayelsa State.

The result in Table 3 revealed that the participants agreed that the ban on twitter increased the unemployment rate especially during period of the ban. The test of hypothesis one further established that the significantly aggravate the unemployment situation in the country. This means that the ban prevented content creators from earning income from the micro blog, inhibit young Nigerians who use the micro-blog to build career as social media managers, stifle Nigerians whose main job is product photographing, displaced vendors and frustrated advert practitioners from practicing with the period.

The findings also indicated that the general opinion of participants was that twitter ban affected the smooth operation of small and medium enterprises in Nigeria. In other words, the ban caused a reduction in revenue generation of small and medium business organization, disrupted business exposure to local and international customer and potential customers, affected the e-marketing practices, impeded customer complaint and quick resolution of dispute and resulted in permanent close of some businesses. This was further confirmed by the result of hypothesis two which indicated a significant effect of twitter ban on small businesses.

Additionally, the findings of the study show that the ban on twitter affected investment especially in the media sector. The ban raised Nigeria's hostility profile before foreign investors, ban dampen foreign investors' appetite to invest in Nigeria, sent the wrong signal to international investors about the sanity and security of business in Nigeria, affected new investment into the technology sector, alter the status of Nigeria as the best-performing African country in attracting investment for tech start-up businesses.

The is in tandem with other studies like Saula et al. (2022), Ozioma (2021) and Edet (2021). For instance, Saula et al. (2022) reported that social networking sites have a considerable influence on the performance of Nigerian hospitality firms, therefore, a ban is expected to cause a devastating effect on the sector in terms market share, client portfolio, turnover snf profit. In addition, Ozioma (2021) asserts that social media (twitter included), impact customer patronage. The disruption of twitter operation is expected to weaken customer patronage which in turn results in labour cut thereby aggravating the unemployment situation. The finding is not different from that of Edet (2021) who discovered that the social media expend sales volume for SMEs, increase customer base and customer loyalty. It then indicated that the clamp down on the micro blog

(twitter) must have affected the volume of sales, shrink customer base and possibly displaced customer loyalty which are necessary for growth and development.

5.0 Conclusions

Twitter is a versatile, accessible and valuable tool for communicating thoughts, ideas and visions of the future, globally. While Twitter presents challenges, the responsible and ethical use of it offers an exciting development that should be embraced. In view of the findings of this study, it was concluded that twitter ban has significant effect on the Nigerian economy.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended as follows.

1. Government should device a means to reassure investor especially in the tech sector that the businesses is secured and will not suffer such a drastic punishment in the future.
2. Government must ensure that the interest of majority of Nigerians should come first before personal ego.
3. At a time like this in our nation's history where unemployment rate is constantly on the rise, government needs to make policies that strengthen twitter for job creation rather ban it.

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