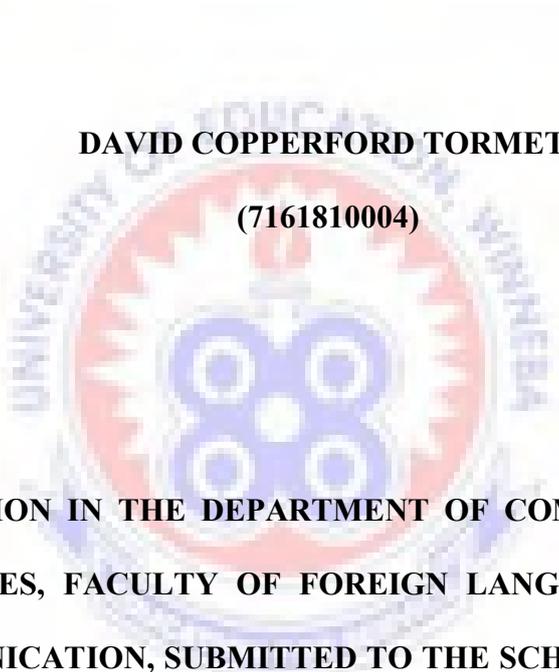UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES:

A STUDY OF THE GHANA POLICE SERVICE

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(7161810004)

A DISSERTATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES, FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS (BUSINESS COMMUNICATION) DEGREE.

DECEMBER, 2017

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, David Copperford Tormeti declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotation and references contained in published works which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: ………………………………………

DATE: ………………………………………

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: ……………………………………….

SIGNATURE: ………………………………………………..

DATE: ……………………………………………………..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family, friends and loved ones who almost felt abandoned in the course of my work. I denied you so much attention yet you still draw me closer to your side. To Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Madam Patience Ashorkor Quaye who always reminds me of God's presence and good plans for my life. You always assured me of my potentials in the days ahead. God Richly Bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

Technology has made it easy for criminals to carry out their illegal activities. Communities are gradually becoming computer-generated where people no longer converge at physical locations to take decisions. The measure of crime in modern times signifies a substantial challenge to law enforcement agencies in Ghana. Social media tools such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram have made it extremely easy for any subscriber to share comments, pictures, and videos with millions of people around the world. Due to the prevalence of social media use, criminals in Ghana have technologically advanced in their activities. Businesses and citizens are being tracked, monitored and ultimately attacked or robbed. The study aims to investigate how the Ghana Police Service uses social media tools to enforce the laws of Ghana. Owing to this, it employs the qualitative approach and a single case study respectively. The study reveals that the Ghana Police Service is taking advantage of the accrued benefits provided by social media platforms to improve upon its law enforcement mandate. However, there are indications that the Ghana Police Service needs to up its game on the use of social media for crime detection and prevention. The study made it possible for some notable senior police officers at the Ghana National Police Headquarters to be interviewed for the desired information.
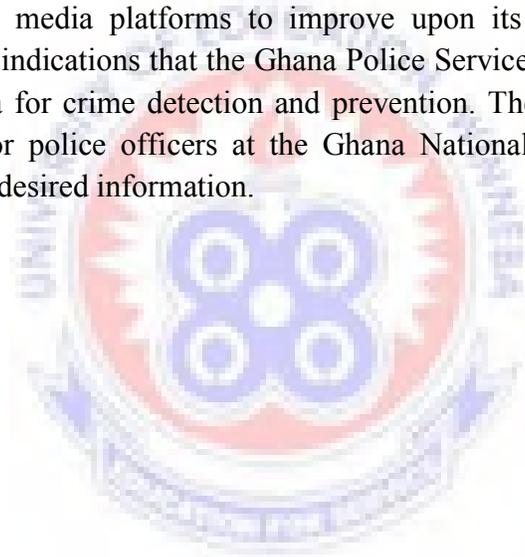
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Technology has made it easy for criminals to carry out their illegal activities. Communities are gradually becoming computer-generated where people no longer converge at physical locations to take decisions. The Ghana News Agency reported that the administration of the Ghana Police Service had declared, in a press briefing, its intention of stepping up crime prevention efforts to adequately respond to the needs and expectations of the community. This declaration saw the dawn of the Visibility/Accessibility Unit (V/AU), whose purpose is to maintain a strong police presence in the community and serve as disincentive to crime commission. In the same vein, it is displayed on the Ghana Police website that the Information Communication Technology (ICT) directorate of the Ghana Police Service functions as a cross-cutting body which seeks to address the connectivity and harnessing of the emerging technologies to enhance police operations. It has been made known that the modernisation of infrastructure and services that support crime detection and prevention is a priority of the directorate (GPS, 2017).

The most effective law enforcement agencies recognise and promote partnerships with their citizens to prevent crime. Citizens who are engaged and empowered to be responsible for their communities are valuable assets to the work of any police department. As the popularity of social media rises, these tools provide opportunities for

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law enforcement agencies to proactively reach out and connect with citizens and promote crime prevention in their communities (IACP, 2012).

As the police allude to the use of technology to support crime detection and prevention, it is very essential to find out how social media is being used by the police to execute their duties. Wolff, McDevitt and Stark (2010) argue that social media have persistently become cohorts in the lives of people. Today, people gather in networked public spaces for a variety of purposes in the form of negotiating their identities, sharing gossips, supporting one another, sharing information, flirting, cracking jokes and so forth just as they would do, in real life, in parking lots and shopping malls (Wollf et al, 2010). Social media is now being considered as a place where people socialise and should not be limited only to a means of communication (Miller, Costa, Haynes, McDonald, Nicholescu, Sinanan, Spyer, Venkatraman and Wang, 2016). This implies that the cyberspace should be seen by law enforcement agencies as a community on its own. To many people, the use of social media platforms has become a daily routine and an integral part of their social and business lives (Hallikainen, 2015). In spite of the numerous benefits of social media, Ackerman, Schutte and Schaefer (2015) are of the view that the prevalence of social media makes it possible for individuals to use the technology as a vehicle to perpetrate cybercrime. The accrued benefits of social media websites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and Instagram has made it compelling for law enforcement agencies to improve and make good use of these new methods of communication. In the digital age, law enforcement agencies should take advantage of the numerous benefits provided by social media. This can be done by integrating social

media as part of the national/regional/local communication and community engagement strategies. Social media can help police to become valuable for the community in terms of cybercrime prevention and awareness. The police service needs to be using these free engagement tools in order to communicate quickly and effectively whilst ensuring that they are getting the correct message out to the public without hindering their investigations or appeals.

Social media could be described as a group of new kinds of online media, which help to enhance most or all of our human characteristics such as participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness (Mayfield, 2008). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) are of the conviction that the development of a systematic classification scheme for social media can be difficult because new sites continue to appear every day. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:12) explain that social media could be categorized into two major elements such as social presence or media richness and self-presentation or self-disclosure. Miller et al. (2016) opine that Social sites should not be seen primarily as the platforms upon which people post but rather, as the contents that are posted on these platforms.

Besides, Fuchs (2011) argues that social media has the tendency of being used to organize riots and revolutions. Moreover, Rizz, Pereira and Curvelo (2011) assert that in times of riot or crisis situation, social media could be used to communicate between authorities, citizens and rioters as well. In the same vein, Storck (2011) maintains that

social media could be used strategically by activists to schedule protests, coordinate and promote political events.

In the meantime, Wollf et al (2010) notify that gangs appear to use social media for the same or similar purposes for which they engage in the physical world. Some of the uses by gangs include recruiting people, communicating ideologies, drug sales, and publicising activities. In a survey conducted by the Community Safety Initiative (CSI) on the subject of how gangs use social media for recruitment, one CSI service provider stated that, gangs that were arrested were not all Latino, or all Black, or all White. He indicated that they mix and match since it is about numbers now. The more numbers/friends they have the more power they have. This implies that social media is a real good way for gangs to quickly mobilise and gather friends (Wollf et al., 2010).

Dewing (2010, p.10) refers to social media as a wide range of internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities". Taprial and Kanwar further explain that 'social media' could be in the form of Social Networking Sites (*Facebook, Friendster, Google plus*), Blogs, Internet Forums, Bookmarking Sites, Online Community Sites and Q&A Sites. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) in an attempt to upgrade Dewing's definition, developed their own working definition of social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (UGC). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p.15) go further and adopt the view of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation

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and Development that content must meet three basic requirements to qualify as UGC: (1) It must be published to all Web users or to a select group (which might exclude emails or instant messages); (2) It should demonstrate some creative effort and not simply replicate the work of another; (3) It must be created outside of professional routines and practices and not for a commercial market (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

1.2 Law Enforcement Agency

Kriger (2017) defines law enforcement agency as a department of public safety, a municipal police department, a sheriff's department, the Attorney General's office, a State's Attorney's office, or certified law enforcement officers of the Department of Motor Vehicles, Agency of Natural Resources, or Department of Liquor Control. Law enforcement agency shall also mean the Department for Children and Families when engaged in: (A) the investigation of child abuse and neglect; (B) the delivery of services to families and children with whom the Department is working pursuant to the provisions of 33 V.S.A. chapters 51, 52, and 53; or (C) the performance of the Department's responsibilities pursuant to an interstate compact to which the State is a party (Kriger, 2017).

1.3 Law Enforcement

According to Jones and Bartlett (2011), Law enforcement is generally a function that includes a society's formal attempt to obtain compliance with the established rules, regulations and laws of the society. GhanaLegal (2012) specifies that,

1) It shall be the duty of the Ghana Police Service to prevent and detect crime, to apprehend offenders, and to maintain public order and the safety of persons and property.

2) Every Ghana Police officer shall perform such functions as are by law conferred upon a police officer and shall obey all lawful orders and directions in respect of his office which he may receive from his superiors in the Police Service.

Today, the influx of technology has changed the unending demands of law enforcement. People are now migrating from physical environments to virtual communities which have not been covered by law enforcement agencies.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

According to a study conducted by the National White Color Crime Center (NWC3, 2011), it was realized that the tremendous rise in the popularity of social media over the years has led to a drastic change in personal communication, both online and offline. Businesses and the public sector use social media to advertise, recruit new employees, and maintain partnerships (NWC3, 2011). In the meantime, criminals have arisen to capitalise on the advantages provided by the technology as a vehicle to perpetrate crime (Ackerman & Schutte, 2015). Per a report given out by the NWC3 (2011), burglary, identity theft and other crimes have been simplified due to the fact that criminals depend on information shared on social media platforms to perpetrate their illicit acts. Gupta (2014) posits that there are few books that show government decision makers, security

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analysts and activists how to use social media to improve security locally, nationally and globally in a cost-effective manner.

Musteen (2013) indicates that social media can be a huge detriment to law enforcement and the officers that protect our communities. It can also work to the advantage of law enforcement when treated properly. Departments can use social media to detect and screen out unwanted applicants during the hiring process, (those who could potentially pose a risk to the department). Investigators can also use the social media as an investigative tool. Detectives can create undercover accounts to gather intelligence on crimes and suspects (Sterbenz, 2013). Using social media is a good way to gather information on the identity and whereabouts of a suspect or even gain information about a particular crime. "The Supreme Court has said police do not need search warrants to get information you have already shared with other people" (Sterbenz 2013). In Ghana, the acceptance of social media based evidence has not been fully granted by the legal system.

Kapitako (2016) undertook a research on how the police use Facebook to relate with the community. The study aimed to establish if the people who had 'liked' the police's Facebook page found the page useful from the purview of police-community relations. The current study is concerned with how law enforcement agencies are using social media to enforce the laws of Ghana. There is the need to find out whether the Ghana Police Service as the major law enforcement agency in Ghana is using social media to carry out its law enforcement mandate. Also, it is essential to examine the perspectives of

the personnel of the Ghana Police Service on the use of social media for enforcing the law.

Moreover, laws have not caught up with technology; they are years behind (Miguel, 2014). The Ghana Police Service, as the main law enforcement agency in Ghana, is yet to catch up with the effective use of social media tools to enforce the laws of Ghana. Most investigations are still being carried out manually. Also, there is inadequate literature on the use of social media for law enforcement. A cursory analysis of news reports seem to suggest that there is an increase in technology related crimes in Ghana. The recent hacking of the Electoral Commission of Ghana's website during the December 2016 elections (AfricaNews, 2016 & BBC News, 2016) and the cloning of ATM cards by two Bulgarians (Graphiconline, 17th June, 2016) is a wakeup call for the Ghana Police Service to also incorporate the use of social media as a means in combatting technology related crimes hence the study.

1.5 Research Objectives

The study is underpinned by the following objectives.

1. To identify the types of social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement.

2. To examine the perspectives of Police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What are the social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement?

2. What are the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study would be a document that could provide detailed feedback on the level at which the Ghana Police Service uses the attendant benefits of social media tools to enforce the laws of the land. It would also contribute in bridging the communication gap between the Ghana police service and its publics. In addition, the study would add up to literature on the use of social media for law enforcement. Findings of the study would help the Ghana police service to improve upon its quest to enforce the law. It would consequently serve as a reference point for further studies.

1.8 Delimitation

The study focused on the use of social media by law enforcement agencies. The study focused on the Ghana Police Service as the main law enforcement agency in Ghana. The study identified the social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service and how they are being used for law enforcement. It also examined the perspectives of the personnel of the Ghana Police Service on the use of social media for enforcing the laws of the land. The aim of the study was to provide a detailed feedback on the level at which the Ghana Police Service uses the associated benefits of social media tools to enforce the

laws of the land. Respondents of the study were purposefully selected in order to address issues concerning the use of social media for law enforcement. The study is not intended to measure the effectiveness of the use of social media for law enforcement. Besides it does not intend to access the social media platforms being used in Ghana. It is only focusing on how the Ghana Police Service is making good use of the technology to carry out its law enforcement duties.

1.9 Organisation of the Study

The study is organized into five interrelated chapters. Chapter one comprises the background of the study, the objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, and the organization of the study. Chapter two reviews related literature and the theory that has been employed to situate the context of the study. Chapter three discusses the methods and procedure for data collection and analysis. Here, the research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and method of data analysis are discussed. The fourth chapter is dedicated to the findings and discussions of the study. Chapter five presents a summary of the findings of the study and draws some conclusions from the findings. The chapter then discusses some recommendations on the basis of the findings and makes some propositions for further studies.

1.10 Summary

This chapter introduced the study with a general overview of the patterns of social media use by law enforcement agencies for fighting and preventing crime. Social media was

discussed and categorized into social networking sites, blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, content communities and micro blogs. Law enforcement was briefly explained in the chapter. The problem was clearly stated together with the research objectives and questions. The significance of the study was indicated while the delimitation of the study was made accordingly. The entire organization of the study was consequently specified.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.0 Introduction

Considering the surge of Web 2.0 technology (*such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube WhatsApp and so on*) and its ability to enhance the duties of law enforcement agencies, this study seeks to identify the types of social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement. It also seeks to examine the perspectives of the personnel of the Ghana Police Service on the use of social media for law enforcement. This chapter reviews various works related to social media use for law enforcement purposes. It also discusses the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as a framework for the study. This is intended to help situate the research within context.

2.1.1 Social media

The term "social media" as defined by Dewing (2010) refers to a wide range of internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities. Taprial and Kanwar (2012) further explain that 'social media' could be in the form of Social Networking Sites (*Facebook, Friendster, Google plus*), Blogs, Internet Forums, Bookmarking Sites, Online Community Sites and Q&A Sites. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) in an attempt to upgrade Dewing's definition, developed their own working definition of social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (UGC).

Social media Content must meet three basic requirements to qualify as UGC: (1) It must be published to all Web users or to a select group (which might exclude emails or instant messages); (2) It should demonstrate some creative effort and not simply replicate the work of another; (3) It must be created outside of professional routines and practices and not for a commercial market.

2.1.2 The Use of Social Media in Ghana

In a survey conducted by CLIQAFRICA (2017) on the use of internet and social media, it was reported that there is currently over 3,424,971,237 internet users globally, with an internet penetration of about 46% of global population, a growth difference of three percent (3%) from 2015. Facebook was recorded as the largest and most active social media channel with a user base of 1.79 billion and 1.09 active users on mobile. The trend showed that one to two (1- 2) out of three (3) persons found online was using Facebook probably using mobile to access. It was also reported that the trend is not different in Ghana because, the 7,958,675 of the populations can be found online (28.4%), ranking the country the 47th highest in internet user base, closely following that of the United Arab Emirates in the global internet user base ranking. This goes to confirm the fact that the community has now moved on to the cyber space. Kemp (2017) posits that the entire world records 18 new social media users every second. This implies that more than 100 new users are likely to sign up to mobile social media in the next one minute of which Ghanaians are no exemption. With regard to this, one can emphatically say that the law enforcement agencies are not taking advantage of the numerous benefits provided by the social media platforms for the execution of their duties. Social media has already reached

its sophisticated stage but brands (such as the Ghana Police Service) and some businesses in Ghana and West Africa are yet to understand how each network performs and how to capitalize on the specific purposes of these networks in reaching their brands or business goals as well as communicating with their audiences (CLIQAFRICA, 2017).

There is no qualm nowadays, that we are seeing a huge shift in media. People are drifting to the use of smart phones and social media thereby rendering social media as the most engaging and interactive form of communication. According to Ahmad (2016), Social media has grown tremendously in the last few years. From 2006 onwards, the growth rate is unexpectedly very high. Especially Facebook and Twitter have grown much faster and captured millions of users in just a few years.

Besides, social media has also affected society in a negative way. Just like anything which can be used for both good and bad, social media platforms have also provided the negative and positive ways for people. Criminals have now advanced technologically in their endeavours due to the prevalence of social media.

2.2 The Ghana Police Service

The Ghana Police Service is the major law enforcement agency in Ghana. There is however, some controversy as to when formal policing started in Ghana. Aning (2006), citing Michael Teku (1984) argues that policing in the Gold Coast started in 1831 when Captain George MacLean formed a body of one hundred and twenty-nine men to maintain and enforce the provisions of the "Treaty of Peace" which he signed with the

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coastal chiefs and the King of Ashanti. Pokoo-Aikins (2009) argues that the work of the Ghana Police Service started during the Second World War. Whatever the case may be, there are indications that some sort of law enforcement was in existence in the colonial era. The first men recruited in 1831 were trained and deployed to perform civil police duties until their activities were made official in 1873 when an 'ordinance to provide for the better regulations and discipline of the armed police force' was enacted. As the force grew and expanded, other improvements were initiated. Teku (1984) argues that some of the developments seen by the Ghana Police Service included the establishment of an Escort Unit, Railway Unit, Marine Police and Criminal Investigations Department. The Ghana Police Service saw the advent of a new unit in September 2006 called the Research and Planning Unit. This unit, according to Pokoo-Aikins (2009), was mandated to research into police methods, operational strategies of policing, and crime trends among others. The Research and Planning Unit was restructured as Research, Planning and Information Technology (RP&IT) in order to help uplift the Ghana Police Service to be abreast of technology (Pokoo-Aikins, 2009).

As indicated on the official website of the Ghana Police Service (www. Police.gov.gh), the police formation is made up of many different departments with diverse focus with the aim of working together to ensure the safety of the country. These units among others include the Criminal Investigations Department (CID), Public Affairs Directorate (PAD), Estates Department, Motor Traffic and Transport Directorate (MTTD), Medical, Community Policing, The Police College, Marine Ports and Railways, Other Training Institutions, and Projects.

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2.3 Use of Social Media for Law Enforcement

As social media use becomes more prevalent, there remain many questions regarding how exactly it is utilized to optimal effect in criminal investigations (LexisNexis, 2014). Henton (2012) asserts that agencies have become increasingly involved in the use of social media to push information out to their communities. A benefit to this medium is that it has minimised the traditional reliance on another entity, such as the press, to get their message relayed. Over the years, law enforcement agencies have been carrying out their jobs manually. This is so because the laws have not appreciably caught up with technology (Miguel, 2014). The increase in the use of real time interactive social media has dramatically changed the manner in which many people live their lives in recent times. People use their smart phones to let others know their location, tell friends what they are doing and post photos in real time. Henton (2012) queries that if law enforcement were to fully engage the segment of society using real time interactive social media, how could it benefit both the police department and the community? This implies that the Ghana Police service can gradually bridge the evident communication gap with its publics through constant interactions via social media. Musteen (2013) argues that social media is detrimental to law enforcement agencies since people post defamatory information on Facebook to make mockery of the police. It is very common to see videos of people confronting the police in a very harsh manner on social media, exhibiting their rigorous notoriety in the community (Musteen, 2013). Henton (2012) on the other hand, argues that the benefits provided by social media tools would rather help law enforcement agencies to succeed in their duties. Similarly, ESRI (2013) indicates that the

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Geographic Position System (GPS) attached to social media is an enormous feature that could help law enforcement agencies in their community patrols.

The most effective law enforcement agencies recognise and promote partnerships with their citizens to prevent crime. Citizens who are engaged and empowered to be responsible for their communities are valuable assets to the work of any police department. As the popularity of social media rises, these tools provide opportunities for law enforcement agencies to proactively reach out and connect with citizens and promote crime prevention in their communities. (IACP, 2012)

2.4 Social Media, Public Relations and Community Policing

Literature on social media shows that the way people communicate with each other has drastically changed over time. According to Coombs (2008) the new/digital media are the latest craze in public relations practice and they have the potential to make communication more global, strategic, two-way and interactive, symmetrical or digital and socially responsible. This is a clear indication that social media platforms have the tendency of enhancing the way law enforcement agencies relate with the community in a more strategic manner. According to Kapitako (2016), findings from a study conducted by Shin, Pang and Kim (2015) which examined how top global organisations incorporated brand websites, Facebook and Twitter to cultivate relationships with stakeholders indicate that online sites are used more for information dissemination rather than user engagement. The findings also show that the types of products promoted can affect the way organisations use different online media to develop relationships

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(Kapitako, 2016). For public relations to fully use digital media, practitioners and scholars must re-institutionalise public relations as a behavioural paradigm rather than as a symbolic and interpretive paradigm (Grunig, 2009). When the Ghana Police Service institutionalises the constant social media engagement with its publics, people's perceptions and unfavorable attitudes towards law enforcement could be curtailed in the long run. To strategically incorporate the use of online media, public relations practitioners and law enforcement agencies should go beyond the one size-fit all approach of communication and involve the community as partners to crime prevention and detection (Kapitako, 2016).

2.5. Control of Social Media

Grunig (2009) argues that although digital media now makes the control of communication largely impossible, the assumed control of messages and influence has always been an illusion rather than a reality of public relations practice. In the Ghanaian context, Citifmonline (2016) reported the Inspector-General of Police's intention to block social media during the December 2016 general elections. This blockage was intended to curb the abuse and misuse of social media to misinform the Ghanaian populace. The Inspector-General of Police (Mr. John Kudalor) explained that intelligence had been gathered that some people were intending to create chaos to jeopardise the security of the country during the December 7, 2016 general elections (Citifmonline, 2016). Kapitako (2016) notes that Facebook crimes have been dealt with on a minimal basis even though the police have recorded several cases where public figures were bullied on Facebook and other social media. Kapitako (2016) citing Muraranganda (2015) reported that

lawmakers are in the process of finalising a bill that would regulate social media in the country.

2.6. Technology Acceptance Model

Mojtahed, Nunes and Peng (2011) recount that, in the 1990s, there was the realization that usage and acceptance of technology was one of the main elements behind the gaining of competitive advantages from Information Systems (IS). Also, the need to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness, the existence of theories to explain and predict, the user tendency for acceptance and use of the technology was in short supply. Furthermore, Mojtahed et al (2011) citing Young (1984) indicates that there was an observed and increasing tendency for user resistance and lack of willingness to engage with technology. Actually, a number of researchers had been previously exploring the influences of individual, organisational and technological variables on acceptance of Information Technology (Benbasat and Dextter, 1986), however Davis (1989) criticised the situation by stating: "Despite the widespread use of subjective measures in practice, little attention is paid to the quality of the measures used or how well they correlate with usage behavior." (Davis, 1989)

This realization led Davis (1989) to propose that measures of Information System usage should be closely related to two factors: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and Perceived Usefulness (PU). These two factors became the corner stone of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as new proposition and method to understand the user acceptance phenomenon.

In the opinion of Marangunic and Granic (2015), the constant improvement and progress in technology, especially Information Communication Technology (ICT) related applications, makes the choice to decide on matters of acceptance and rejection a dilemma. Based on this, many models and theories have been developed to shed more light on the effective use of technology and, out of all the models, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) stands out in examining issues affecting users' acceptance of modern technology. Without considerable understanding of the foundation, growth, and adjustment, along with the limitations of the model, there can be no broad and systematic research in the field. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is an expansion of Ajzen and Fishbein's Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Priyanka and Kumar, 2013:144) which was a theory initiated by Fred Davis in1986 and since then has gone through several modifications and validation. The aim of the theory is to describe factors that determine technology acceptance, information technology usage behaviour and to provide a parsimonious theoretical explanatory model (Bertrand and Bouchard, 2008). Ducey (2013) explains that the TAM includes Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness which are the important determinants of technology acceptance and user behaviour. Teo (2013) identified various factors that promote the use and acceptance of technology. He enumerates individual differences, social influences, beliefs, attitudes and situational influences as factors that promote the intention to use technology and promote the ability to accept or reject it. In addition, Teo (2013) posited that an individual's behaviour is influenced by an intention to perform the behaviour, in other

words, the real performance of the behaviour is heralded by a person's behavioural intention to engage in the activity.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a prominent theory that seeks to investigate the attributes that influence technology adoption. Ducey (2013) also described it as a parsimonious theory of technology adoption in an establishment which intends that individual responses toward a technology can trigger intentions or curiosity to use the technology, which in due course can influence actual usage (Aggorowati, Suhartono and Gautama, 2012). Also important to TAM is intention which can also be used to envisage and predict the eagerness and motivation to perform behaviour and a number of skills. Such intention is determined by three factors: the first is personal in nature which reflects human attitude, the second is a subjective norm which shows social influence and the third is called perceived behavioural control (Huda, et al., 2012). Therefore, people's intention to adopt a particular skill can be anchored on the three important factors stated above.

Many studies have been conducted to test the authenticity of TAM. For example, Aypay, et al. (2012) tested the theory in predicting the intensity of technology acceptance among pre-service teachers and results indicated that there is a relationship between the model and information acquisition. Jiang, Chen and Lai (2010) also found that individual behaviours of technology acceptance are valuable but incomplete without looking at social factors and personal environment which are two of the factors alluded to in the previous paragraph. Thakur (2013) discussed the issues affecting consumer intention to

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adopt the use of mobile payment systems and found out that "performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence are facilitating conditions in the e-finance and mobile finance context". Garg and Garg (2013) suggest that in formulating perceptions regarding new technologies, subjective and social norms influence consumers as well as perceptions of the quality of service. Many theories have been developed that are applicable to Information Literacy research. They include: Diffusion of Innovation by Rogers (1983), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Ajzen cited by Priyanka and Kumar (2013) and Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen (1991). Despite that, the Technology Acceptance Model, in my view, is most appropriate because it helps to predict users' behaviour by considering the three components suggested by Huda et al. (2012) and supported by Shroff, Deneen and Eugenia's (2011) study. The validity of the theory has also been tested and was found to be impressive.

The TAM, which is based on the two central variables of Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness has been adjudged as an essential determinant for instructional media acceptance and performance and is one of the most widely, applied theoretical models in the Information System (IS) field. The TAM is also one of the most influential and commonly adopted theories for describing an individual's acceptance of information systems (Bagozzi, 2007). With careful observation, the variables that make up TAM are also similar to the personal ability expected of modern professionals in order to attain Information Literacy skill. Suki and Suki (2011) observed that the two definite beliefs of Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use to a large extent have direct links to the attitudes that determine the use of technology. Perceived Usefulness is seen by Pantano

and Di Pietro (2012) and Teo (2013) as a subjective prospect that specific application systems will increase job performance within a particular organisation, which is also known as "performance expectancy". Wen and Kwon (2010) observed that Perceived Ease of Use is anchored on the belief that it would be effortless and hassle free to acquire a particular skill also known as "effort expectancy". In the opinion of Bagozzi (2007), the TAM anticipated that attitudes would have a positive influence on the mindset that would gear human efforts towards the use of technology.

The TAM has proven to be useful in revealing certain shortcomings in society. In Portera and Donthub's (2009) study, it was discovered that despite the growth of information usage, evidence has shown that there is a significant decline among the elderly, illiterate, lower income earners than the younger, well-educated and high income earners. The application of the TAM has helped to confirm that age, education, earnings and race are associated with beliefs of the importance of information and beliefs can influence attitudes towards and use of skills that will enhance access to information.

Durodolu (2016) citing Davis (1989), the proponent of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), indicated that the TAM is made up of two important variables namely, Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU). The variables influence the perceptions determining the adoption of technology and are suggestive of user intentions to develop new skills. The extent of the acquisition of new skills can be affected significantly by both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations (Davis 1989). Extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity because it is perceived to be helpful in

achieving special outcomes that are different from the activity itself (Davis, 1989). In contrast, intrinsic motivation, Davis further explains, refers to the performance of a task for no apparent reinforcement other than the procedure of performing the activity per se. The underlying principle for each variable in the model is examined below.
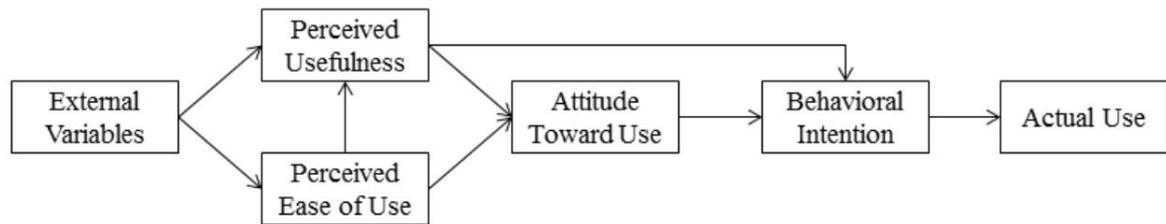
Figure 1: Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1986)

2.6.1.1 Description of the Technology Acceptance Model

Davis (1989) and Davis et al. (2011) suggested TAM as a suitable model that can explain and characterise the reasons why users accept or reject Information System. TAM is useful both as a predictive method, in order to assess the likelihood of people and organisations to adopt a particular new technology (Turner et al., 2010), or as an evaluation technique to assess acceptance of technology already in use (Trevino and Webster, 1992). Despite the many additions and changes to TAM as a methodology (e.g. Venkatesh and Davis, 2000), the initial emphasis remains today, that is identifying the effective factors that influence user acceptance of IS. After more than a decade of use in the field of IS, IT and Computer Science, TAM model is now recognized as one of the more efficient (Taylor and Todd, 1995), pervasive and continuously used model in measuring the adoption of IS (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000). TAM is based on social

psychology theory, in particular theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). TRA is based on the assumption that people, in performing of their organizational tasks, consider the impacts of their possible actions and this reasoning affects their decisions to undertake these actions (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Therefore, based on TRA, TAM assumes that technology acceptance and usage is determined by users' reflections and reasoning, that in turn determine their attitudes, intentions and internal beliefs. As discussed above, the TAM model originally proposed by Davis (1989) contains two core elements, namely PEOU and PU.

Specifically, Davis (1989) claims that the difficulties of using an IS can offset the usefulness and benefits of the system, as well as affecting user acceptance and satisfaction. PEOU is thus defined as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort" (Davis, 1989). On the other hand, if users perceive an IS to be useful to support their current and long-term job performance, they are more likely to adopt the system in their daily practice. PU is hence referred to as "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her [current and continuous] job performance" (Davis, 1989). A large number of IS studies confirmed and validated that both PEOU and PU can have direct impact on user's intention to use IS (e.g. Park et al., 2009). Moreover, previous research also identified and supported that PEOU can in turn affect PU, since users' feeling on how easy or difficult the system can be used will shape their perception on the usefulness of the system (e.g. Wu and Wang, 2005; Park et al., 2009).

The original version of TAM consists of combinations of these two core factors (i.e. PU and PEOU) and other essential elements, including External Variables, Attitude, Behavioural Intention and Actual Use, as synthesised by Legris et al. (2003) and shown in Fig. 1. The user acceptance and actual use of technology is assumed to depend on the intention of users. In turn, the attitude of users, which influences the users' intention, is formed by the users' beliefs. According to Davis et al. (1989) the two base elements of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are the components of these users' beliefs. However, these beliefs are also constructed by development processes, personal experiences, professional experiences, organisational factors, social and political influences as well as the perceptions of the tasks to be performed using the technology. These latter influencing factors are known in TAM as external variables. Although TAM has nowadays been recognised as a well-defined and widely-used model in studying user intention for accepting IT/IS, it has some inherent limitations that IS researchers should consider when applying the model in their study.

In particular, Wu (2009) highlighted that the popularity of TAM may be resulted from its simplicity and its efficiency in providing an initial roadmap for planning empirical IS research. However, it can be argued that when focusing on the limited set of six elements in the original TAM model, researchers may not be able to fully explore and explain the social-technical, cultural, and organizational dimensions embedded in the IS usage and operation environment (Wu, 2009). As a result, the original TAM model is rarely used by researchers as it is (Turner et al., 2010). In fact, in order to satisfy the needs and contexts of specific studies IS researchers very often need to establish their own research

framework, by using the original TAM model as the core but extending it with new proposed elements and relations (e.g. Wu and Wang, 2005; Hill and Troshani, 2009). The following section presents a previous study as an example to illustrate how TAM can be extended and applied in IS research.

2.6.3 Relevance of Technology Acceptance Model to the Current Study

In the area of information system, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been used in several studies to explain and conceptualise behavior and motivation for the adoption of technology. ESRI (2013), for instance employed the TAM to examine how law enforcement agencies could use technology, especially, social media to track the geographical locations of buildings and people for crime detection and prevention purposes.

The conceptualisation of the TAM in ESRI's (2013) study makes the model very significant to the current study. This is because the model has the tendency of examining the motivation of the Ghana Police Service's use of social media for enforcing the laws of the land.

A crisis and conflict example of the TAM that is relevant right now is the results from Ghana's presidential election held on December 7, 2016. The Chairperson of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, Miss Charlotte Osei posted a tweet that the website of Ghana's Electoral Commission had been hacked (BBC News, December 8 2016). The commission realized the usefulness of the technology (Twitter) and used it to notify the

Ghanaian populace that the results circulating in the media were bogus and advised the public to disregard them.

Another relevant example of Technology Acceptance Model is the recent Atomic Junction gas explosion (Myjoyonline, October 8, 2017). Pictures and videos were circulating on the various social media platforms, alerting the public of what had transpired at the said venue. Social media became very important and useful to the general public. In no time, the news could reach a very large number of people via social media. This theory is well grounded with the current study because, it aims at exploring how social media could be used by the Ghana Police Service in crime prevention and detection as it relates to the perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (POEU) which form the basic principles of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

2.7 Summary

This chapter introduced some literature relating to the study. Social media, in general, was discussed as online based user generated content applications that help people to linkup with their relations and as well share information. Use of social media in Ghana was deliberated upon. The chapter discussed the impact and or uses of social media in our everyday lives. Some advantages of social media to society were discussed. The chapter also highlighted some disadvantages of social media to society. Law enforcement was briefly explained and at the same time, an overview of the main law enforcement agency (Ghana Police Service) in Ghana was given. The chapter also looked at the possible ways social media could be used for law enforcement. Due to an increased use of social media

today, new patterns of social media aided crimes were briefly looked at. Besides, issues and debates about the use of social media for law enforcement were discussed. The Technology Acceptance Model was used as a framework to put the study to context. A brief indication of the relevance of the Technology Acceptance Model was made.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The study sought to investigate how the Ghana Police Service uses social media for law enforcement. However, this chapter gives an overview of the research methodology and it presents discussions on sub-themes such as research approach, research design, population, sampling, data collection methods and data analysis. Issues of trustworthiness and ethical consideration were duly explained.

3.1 Research Approach

The study is not intended to include surveys, large scale immoderate benchmarks, and prioritization methods such as conjoint analysis (Sauro, 2015). Rather, the study considers the exploration of some notable views, described the complexity and subtlety of how the police interact on social media platforms or use the technology to accomplish goals. For this reason, the study employs the qualitative research approach. A qualitative research consists of the descriptive variety which attempts to surface a situation or condition (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). The study seeks to identify how the Ghana Police Service uses social media tools for law enforcement. It also seeks to examine the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement. However, the research work does not intend to enumerate statistical affirmations of social media related law enforcement cases in Ghana. The rational for this is that the research

work generally explored the broad range of interconnected processes of social media usage in law enforcement activities.

3.2. Research Design

A research design is the set of means and measures used in collecting and evaluating data in a scientific manner (Schaefer, 2011). Research design could be described as the master plan and procedure for research that span conclusions from broad expectations to detailed methods of data gathering and examination. According to Creswell (2014), a research design encompasses the strategy and procedures of carrying out a study. The research design selected for this study is dependent on the nature of the research and problem. In the qualitative circles, research design is characterised by narrative research, grounded theory, ethnography, phenomenology and case study (Creswell, 2014).

The design adopted for this study is a single case study. Yin (2014) defines the case study research method as an experiential inquiry that investigates a current phenomenon within its true situation. A case study also becomes useful when the limits of a setting are not obviously evident and multiple sources of evidence are required. Creswell (2014) explains that a case study is one of the surest ways of conducting qualitative researches since it aims at understanding humans in a social setting through the interpretation of their individual actions collectively. The current study which seeks to identify the social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement represents a case which needs to be examined in detail. This is because, social media usage is a contemporary phenomenon in a real-life context and the study seeks to understand the

motivations for their use; and perspectives of police personnel on the institutionalization of the use of social media for law enforcement by the Ghana Police Service. To arrive at a more evenhanded supposition, it is very essential for me to apply multiple sources of approach to investigate the extent at which social media is used for law enforcement in Ghana. My reason for using the single case study approach is to enable me to explore and critically investigate contemporary real-life situations of how the Ghana Police Service uses its social media platforms for law enforcement.

3.3 Sampling

Hanlon and Larget (2011) posit that population refers to all the individuals or units of interest of a study. Kapitako (2016) argues that due to the large sizes of populations, however, researchers often cannot test every individual in the population because it is too expensive and overwhelming. This is the reason why researchers rely on sampling techniques. Burns and Grove (2003), avert that population refers to all the elements that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study. According to the report of Ghana's development framework which was under review for implementation for the period 2014 – 2017, the total number of police personnel increased from 24,818 in 2011 to 29,117 in 2012 representing an astronomical increase of seventeen percent (17%) (Ghanaian Times, 2014). This implies that the actual number of police personnel in Ghana today, goes beyond thirty thousand (30,000). The Ghana Police Service is the main law enforcement body in Ghana. It is divided into eleven administrative regions namely, Accra Region, Tema Region, Eastern Region, Ashanti Region, Brong-Ahafo Region, Volta Region, Northern Region, Upper East Region, Upper West Region, Western Region and Central

Region. All these Police Regions report to the National Police Headquarters Formation, which comprises the uniform and plain cloth (Criminal Investigations Department) sections respectively.

3.4 Sampling Strategy

I employed the purposive sampling technique for this study. Palys (2008) is of the view that in purposive sampling the researcher sees sampling as a series of strategic choices about whom, where, and how he does his research. This statement implies that the choice of sampling technique is dependent on a researcher's objectives as well as the kind of data being sought for. Owing to this I selected specific people who would help me to achieve my aim. Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998) maintain that sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. The research looks at the entire Ghana Police Service and its catchment areas during its quest to enforce the law. On this premise in this current study, I purposively selected a number of high ranking police officials at the National Police Headquarters of Ghana whose line of duty were related to the research work. I targeted the Public Affairs Directorate (PAD) and the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) of the Ghana Police Service. This category of respondents were considered crucial to this study because the Public Affairs Directorate (PAD) is charged with the duty of relating with various media houses, other institutions and the public in general, on matters of law enforcement while the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) is charged with the responsibility of investigating and detecting crime. Per the respective mandates of the

Criminal Investigations Department (CID) and the Public Affairs Directorate (PAD) of the Ghana Police Service, I considered them (CID and PAD) as the most credible source of information so far as the use of social media as a tool for law enforcement in Ghana remains in focus.

3.5 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

I adopted interviews as the data collection instrument. Lindlorf and Taylor (2002) are of the view that the qualitative interview is an event in which one person (the interviewer) encourages others to freely articulate their interests and experiences. Interviews are strikingly distinctive ways that people articulate their experience that makes interviews so fascinating and useful (Lindlorf & Taylor, 2002). Gilbert (1997) maintains that interview is a qualitative research technique which involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program or situation. Even though the research considers the use of social media by law enforcement agencies in Ghana, the entire population cannot be reached easily to respond to a number of issues. However, the researcher identified notable senior Police Officers at the Police Headquarters whose line of duty is strategically linked to the research work.

The study sought to identify the types of social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement; and to examine the perspectives of the personnel of the Ghana Police Service on the use of social media for enforcing the laws of the land. The current study compelled the researcher to interview specific officers at the National

Police Headquarters in order to get appropriate answers to the research questions of the study. Kajornboon (2005) asserts that there are many reasons to use interviews for collecting data and using it as a research instrument. Interviews are useful when there is a need to attain highly personalized data and when there are opportunities required for probing.

The interviews were semi-structured and an interview guide was used to obtain the required answers. The respondents of the study are highly experienced in the field of law enforcement and per their schedules, had little time to spare. I employed an interview guide which was designed to cover all aspects of the research objectives and also, to keep the interview within a specific timeframe. Each interview lasted for about twenty (20) minutes. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) posit that semi-structured interviews are suited to working with small samples and are useful for studying specific situations or for supplementing and validating information derived from other sources. The researcher identified the various offices that could provide the required information and began to book appointments with a number of follow-ups prior to the days of the interviews.

The semi-structured approach enabled participants the liberty to provide detailed and exhaustive answers to the questions asked them. Some of the interviews were recorded on tape and was played back and forth severally for proper assimilation and transcription.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The findings of the research work were divided into themes where various issues were handled one after the other. Short notes were captured for further assessment. When I was gathering the data, I took note of concepts that had not been thought of initially. Summaries of field notes were drafted accordingly. I had a prolonged engagement with respondents in order to be furnished with detailed clarifications. Some of the respondents could not easily respond to some of the interview questions that were asked. In the course of the study, I used multiple sources and methods of investigation to achieve my aim. I did a peer review and debriefing. The data collected were coded into themes for easy analysis.

Creswell (2014) opines that thematic analysis is a type of qualitative analysis which is used in identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It enables the researcher to organise and describe his data set in (rich) detail; it helps the researcher to interpret various aspects of the study; it also enhances data management, data reduction and conceptual development. The various data collected from interviews and focus group discussions were developed into codes which were later on grouped into themes. I noted the issues that run through the interviews and categorised them under unique themes. Thematic Analysis is the most appropriate that seeks to discover concepts and ideas and describe human behavior using interpretations (Mark & Yardley, 2004). The study helped the researcher to understand the various viewpoints of the respondents.

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3.7 Ethical issues

The names and offices of the various respondents have not been mentioned in any way as far as the research is concerned. Most of the respondents in this research work are people of substance and high ranking in the Ghana Police Service. Respondents of the research work were assured of utmost confidentiality. Fouka and Mantzorou (2011) assert that the issue of confidentiality and anonymity is closely connected with the rights of beneficence, respect for the dignity and fidelity of respondents. Anonymity is protected when the subject's identity cannot be linked with personal responses. If the researcher is not able to promise anonymity he has to address confidentiality, which is the management of private information by the researcher in order to protect the subject's identity (Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011). A good research is a moral and ethical task and the researcher should be concerned with ensuring that the respondents of the study are assured that their identities would be duly concealed (Sauro, 2015).

3.8 Trustworthiness

Creswell (2014) defines qualitative validity as the extent to which the researcher checks for accuracy of findings employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects. The reliability techniques are triangulation or using multiple data sources; the use of member checking; the use of rich, thick descriptions to convey findings; clarification of the biases the researcher brings to the study; presentation of negative evidence; spending prolonged time in the field and the use of peer briefing to enhance the accuracy of the account and the use of an external auditor to review the

entire project. Findings of the study are reliable on the basis that I interviewed credible people who had hands-on experience on the subject matter and are thus, in the position of providing facts about the phenomenon. I requested the consents of the respondents of this current study and had their respective responses recorded on tape which I played back to their hearing.

Creswell (2014) opines that validity include checking of transcripts for accuracy; avoiding redefinition of codes; coordination among coders in the case of team research or when the researcher is assisted by another person during the coding process. Following from the above, the researcher triangulated data from interviews. Besides, the researcher played back recorded and transcribed interviews to respondents to determine their validity while rich and thick transcriptions were carried out by the researcher.

3.9 Summary

This chapter provided the research approach used for the study. It went further to discuss the research design and how the population was sampled to enable the study to be carried out successfully. The chapter explained into details the data collection instruments used for the study. The data collection processes used for the study were elaborated while the kind of data analysis plan adopted was briefly explained. The researcher considered the validity and reliability of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The chapter discusses the findings of the research. With the help of relevant theory and related literature, the study presents key issues regarding social media use by law enforcement agencies and conceptualises its findings. Specific codes were used to label respondents so as to ensure their anonymity. The following are the codes for the respective participants: R1 (Respondent 1), R2 (Respondent 2), R3 (Respondent 3).

The research questions that guided data collection and analysis are:

RQ1: What are the social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement?

RQ2: What are the perspectives of Police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement?

4.1.0. RQ1: What are the social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement?

In the digital age, law enforcement agencies have taken advantage of the numerous benefits provided by social media. This can be done by integrating social media as part of the national/regional/local communication and community engagement strategies (Europol, 2015). For research question one which sought to identify the kinds of social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement, I grouped the

data under five themes: circulation of information; investigative tool; community engagement; collection of evidence; and maintenance of trust and confidence.

4.1.1 Circulation of Information

The study revealed that the Ghana Police Service was connected to the following social media platforms namely, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp. Whenever the Ghana Police needed to circulate information among its publics, these social media platforms were used. The various social media accounts of the Ghana Police Service are as follows:

1. Facebook: GhPoliceService

2. Twitter :   @GhPoliceService

3. Youtube :   GhPoliceService

4. Instagram: GhPoliceServcie

5. WhatsApp: +233206639121

Wollf et al. (2011) assert that the first and main advantage of social media is connectivity. People from anywhere can connect with anyone. This is regardless of the location and religion. The beauty of social media is that, one can connect with anyone to learn and share thoughts easily.

Crump (2011) avers that the interest of being connected to social networking sites is set in the context of a political agenda for increasing public trust and confidence in the police and enlistment of the public as jointly responsible for crime reduction. Although this

agenda may seem somewhat ambitious, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has promoted the use of social media to engage groups previously uninvolved in discussion of local policing (Crump, 2011). It came to light that the Ghana Police was using the social networking sites to engage their external publics. One respondent commented as follows:

> The Ghana Police Service has about eighty thousand (80,000) followers on Facebook and Twitter but in order to reach more people, we tag more influential media houses so that anytime we post something on social media, a greater number of people around the globe would have access to the information. For example, during the December 2016 elections, people were twitting and posting messages that had security implications. We used the same media to respond to their comments and debunk all misleading information due to the fact that we are aware of the power and usefulness social media platforms. (R1).

It is in this vein that Davis (1989) indicated in his Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that if users perceive an Information System to be useful to support their current and long-term job performance, they are more likely to adopt the system in their daily practice. The Ghana Police Service believes that using social media to circulate information to the public would enhance its current and continuous job performance.

4.1.2 Investigative Tool

The study revealed that investigators were taking advantage of the numerous benefits provided by social networking sites. One respondent stated that he managed to gather information about a hardened criminal who seemed to be very active on Facebook. Sterbenz (2013) claims detectives can create undercover accounts to gather intelligence

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on crimes and suspects. Using social media is a good way to gather information on the identity and whereabouts of a suspect or even gain information about a particular crime. Montaldo (2013) in sharing an experience states that when he worked as a detective, he assisted an officer with a burglary investigation in which a suspect had posted a photograph of himself and his accomplice in the building during the burglary. A respondent gave an account of how the suspect was nabbed.

> The suspect was part of a gang that was into car snatching business. His accomplices were arrested by the police but he being the gang leader had gone into hiding. His accomplices mentioned his various nicknames which were later searched on Facebook. Some of his online friends were secretly contacted by investigators and he was traced till he was eventually caught in his hideout outside the city. In fact, I was very lucky to chance on the right informant on Facebook. (R2)

This instance confirms the fact that the Ghana Police Service realized the perceived usefulness of social media to aid furtive investigations as propounded by Davis (1989).

4.1.3 Community Engagement

The study revealed that the social media accounts of the Ghana Police Service are managed by the Public Affairs Directorate which has a close working relationship with the media and the public. The Public Affairs Directorate of the Ghana Police Service has a social media team who monitor all conversations on the various social networking platforms. The social media team disseminates accurate information or clarifies incorrect information on matters of security implications. The prevalence of social media has made it easy for the police to reach a greater number of the Ghanaian populace through a single

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post. Henton (2012) avers that Facebook and other social media sites have proven to be very useful during investigations; however, police departments can use them as a community relations tool in many different ways. A respondent indicated how social media is used by the Ghana Police Service.

> These days, social media has made it very easy for the Ghana Police service to readily relate with the community. We use the social media platforms to inform the public about wanted persons, press releases, security alerts and the like. (R3).

As Davis (1989) asserts, the use of social media for community engagement is perceived to be easy by the Ghana Police Service. One does not need any special skill to use the technology (social media).

4.1.4 Collection of Evidence

The study revealed that The Ghana Police Service no longer depends solely on traditional means (relying on third parties such as the media and eye witnesses) to collect evidence of a criminal event. Social media evidence of any form of criminality is valid. In a survey conducted by LexisNexis (2014), an interviewee stated that he located a very unique three finger rings used in an assault. This implies that social media evidence is beginning to aid successful criminal investigations in real times. This gives a clear indication that social media as a technology has been found to be very useful (Perceived Usefulness) on the side of the police hence its acceptance and usage.

> A typical example is what happened at Denkyira Obuase where a military official was lynched by a mob. Police were not present at the scene of crime but per the evidence got from social media, the situation was duly taken care of. (R1)

4.1.5 Maintenance of Trust and Confidence

The study revealed that the Ghana Police Service makes good use of social media to maintain public trust and confidence by constantly responding to the distress calls of its publics and also educating them on basic security tip. The easy use of social media has reduced the Police's burden of having to use a lot of resource to constantly get in touch with the public through the traditional media. Europol (2015) contends that social media could be used to show to the public a different police side, not only more human but also more useful, explaining what services law enforcement can provide to the community.

4.2.0 RQ2: What are the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement?

In the case of research question two which sought to examine the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement, I grouped the data into seven themes: source of information; dissemination of credible information; stalking unsuspecting criminals; maximise police reputation; avenue for misinformation; leakage of information; and vehicle for cybercrime.

4.2.1 Source of Information

The study revealed that due to the fact that the Ghana Police Service is always present on the various social media platforms, it has become easy to monitor and source information to provide a quick response. Currently, social media has made it very easy for them to stay home and post whatever criminality they witness within the vicinity. According to Sambrook (2005), different category of people such as children, fathers, mothers,

celebrities, politicians and experts share their views, experiences and on-going events on their individual pages. This means that social media provides a news source for the entire Ghanaian community. These pieces of news could have security implications that may call for the attention of the Ghana Police Service.

4.2.2 Dissemination of Credible Information

The study revealed that the Ghana Police Service has identified and linked up with some media houses that have greater number of followers. Anytime a message is posted on the social media platforms of the Ghana Police, it is quickly disseminated to the public who regard it as credible information. IACP (2012) posits that hosting a crime stoppage web chat with the chief or the public information officer allows the law enforcement department to interface with many citizens in connection with ways that they can keep themselves and their communities safe. The acceptance of social media has made it possible for online forums to be created where people could simply share their views on a matter by just posting their views. The study revealed that the Ghana Police Service has not done much about using social media for traffic control. Rather, one of the respondents stated that people call to complain to the police through social media about traffic congestions in some parts of the city thereby making the police to respond quickly to such calls without delay. Social media tools can be used to assist the police in traffic controls (Lesperance et al, 2010).

According to Lesperance et al (2010), social media networking tools can be used in a variety of ways to support emergency management and public health and safety. Some

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police departments use dedicated Facebook and Nixle pages to alert citizens about what is going on in town. Managers of the social networking pages put out advisories, warnings and details of crime. They also use Facebook for public service announcements (LexisNexis 2011). The study revealed that the social media team of the Public Affairs Directorate at the National Police Headquarters uses the social media platforms to inform the citizenry about safety issues in the community. A respondent indicated as follows:

> During the gas explosion incident at 'Atomic', we had to post safety precautionary messages via our social media platforms so that more casualties would not be gotten after the disaster. We did this because we are aware that people would quickly have access to the information. (R2)

The Ghana Police Service used social media to disseminate credible information because, it hopes to positively influence the mindset of the public to consume the information as desired. In the opinion of Bagozzi (2007:2), the TAM anticipated that attitudes would have a positive influence on the mindset that would gear human efforts towards the use of technology.

4.2.3 Stalking Unsuspecting Criminals

The study revealed that the Ghana Police Service is mindful of the usefulness of the geographical position system attached to most social media sites and how possible it is to realise the locations of suspects beforehand. Some personnel of the Ghana Police Service indicated that criminals have personal information on Facebook which when tracked, could be useful for furtive investigations. Social media nowadays, is very easy to use among old and young people alike. Social media could aid law enforcement agents to

trace and locate criminals (LexisNexis, 2014). The police could easily go on Facebook to look out for who criminals associate with, and thereafter, trace them to their hideouts. Musteen (2013) citing Curtis (2012) averts that personal information from public records has been available on online for years. Due to this, the Ghana Police Service stands a very high advantage of easily tracking and distributing information to harness law enforcement.

> One notorious criminal who had been on the run for barely six months got arrested through a Facebook post where he was seen in a photograph at a wedding reception in Akosombo with his friends, having fun. Upon identification, information was relayed to the Akosombo Police Command who further proceeded to the said venue and got him arrested and detained. As for the criminal, he thought he had left Accra and gone into hiding but Facebook gave him out to the police. (R3).

4.2.4 Maximise Police Reputation

The study revealed that the Ghana Police Service uses social media to respond quickly to negative issues emerging from the public domain to maximize its reputation in the eyes of the public. According to Europol (2015) social media can be used to (1) reach out to the community: by engaging with individuals (who otherwise would not be reached) and by sharing information (otherwise not covered by traditional outlets). (2) To address community concerns: by promoting engagement rather than broadcasting, by listening to their voice and answering in return to keep the community safe and reassured.

> There was an instance where a journalist from one of the popular media houses posted a story that the Ghana Police Service had arrested a Police Constable at "Kasoa Toll Booth". It was reported that the Police Constable was heavily armed and was using a saloon car, baring a Nigerian registration number plate with a lot

of communication gadgets in his vehicle. The information went on to conclude that Ghanaians are not safe because the same police who are to protect the citizens are themselves, armed robbers in disguise. This information was misleading so we quickly used the same social media platform to debunk the information and presented the facts of the case to the public. We then assured the public of its safety and our agility to prevent crime in the community. (R1).

As reported by respondent 1 (R1), the journalist who used social media to misinform the public was being influenced and motivated by social factors and the situation at the time. Teo (2013) identified various factors that promote the use and acceptance of technology. He enumerates individual differences, social influences, beliefs, attitudes and situational influences as factors that promote the intention to use technology and promote the ability to accept or reject it. The Ghana Police in the same vein is motivated by the situation at stake. In order to correct the negative impression being created by the news reporter, the Ghana Police Service was influenced by its belief in the usefulness of the technology (social media) to erase all negative impressions.

4.2.5 Avenue for Misinformation

The study revealed that some officials of the Ghana Police Service are reserved on the use of social media because they feel that they (social media tools) enable people to put the image of the police in an unfavourable frame. Defaming pictures of police officers engaging in unprofessional acts keep rolling on social media, thereby creating a lot of discredit to the Ghana Police Service as a whole. People also take advantage of the platforms to generate information that misinform the general public on a matter. With the speedy access to cameras and social networking sites it takes just a few seconds to record

a police encounter and post it to billions of people around the world (Musteen, 2013). A number of information coming from the media comes with pictures and videos yet the information tend to be twisted to the detriment of the police. Due to the fact that social networking sites are user-generated, people find it easy to post information to discredit law enforcement agencies (Musteen, 2013). A respondent's account revealed how social media was used to misinform the public.

> During the electioneering period at Bawku, a reporter from 'TV3' (a private television station in Ghana) was live on air, saying that there were gunshots all over the place. That people are being shot at by the police. He created a scenario. We were monitoring on television and called the Bawku Police Commander to find out what was happening in his jurisdiction. The commander explained that there was an argument about where to collate and count the ballots, which created a chaotic situation so the police fired a gunshot to disperse the crowd. The Commander stated that the security was not under any threat so the news of people being shot at is rather frivolous and should be disregarded. (R1).

4.2.6 Leakage of Information

The study revealed that some police personnel are abusing the use of social media to leak information to the public domain. Due to this, some police personnel are of the view that social media must not be adopted by the Ghana Police Service as an official information dissemination channel. Musteen (2013) asserts that social networking does not only damage law enforcement's public image by posting photos and videos of officers in a funny or inappropriate situations. He contends that some officers on the other hand, use social media to divulge information that is not meant for public consumption. However, the prevalence of social media has made it very easy for people to leak information to the public without the approval of the Public Affairs Directorate.

Yes, sometimes our information is leaked to the public domain but this is usually one out of a hundred. It is possible that some of the personnel working in various sensitive offices come across information and quickly take a snapshot of a supposed restricted police signal and thereafter post it to unauthorized friends on social media. I can assure you that Police administration has put measures in place to mitigate such situations. (R1).

On one hand, the Ghana Police Service perceives social media to be very useful in enhancing its law enforcement mandate. On the other hand, a few police personnel do not perceive social media to be useful for enhancing law enforcement due to the fact that some unauthorized persons use the technology to leak restricted police information to the public. Perceived Usefulness is seen by Pantano and Di Pietro (2012) and Teo (2013) as a subjective prospect that specific application systems will increase job performance within a particular organisation, which is also known as "performance expectancy".

4.2.7 Vehicle for Cybercrime

The study revealed that even though social media has numerous benefits, some police officers are of the view that it enables people to impersonate others or engage in identity theft without any difficulty. The study revealed that some police officers fear that social media has come to nurture cybercrime commission and for that matter, it should be given a second look by the Ghana Police Service. These personnel claim that there have been a number of instances where people are duped by making them click on some links on social media where their systems are later on hacked into by cybercriminals. Ackerman and Schutte (2015) averse that social media has now become a vehicle for committing cybercrime. The 2010 Internet Crime Report from the Internet Crime Complaint Center

(IC3) reported that identity theft was the third highest complaint at 9.8% for 2010. In addition, identity theft was the second most referred crime to law enforcement at 16.6% (NWC3, 2011).

> Truly, there are cybercriminals and we are aware of that. The Police service has this in mind that is why it has made its official social media accounts known to the general public so that when someone creates a fake police social media account to solicit sensitive information from the public, he or she would be suspected and reported immediately for necessary action. On our social media platforms, we rather try to educate the public on cybercrime prevention tips in order to keep the public informed and free from becoming prey to cyber criminals. (R3).

Here, the experiences of some police personnel are influencing their acceptance of social media as a useful tool for law enforcement. They want to be very sure about the usefulness of the technology (social media) and their security before they adopt its use. Ajzen (1991) explains that the variables of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) influence the perceptions determining the adoption of technology and are suggestive of user intentions to develop new skills.

4.3 Summary

This chapter presented the findings and discussions of the research questions for the study. Specific issues that came up with reference to the research questions were discussed and analysed using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to contextualise the findings. The first objective which sought to identify the social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement was tackled by grouping all its findings

into the following themes for analysis: circulation of information; investigative tool; community engagement; Collection of evidence; and maintenance of trust and confidence.

In continuance, the second objective which sought to examine the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement was also tackled where findings were grouped into the following themes for analysis: source of information; dissemination of credible information; stalking unsuspecting criminals; maximise police reputation; avenue for misinformation; leakage of information; and vehicle for cybercrime.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings of the research, draws conclusions and finally makes recommendations on the importance of social media use by the Ghana Police Service.

5.1 Summary

The study sought to identify the types of social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement and to examine the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement. The importance of the study is that it would provide detailed feedback on the level at which the Ghana Police Service uses the associated benefits of social media tools for law enforcement.

The review of literature served as a foundation for exploring into the phenomenon. The Technology Acceptance Model was used to contextualize the study. It was therefore established that people's attitude towards the use of a system is affected by how useful they perceive the system to be and how easy it would be for them to use the system to achieve their aim. The study looked at how easy the Ghana Police Service could use social media to carry out its law enforcement duties, as well as how easy it is to use social media to successfully enforce the laws of the land. People's perspectives were examined as to how useful social media could be to the Ghana Police Service.

The research approach and design for the study were qualitative (Creswell, 2014) and case study (Yin, 2009) respectively. The respondents of the study were purposively selected based on their appropriateness to the phenomenon (Palys, 2008). The data analysis used was thematic analysis (Creswell, 2014) where the data was broken into codes and was later grouped into themes. This method of analysis enabled the researcher to vividly present the findings according to the objectives of the study.

5.2 Main Findings

The first objective of the study sought to identify the social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement. It turned out that the Ghana Police Service is subscribed to Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp.

1. Facebook: GhPoliceService
2. Twitter :   @GhPoliceService
3. Youtube :   GhPoliceService
4. Instagram: GhPoliceServcie
5. WhatsApp: 233206639121

It was discussed that social media platforms have made it easy for the Ghana Police service to circulate information to a very large number of audiences by identifying and linking up with influential media houses that have numerous followers on social media. The study revealed that investigators could use social media as an investigative tool. It came to light that detectives could create undercover accounts to gather intelligence on crimes and suspects. It was noted that social media is a good tool to gather information

on the identity and whereabouts of a suspect or even gain information about a particular crime. It came to light that the prevalence of social media has made it easy for the police to reach a greater number of the Ghanaian populace through a single post. The study revealed that The Ghana Police Service can use social media as a community relations tool in many different ways. It was discussed that social media can be used to keep citizens up to date on current events. The social media accounts of the Ghana Police Service are managed by the Public Affairs Directorate which has a close working relationship with the media and the public. The Public Affairs Directorate of the Ghana Police Service has a social media team whose mandate is to monitor all conversations on the various social media platforms. The social media team disseminates accurate information or clarifies incorrect information on matters of security implications. It was discussed that social media evidence is beginning to aid successful criminal investigations in real times. The study expounded on how social media is being used to present the image of the police in a more favourable manner, not only more human but also more useful. It was revealed that the Ghana Police Service posts crime prevention tips to the public and as well, solicits information from the public in order to maintain the connectedness between the police and its publics.

The second objective of the study sought to examine the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement. A section of the respondents were of the view that the use of social media by the Ghana Police Service should not be encouraged for a number of reasons. On the other hand, other respondents were very optimistic about the use of social media by the Ghana Police Service in carrying out its law enforcement

activities. The study revealed social media has made it very easy for people to stay at home and post whatever criminality they witness within the vicinity. The study revealed that Ghana Police Service now uses its social media platforms to educate the public on security and safety issues. The study revealed how the Ghana Police Service uses its social media accounts to stalk unsuspecting criminals. The study revealed that the Ghana Police Service uses its social media accounts to maximise the confidence of the community in the following ways: (1) reach out to the community: by engaging with individuals (who otherwise would not be reached) and by sharing information (otherwise not covered by traditional outlets). (2) To address community concerns: by promoting engagement rather than broadcasting, by listening to their voice and answering in return to keep the community safe and reassured.

The study discovered that some personnel of the Ghana Police service avert that there is so much fake news on the cyber space and for that matter they do not regard social media updates as authentic. Other respondents made it clear that even though people might use social media to misinform, the same media could be used to correct the situation and also debunk bogus information. The study revealed that a section of police personnel lamented about the use of social media for law enforcement by the Ghana Police Service. They claimed it should be given a second look due to its tendency of having restricted information leaked on the blind side of the Public Affairs Directorate of the Ghana Police Service. The study further clarified that the situation was not compelling and that the measures have been put in place to curb the situation wherever possible. The study

revealed that a few personnel expressed fear of falling prey to cyber criminals, should the Ghana Police reinforce the use of social media for law enforcement.

5.3 Conclusion

The study sought to identify the types of social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement. It also sought to examine the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement.

The study concludes that the Ghana Police Service is actively on the most popular social media sites used in Ghana. The study makes it known that the Ghana Police Service employed the use of social media tools for law enforcement because of their Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) as propounded by Davis (1989). The TAM, which is based on the two central variables of Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness, has been an essential determinant for social media acceptance and performance by the Ghana Police Service. Majority of police personnel accept that social media tools can be easily operated by any individual and that they (social media tools) should be institutionalised by the Ghana Police Service in order to enhance its law enforcement mandate.

5.4 Limitations of the study

The study sought to identify the types of social media platforms used by the Ghana Police Service for law enforcement. It also sought to examine the perspectives of police personnel on the use of social media for law enforcement.

Some of the respondents were not ready to fully open up to me even though they were assured of utmost anonymity. Besides, it was very difficult to get literature on the use of social media by law enforcement agencies within the African context. The literature reviews were from the western parts of the globe. There have been insufficient studies on the use of social media by law enforcement agencies. Due to this, future researchers can expand the study and make vital contributions to law enforcement agencies on the best practices of social media use for law enforcement. The quest to meet the deadlines of the research placed limitations on the study. There was no ample time for me to make follow-ups. I could have worked more comprehensively if the time limit was slightly extended.

5.5 Suggestions for further studies

Future researchers may do a quantitative study to measure the use of social media in terms of the people who follow, like or share their views on the social media platforms of the Ghana Police Service. Future researchers may make a content analysis of the social media pages of law enforcement agencies to ascertain the kinds of information posted by the public. People's perception and attitudes towards law enforcement agencies via social media could be a wonderful research area. Social media use for traffic management may also be ventured by future researchers. Future researchers may delve into the best practices of social media use for law enforcement. Also, social media surveillance would be a tremendous area of study.

5.6 Recommendations

As the Ghana Police Service strives towards its transformation, it would be of great benefit to concentrate on how best to incorporate social media use for effective community patrols and traffic management. This, in my view, would harness the Ghana Police Service's aim of becoming a world class professional police organization; the best Police Service in Africa; and one of the top ten (10) police services in the world within four (4) years (GPS, 2017). Informed by Wolff et al (2011), the entire community is gradually becoming digitized. People no longer gather in places to socialize or mobilise. The Geographic Position System (GPS) technology associated with most social media platforms can provide the Ghana Police Service with enormous advantage to track unsuspecting criminals from their supposed hideouts.
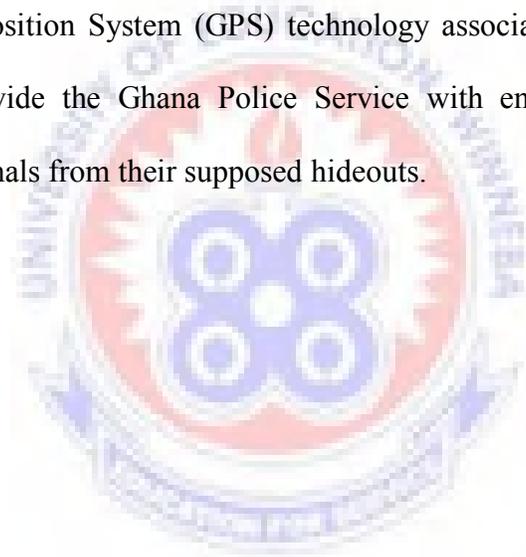
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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What are the social media accounts of the Ghana Police Service?

2. How is the Ghana Police Service using social media tools to achieve its law enforcement goals?

3. Could you share any account of social media aided law enforcement event in Ghana?

4. How useful have social media platforms been to the Ghana Police Service with regard to police community relations?

5. What are your views on the use of social media by the Ghana Police Service for investigations and evidence collection?

6. What are your views on the use of social media for safety and traffic management by the Ghana Police service?

7. How has social media use been detrimental to the Ghana Police Service?

8. How beneficial has the use of social media been to the Ghana Police Service?

9. How interactive have citizens (audiences) been on the various social media platforms of the Ghana Police Service?

10. Why do you think social media information should be considered as credible?