



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# AUDIENCE PERCEPTION OF WHATS APP VIDEOS OF JUNGLE JUSTICE IN ONITSHA AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ATTITUDE CHANGE

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### ABSTRACT

Jungle Justice is not just a crime but a heinous punishment on the individual who survives it, because it continues to live with them as a traumatic effect. WhatsApp as a social networking site is more personal-related, connecting the user to those with close affiliations. Videos of mob assault is shared on WhatsApp to assess the reaction, as well as perception of individuals on the ways of controlling and minimizing the rate of meting out punishment that is not within the jurisdiction of the law of the victim that is mobbed. This study aimed at ascertaining Onitsha residents' perception/reaction to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha, investigate the influence of exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice on Onitsha residents and then assess whether there is a significant relationship between exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha and attitude change. The study is hinged on uses and gratifications as well as cultivation theories. Survey research method was adopted in the study and a sample size of 399 was selected from the population of those living in Onitsha. The purposive sampling technique was also employed in selecting the samples from the population. Findings revealed that greater percentage of the respondents agreed that exposure to these videos have influenced them; this influence navigates through the area of attitude change and the area of reflection on ways to curb the widespread of these gruesome mob activities. Also, the respondents believed that there was a relationship between exposure to the video-clips and attitude change, because their exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha gave rise to some kind of empathy and warning for relations against being lynched. The study therefore recommends that individuals whose perceptions are changed as a result of their exposure to such videos should act on their impulse through community and rural sensitization on the negative effects of jungle justice, calling on the people to always seek the face of justice in every situation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Social media can be said to be the infrastructure and tools for creating and distributing contents with individual's shared values; personal messages, news, and ideas become cultural items when they are converted to digital form by the individuals, businesses, and industries that create and consume both tools and contents (Howard & Parks, 2012). This shows that social media are means of exchanging contents about individual values that will contribute to cultural products. Users can develop and engage in different communities through sharing, communicating, interacting, collaborating, publishing, and managing information (Mao, 2014). Social media enable sharing content with impressive features that allow users to link together through news feeds. Basically, internet-based one-to-one communication (instant messaging, email), the content generated by media organizations (online news sites), and simulated or fictitious social media sites are not considered social media

(Stoycheff, et al., 2017). Aldahdouh, et al., (2020) found that higher education institution staff mostly use Facebook for work and personal purposes. The advent of social networks has brought about the introduction of "new media" in addition to other existing large scale channels for conveying information; hence, two separate distinctions are created. The old (or traditional) media such a television, books, newspapers and magazines are the agents of communication, based on a one-way process where producers creating information that is transmitted to large number of consumers. Old news media rely on expensive gadgets and equipment to transmit signals and are limited to a fraction of given geographical location (Alejandro, 2010). The new media (internet), on the other hand, involves two-way communication within a mass audience who are both producers and consumers (Dutton, O'Sullivan & Rayner 1998).

The new media have been identified with the advent of digital revolution and rise of mobile technologies which have significantly determined not only the nature of the information being transmitted but equally the speed at which the information reaches wider audiences (Aslam, 2014). This is why Alejandro (2010) described the new media as the “web” that has “changed the world and revolutionized how information is stored, published, searched and consumed”. Meanwhile, Obiakor, Ikegbunam and Ezeja (2024) posited that social media have been seen as an integral source of political information for the youths, and most of what the people know and discuss about their political system are what they read or watched from the social media channels. The implication is that the social media make it possible for information to be released almost immediately through the help of web. That is the reason why Gilboa (2009) described the new media as an “evolution in communication technology”. This subsequently has created global networks and various online social networks. Though the print media and other conventional electronic media are still relevant, the growing competition trend between them and the internet-provided information channels is evident in the expanding number of readers, viewers and listeners of online news. Hence, social media have enabled people to share their encounters and happenings around them. Some of these images shared or updated on the social media platforms could be images of victims of crimes and others related vices such as jungle justices. While it is believed that such images are capable of triggering emotional distress among viewers, uploading them on the social media could trigger positive responses from the viewers who would render helps to abolish such barbaric acts (Nwakpu & Ogbodo, 2018).

Arguably, the increase in the number of images of victims of jungle justice on the social media, particularly, the Facebook, is an indication that the users have become producers as well as consumers of news without limitations. With social media, people have become reporters and editors as their stories do not need to pass through government, organizations or any media gatekeeper before getting to their social media audience. Consequently, the people who were formerly called the audience are now active news makers (Rosen, 2012). Incidentally, punishment or even death by jungle justice in Nigeria is no longer news as images of the victims are constantly shared on social media (Nwakpu & Ogbodo, 2018). These activities occur in such a way that some Nigerians who have had bitter encounters with criminals in the past will unleash full punishment on suspected criminals as a revenge or a way of eliminating societal ‘nuisances’ with lack of patience to investigate an accused (Obarisiagbon, 2018). It has to be noted that jungle justice is a global scourge, and its rampancy in many African countries and some Asian countries is a source of concern (Adu-Gyamfi, 2014; Sangma, 2017). While sometimes the accused are guilty of the offences leveled against them, most times innocent victims are killed, burnt or dismembered as punishment for crimes they were not involved in. This was the case with the ALUU4, an incident that claimed lives of four innocent students of University of Port Harcourt (Legit.ng, 2012). On 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2023, a viral video of a mob assault and burning of two brothers was circulated mostly on WhatsApp as well as other social media Apps. This horrific incident took place at Bida in Onitsha, Anambra State. These two brothers have been accused of extorting and imposing undue taxes on tricycle riders in the Bida area of Onitsha.

Thus, WhatsApp has provided an avenue to share and disseminate information on security alerts, and entertainment to family and friends and especially, jungle justice videos. There is need to ascertain audience perception of WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha and its influence on their attitude change.

**Statement of Problem:** WhatsApp as an application has over the years been a medium through which individuals share and exchange information, ideas, emotions, videos, contents, businesses, and relationships. The dissemination of visual contents through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, has significantly altered the landscape of information sharing and audience engagement. In this context, the circulation of videos depicting incidents of jungle justice has emerged as a subject of immense societal interest and concern. WhatsApp has automatically become an avenue to reach large audience mostly families, friends, business associates, prospective customers and customers. The emergence of WhatsApp videos has redefined the way WhatsApp users access their information on the platform. This has brought a new dimension to audience reception of information. The November, 2023 jungle justice video showcased the gruesome beating, torture and killing of individuals who were regarded as, and labeled thieves and illegal tax collectors, and consequently, killer by the mob. The pervasive nature of WhatsApp as a conduit for distributing these graphics and emotionally-charged videos has sparked intense debates surrounding their impact on individual perceptions, attitudes and broader societal implications. Jungle justice characterized by extrajudicial actions taken by groups or communities bypasses legal processes to administer often-violent punishments to alleged offenders. The dissemination of such visual narratives portraying acts of vigilante justice without legal sanction raises critical questions about the influence of these videos on viewers’ emotional responses, their understanding of justice systems, perceptions of community behavior and potential effects on societal norms.

This study aimed to delve deeply into the complex and nuanced interplay between WhatsApp-shared videos depicting jungle justice in Onitsha and the Onitsha audience’s cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses. By examining the emotional resonance, interpretative frameworks and attitudes shaped by these videos, this research sought to unravel the layers of impact these visuals wield on individuals’ perception of justice system in Nigeria, the ethical considerations surrounding vigilantism, and the broader societal implications of such contents’ dissemination. The essence is to determine the effect of exposure to those jungle justice videos on the residents of Onitsha metropolis.

## Objectives of the Study

The objectives that guided the study are:

- To determine Onitsha residents’ extent of knowledge of WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha.
- To ascertain Onitsha residents’ perception/reaction to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha.
- To investigate the influence of exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice on Onitsha residents.
- To assess whether there is a significant relationship between exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha and attitude change.

**Significance of the Study:** This study centered on WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha and its influence on audience change of attitude. Understanding how these videos influenced audience attitude can inform the development of policies and advocacy efforts aimed at curbing vigilantism and promoting lawful means of justice. Policy makers can use insights from the study to create regulations that address the dissemination of such contents on social media platforms mostly WhatsApp. Again, insights into audience attitudes towards jungle justice can have implication to community safety. Therefore, if there is a correlation between exposure to jungle justice contents and a positive attitude formation towards humanity and legal trust, there will be a need for community engagement programme to promote trust in formal judicial systems. Meanwhile, the findings of this study could be used to design intervention aimed at preventing individuals from taking laws into their hands. The findings of the study could also inform educational curricula integrating lessons on media literacy and critical thinking skills to empower individuals to navigate and interpret online contents responsibly.

**Theoretical Framework:** This study was anchored on uses and gratifications and cultivation theories.

**Uses and Gratifications Theory:** Uses and gratifications theory was proposed by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler and Micheal Gurevitch in the 1970's. The theory, also called utility theory, according to Asemah, Nwammuo and Nkwam-Uwaoma (2017) is a mass communication theory that tries to understand why people actively seek specific needs from certain media contents. It explains what function a particular kind of media content serves in a particular circumstance. The theory seeks to investigate what people do with communication content, instead of what the communication content does to them. Folarin (1998) notes that the theory perceives the recipient as actively influencing the effect process since they selectively choose, attend to, perceive and retain the media messages on the basis of their needs, beliefs and attitudes. The theory is considered one of the most appropriate perspectives for investigating why audiences choose to be exposed to different media channels; that is why people like some media contents and dislike the others. For Wimmer and Dominick (2000), the theory takes the view of a media consumer examining how people use the media and the gratifications they seek and derive from their media behavior. It has to be noted that gratifications sought could be different from gratifications obtained depending on the content and the disposition of the audience members (Obiakor & Nwabueze, 2019). Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) maintained that different people can use the same communication messages for different purposes. The same media contents may gratify different needs for different individuals. Needs here according to McQuail, Blumler and Brown (1972) might be diversion needs, personal relationship needs, personal identity/psychological needs, surveillance needs, etc. Thus, WhatsApp videos as media contents can serve specific needs for specific audience. In this context, WhatsApp videos on jungle justice circulated on social media platforms, particularly, WhatsApp, will definitely serve different functions to different people.

**Cultivation Theory:** Cultivation theory was proposed by George Gerbner and Larry Gross in 1976. The theory argues that television plays an extremely important role on how people view their world.

The primary proposition of cultivation theory is that the more time people spend living in the television world, the more likely they are to believe the social reality portrayed on television. Cultivation theory explains how people's conceptions of social reality are influenced according to exposure to television (Zaharopoulous, 2001). This explains the circle of how exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice can shape the behavior of people; that is to say that attitudes are forged in these hours we watch videos or are exposed to WhatsApp videos, in the direction in which the contents flow ideologically. According to this theory, in modern culture, most people get much of their information in a mediated fashion, rather than through direct experience (Asemah, Nwammuo & Nwammuo, 2017). The implication is that the more one is exposed to such video contents, the more the perception of the viewer is influenced.

## The Review

**Society and Jungle Justice: An Analysis of Facts:** The term Jungle justice often referred to as Mob Justice or Vigilante justice, encapsulates a form of extrajudicial punishment or retribution carried out by a group of individuals outside the confines of legal and judicial systems. This phenomenon is characterized by swift and often violent actions meted out to an accused individual or group, bypassing formal legal proceeding. This practice is deeply rooted in societal frustrations, stemming from perceived failures of the formal judicial system. The act of Jungle justice's prevalent in various societies reflects complex interplay between societal dynamics and the administration of justice. It is crucial to note that jungle justice lacks judicial precedence. The term 'jungle' metaphorically alludes to a state of lawlessness where individuals believe they must take matters into their own hands due to distrust or disillusionment with formal institutions. This practice often occurs in a public space and is marked by an absence of due process, impartial investigation, or unfair trial (Eze, 2017). It is crucial to recognize that while these actions might be perceived as addressing grievances swiftly, they pose significant risks to the accused and the society at large.

Several societal factors contribute to the prevalence of jungle justice. Economic disparities for instance, exacerbate tensions within communities, leading to an erosion of trust in the formal institutions. Moreover, cultural beliefs and historical precedents shape the normalization of vigilante actions within certain communities, influencing the acceptance and perpetuation of jungle justice practices (Ibe, 2018). The advent of social media has played a pivotal role in disseminating incidents of jungle justice. Graphic videos and images circulated on the social media platforms often evoke strong emotional responses and shape public perceptions (Ani, 2021). These videos while trying to expose injustice might inadvertently amplify the culture of vigilantism and further erode faith in formal justice systems. Jungle justice poses multifaceted challenges. The absence of legal frameworks, and adherence to due process increase the risk of innocent individuals falling victim to baseless accusations, leading to human rights violations and perpetuating cycles of violence (Okafor, 2019). Thus, addressing jungle justice demands a comprehensive approach; legal reforms, community engagements and public awareness campaigns are imperative in restoring trust in formal judicial/legal systems.

### Analysis of the WhatsApp Videos on Jungle Justice in Onitsha:

On 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2023, a viral video of a mob assault and burning of two brothers was circulated mostly on WhatsApp and also other social media Apps. This horrific incident took place at Bida in Onitsha Metropolis. These two brothers were accused of extorting and imposing undue taxes on tricycle riders in the Bida area of Onitsha. In honing the issue, video links shared on WhatsApp and other various social media Apps displayed the moment the local vigilante group attached to Bida area who were completely masked, hitting, spraying fuel and hanging tyres on the neck of the two brothers, burnt them alive for crime that they do not have credible proof for. This particular mob assault is equivalent to the different kinds of jungle justice cases that have been happening in Onitsha and its environments. These activities are carried outside the jurisdiction of the law. The horrific sight of the viral videos depicts gruesome murder, torture and burning of human beings alive, which is a capital punishment not deserving of anyone because of the impact it may have especially if the person survives it. Voices of women could be heard at the background expressing anguish and emotions as they sympathized with the victims. Jungle justice as a crime against the order of nature is not just a new thing but dated years back in the bible where the Jews stoned anyone caught in criminal acts. The case of Onitsha jungle justice is not different; this occurrence of mob assault is as a result of lack of trust in the judicial system in the country. The videos of most jungle justice cases in Onitsha range from people who are accused of stealing, extorting, reckless driving, witchcraft and other related crimes. Their punishment for these crimes may be in the form of burning the victims, beating them up, stoning them, or having the persons walk around naked in public places, as the case may be.

**Empirical Review:** One of the works done in the area of framing was conducted by Dakuku (2022). The paper stated that there is a growing malaise of social angst, frustration and discontent with society and social systems in our country. The paper established that people are losing faith in the society and are easily provoked; hence, they resort to self-help especially in criminal and social justice issues. The paper revealed that the unemployed youth population contributes to this social menace. The paper, however, faulted the judicial system for being too slow, clumsy and sometimes ineffective which most often results to this state of lawlessness. Another study is "Nigeria media framing of coronavirus and audience response" by Nwakpu, et al., (2020). The study examined Nigerian audience reactions to images of coronavirus victims on social media. The study proved that despite the kind of medium used to depict victims of COVID-19, it is still capable of raising emotional response and reactions from Nigerian audiences. It also shows that women assign responsibilities to themselves to end the situations than men when they are faced with virtual display of suffering victims.

**Research Methodology:** The method used in this research was the survey research method. This method was adopted because it provides an easy technique designed to acquire information from a group of people for the purpose of understanding and predicting the behavior, reaction, attitudes and desires of the target population under study. The population of Residents in the urban area of Onitsha was given as 205,619 according to statistics in the 2006 census population of the Onitsha area.

However, to determine the current population of Onitsha residents, Owuamalam (2012) provided the formula for projecting the population, thus;

$$PP = GP \times Pi \times T$$

Where PP = Projected population

GP = Given population (205,619)

Pi = Population increase index (2.28%)

T = Period between the given population and year of study (2024-2006 = 18)

$$\therefore PP = 205,619 \times 0.023 \times 18 = 85,126.266$$

$$\therefore \text{Latest Population} = 205,619 + 85,126 = 290,745$$

The sample size was then derived using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination, thus;

$$S = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Therefore,

$$S = \frac{290,745}{1 + 290,745 (0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{290,745}{1 + 290,745 \times 0.0025}$$

$$= \frac{290,745}{1 + 726.8625}$$

$$= \frac{290,745}{727.8625} = 399.450$$

$$S = 399 \text{ (approximately)}$$

The purposive sampling technique was used in identifying the samples. The instrument used in collecting data for this study is the questionnaire which is the primary source of information.

**Data Presentation and Analysis:** The researcher distributed 39 copies of the questionnaire to purposively selected respondents who reside in the urban cities of Onitsha. 382 copies of the questionnaire were properly filled and returned. Hence, the analysis of this study was based on 382 validly returned questionnaire copies and on this premise was the research analyzed showing 4.5% mortality rate.

### Demographic Data

**Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Characteristics**

Contents	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	179	47%
Female	203	53%
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age</b>		
20 – 25	38	10%
26 – 30	77	20%
31 – 35	119	31%
36 – 40	102	27%
41 and above	46	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupational Qualification</b>		
Student	96	25%
Business	100	26%
Corporate Worker	186	49%
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	107	28%
Divorced	5	1%
Single	270	71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 1 above which depicted the demographic characteristics of the respondents, reveals that female respondents dominated the study, that greater population of the respondents are aged 36-40, that greater majority of the respondents are corporate workers, and that greater majority of the respondents are single.

### Answers to the Research Questions

**Research Question One:** What is the extent of Onitsha Residents' knowledge of WhatsApp videos on Jungle Justice? The table 2 above presents respondents' knowledge of shared WhatsApp videos on jungle justice.

**Table 2. Respondents' knowledge of WhatsApp shared videos on Jungle Justice**

Item 7	Frequency	Percentage
Have you seen/viewed a WhatsApp shared video on jungle justice in Onitsha?		
Yes	368	96%
No	9	3%
Can't remember	5	1%
Total	382	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The table shows that overwhelming majority of the respondents have seen/viewed the shared videos on jungle justice in Onitsha. The implication is that greater population of the people in Onitsha metropolis have knowledge about the videos under study. Therefore, the extent of knowledge of the videos under study is very high.

**Research Question Two:** What is the perception/reaction of Onitsha residents to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha?

**Table 3. Respondents' Perception/Reaction to WhatsApp videos of jungle justice in Onitsha**

Item 9	Frequency	Percentage
What emotions do these videos evoke in you?		
Anger	67	18%
Fear	59	15%
Sadness	106	28%
Shock	100	26%
Indifference	40	10%
Others	10	3%
Total	382	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3 above indicates that sadness followed by shock dominated the respondents' perception/reaction towards the videos as displayed showing the lynching of the victims of jungle justice. The implication is that the videos made the audience quite emotional.

**Research Question Three:** What is the influence of exposure to WhatsApp videos of jungle justice on Onitsha residents?.

**Table 4. Respondents' level of influence as a result of exposure to jungle justice videos shared on WhatsApp**

Item 11	Frequency	Percentage
Have these videos influenced your views on jungle justice?		
Yes	287	75%
No	81	21%
Can't Say	14	4%
Total	382	100

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Analysis of the table 5 above shows that the videos of jungle justice have a lot of influence on the respondents. The result indicates that greater majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that the videos have influenced them in one way or the other.

**Research Question Four:** is there any relationship between exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice and attitude change by Onitsha residents?. Using the Likert scale in the table 5 above, mean deviations of 3.64 and 3.5 were recorded after collating the questionnaire, these show that there is a high agreement that exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha has changed the attitude of the respondents towards the issue under study.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study set out to ascertain audience perception of WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha and its influence on attitude change. The **first objective** in determining the extent of knowledge of WhatsApp videos on jungle in Onitsha, it was found that greater majority of the respondents are virtually exposed to, and have high knowledge of the WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha. This shows that the extent of exposure to these videos circulating online and chiefly shared on WhatsApp is very high given 96% as recorded in table 2 above. The findings collaborate with the findings of Okoji and Azeez (2023) which affirmed popularity of the social media mostly WhatsApp as the most frequently used social media app, used for communication. More still, the finding is also in line with the findings of earlier studies, that social media platforms provide direct access to contents to an unprecedented number of people (Ikegbunam & Obiakor, 2021, in Obiakor, Ikegbunam & Ezeumenwa, 2024), that social media is one of the most vibrant means of disseminating information to the masses ((Obiakor, & Ikegbunam, 2021; Obiakor, Ikegbunam & Ezeja, 2024), that social media are one of the major sources of information on politics for users (Duru, 2019, in Obiakor & Adikuru, 2024), about a demonstration of the universality of the internet and its permeation ability (Obiakor, Adikuru & Agbakaj, 2022), that WhatsApp is one of the social networking sites where political issues are being discussed everyday by users (Obiakor, Ikegbunam & Ezeaso, 2023) and that the role of the social media in projecting public information to the people is hereby acknowledged (Ikegbunam & Obiakor, 2023). The high exposure to these videos may be attributed to the fact that "When audience members in the society distrust the mainstream media, they have a tendency to withdraw from it and turn towards alternative sources (Müller & Schulz, 2021, in Obiakor, 2024). This high level of exposure to the news reports under study depicts an agreement to the fact that vibrant and active media are indispensable tools for the execution of any election (Ezinwa, 2015, in Obiakor, Okelue & Okeke, 2024), in the sense that without access to the full range of information about their world, citizens cannot fulfill their roles, and democracy will wither (Kurfi, 2010, in Obiakor, Okelue & Okeke, 2024).

The **second objective** is to ascertain Onitsha residents' perception/reaction to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha. It was found that greater percentage of the respondents express sadness as their emotional state to the WhatsApp-shared videos on jungle justice, while others express anger, fear, shock, pity and indifference amongst other reactions.

**Table 5. Respondents' belief that exposure to WhatsApp video has changed their attitudes**

Item 13(i)	S/D	D	U/D	A	S/A	Total	X	
Exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice has changed my attitude towards the issue.	30 (30)	47 (94)	70 (210)	106 (424)	127 (635)	382 (1393)	3.64	Accepted
I have warned my wards not to do anything that will lead to them being lynched	50 (50)	48 (96)	54 (162)	117 (468)	113 (565)	382 (1393)	3.5	Accepted
I am not moved because it doesn't concern me	200 (200)	115 (230)	32 (96)	20 (80)	15 (75)	382 (1393)	1.8	Rejected

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

This is in line with the findings of Nwakpu *et al.* (2020) where the participating respondents in a focus group discussion pointed out that they feel touched by the videos they watch on jungle justice on YouTube; some of the respondents expressed shock, some others feel pity and numb to these horrific views they have witnessed or viewed.

Investigating the third research objective on influence of exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha, it was established that greater percentage of the respondents agreed that exposure to these videos have influenced them. This influence navigates through the areas of knowing that jungle justice happens and that there is need for self respect so as not to fall victim. The influence is also on the aspect of advising the younger ones to avoid issues that will make them to face such horrific ordeals. The fourth objective assessed whether there is a significant relationship between exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha and attitude change. Using the Likert scale, it was found that the respondents believe that there is a relationship between exposure to the videos under study and attitude change because the mean deviations of the hypothesis as tested were 3.64 and 3.5. The essence is that the study recorded a change of attitude on the part of the respondents. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Nwakpu *et al.* (2020) which state that people who are exposed to videos on jungle justice claimed that they would start a social media campaign to alleviate punishment of jungle justice while some others also claimed they would use the traditional media like villages, market places, churches and through street protest to preach against jungle justice and its implication on social development of the society. Hence, change of attitude is all encompassing as this will affect both the young and the old towards a better phase of life in the society. For some, change of attitude to become better persons and avoid being lynched; for others, advocacy for due process within the society.

## CONCLUSION

The study examined audience perception of WhatsApp videos on jungle justice and its influence on attitude change. It was found that the respondents are well aware and exposed to the WhatsApp videos on jungle justice in Onitsha metropolis; that the respondents exhume a great deal of shock, sadness, pity as reactions to the videos on jungle justice which brings about perception that leads to change of attitude. It was also established that there is a significant relationship between exposure to WhatsApp videos on jungle justice and change of attitude. Hence, it has been proven through this study that despite the kind of medium used to depict or share jungle justice or mob action, it is still capable of raising emotional response. It also proves that there is an attitude change as a result of exposure to jungle justice videos.

Perception about the barbaric act can be changed through campaigns against such acts. The study results found that audience are moved by these videos as reactions trills with sadness, numbness/shock and others. These are factors that incite change of attitude. Hence, the study concludes that people can have change of perception and attitude with regards to the WhatsApp videos on jungle justice. Since it has been discovered that a contributing factor to jungle justice is illiteracy as those who engage in such crimes are not properly educated. It becomes necessary to properly educate the masses about the dangers of jungle justice.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It was recommended thus: that the negative effect of jungle justice should be emphasized through community and rural sensitization by calling on the people to always seek the face of justice in all situations; that the judiciary should avoid corruption in the dispensation of justice; hence, responsible, truthful and accountable judiciary should be upheld so that issues brought before the law does not go unresolved; that individuals whose emotions are aroused as a result of their exposure to the jungle justice videos should work on their impulse so as not to get hurt psychologically; that there should be more in-depth study on other social media platforms to explore the method, manner and how jungle justice videos are circulated and consumed by their users. Thus, helping the agencies involved in curtailing the menace of jungle justice in the society; there should be limits to citizen journalism because most of the videos on jungle justice circulated online are not properly censored in line with the ethics of journalism.

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