

AWARENESS OF ETHICAL CONCERNS IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE IN SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG RESIDENTS OF LOKOJA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the awareness of ethical concerns in artificial intelligence use in social media among residents of Lokoja, Kogi State. Anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model. A survey research method was adopted, employing a multistage sampling technique to select respondents from Lokoja metropolis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that a significant proportion of residents are fairly aware of AI ethical concerns. Privacy invasion and personal data security threats were identified as the most prominent ethical issues. The study concludes that perceived usefulness and ease of use continue to drive acceptance of AI-enabled media platforms despite ethical apprehensions. It recommends that government and regulatory agencies should intensify public sensitisation campaigns on AI ethics and digital rights. Social media companies should enhance transparency in AI algorithms and data usage policies.

Key words: Awareness, Ethical Concerns, Artificial Intelligence, Social Media.

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INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies are becoming central to modern communication channels, especially in social and digital media environments. Over the past decade, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) have integrated AI-driven tools for content moderation, algorithmic personalization, automated recommendations, and targeted advertising (Senarathna, 2025). The use of AI has drastically transformed the way people communicate, obtain information, interact with brands, and participate in civic discourse. However, this swift integration has also given rise to complex ethical concerns requiring scholarly attention. AI algorithms are designed to analyze user data, predict preferences, shape content feeds, and influence user engagement. The automation of these tasks enhances efficiency, improves user experience, and increases profitability for digital platforms. For instance, algorithms now determine trending topics, perform emotion

analysis, and tailor news feeds based on behavioural patterns (Maya, 2025). Although beneficial for personalization, such practices raise serious ethical questions about transparency, autonomy, privacy, and accountability in digital media ecosystems.

One primary ethical concern is privacy and data protection. AI systems rely heavily on large datasets that contain personal information of users. These datasets include behavioural histories, preferences, location data, social interactions, and in some cases, sensitive identifiers. When AI systems collect, store, and process such information, users may not be fully aware of how their data are being used or the extent to which they give consent. In many cases, privacy protections are inadequate, and mechanisms for explicit consent are weak, leaving users vulnerable to data misuse and breaches (Jaiswal et al., 2024). The spread of misinformation and deepfakes is another major ethical challenge. AI tools can generate highly realistic synthetic media audio, video, and images that appear authentic but convey false information. This phenomenon undermines trust, challenges democratic processes, and can incite social unrest. In Nigeria and other developing nations, where digital literacy varies widely, the risks posed by AI-generated misinformation on public safety and national cohesion are significant (Lawal, 2025).

Transparency and accountability are also pressing issues. Many AI systems operate as “black boxes” meaning neither developers nor users fully understand how decisions are generated. Lack of explainability creates barriers for accountability when AI causes harm. For example, automated moderation tools might remove legitimate content unjustly or fail to detect harmful content due to contextual limitations, raising questions about fairness, censorship, and free expression rights. Such ethical dilemmas highlight the competing priorities between platform governance and user rights, a tension that requires nuanced research and regulatory oversight (Senarathna, 2025). In the Nigerian context, the adoption of AI technologies in social communication is growing, but public awareness of ethical implications remains limited. Policies and frameworks governing AI usage are nascent and inconsistently enforced across sectors (Ikeyi et al., 2025). Unlike developed countries with stricter guidelines such as GDPR in the European Union, many African nations including Nigeria lack comprehensive regulations that ensure transparency, equity, fairness, and protection of user rights in AI applications.

From a societal perspective, AI integration in social media holds immense potential for enhancing information flows, democratizing communication, and promoting civic engagement. However, without ethical safeguards and public awareness, these benefits may

be overshadowed by violations of privacy, digital discrimination, misinformation propagation, and erosion of trust in media institutions. Awareness and understanding of these ethical concerns among digital citizens especially at the community level are therefore crucial for informed media consumption and participatory digital citizenship. The current study focuses on Lokoja residents, a diverse urban population in Nigeria's Kogi State. The study is anchored on the technology acceptance model (TAM). Examining their awareness of ethical concerns in artificial intelligence use in social media among residents of Lokoja provides valuable insights into how communities perceive and respond to emerging technological risks.

Statement of the Problem

Artificial Intelligence integration into social and digital media usage has become ubiquitous, shaping communication behaviours and impacting public trust. While AI-driven functionalities such as personalization, automated moderation, and content recommendation offer numerous benefits, they also pose significant ethical challenges. These include data privacy violations, algorithmic bias, misinformation spread, and diminished accountability for content outcomes. Existing literature underscores that despite the global proliferation of AI ethics concerns, public awareness remains limited, particularly in developing contexts where digital literacy and regulatory frameworks are underdeveloped (Maya, 2025). In Nigeria, ethical discourse on AI adoption in various sectors including media and communication, has only recently begun to emerge (Ikeyi et al., 2025). In Lokoja, as in many Nigerian urban communities, social and digital media use is widespread, yet the extent to which individuals understand AI integration's ethical implications is unclear. Furthermore, mainstream studies predominantly focus on Western contexts and specialized user groups (e.g., journalists, developers), with limited emphasis on general urban populations in African settings.

The problem is that without adequate awareness of ethical issues, Lokoja residents may unwittingly expose themselves to risks that undermine, privacy, fairness, and trust in social communication environments. Additionally, limited awareness restricts public participation in debates about AI governance, policy formulation, and ethical standards. This research therefore, seeks to fill the gap by empirically assessing the awareness of ethical concerns in artificial intelligence use in social media among residents of Lokoja, identifying key ethical issues recognized by users.

Objectives

1. To assess the level of awareness of ethical concerns surrounding AI integration among Lokoja residents.
2. To identify specific ethical concerns (e.g., privacy, bias, misinformation) perceived by Lokoja residents in social media.
3. To determine residents' perceptions of accountability and transparency in AI-driven media platforms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Artificial Intelligence and Its Types

Artificial Intelligence (AI) broadly refers to computer systems designed to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as reasoning, learning, problem-solving, perception, and language understanding. Artificial intelligence refers to the various processes involved in the programming of machines that enable them to act like humans and mimic their actions (Ezegwu, Ude-Akpeh, Edim, & Omale, 2024). AI has become central to contemporary technology, shaping sectors from education and healthcare to finance and governance. At its core, AI seeks to simulate cognitive processes so machines can interpret data, adapt, and act autonomously in complex environments (Russell & Norvig, 2021). Although definitional debates persist due to the diversity of AI applications, scholars generally agree that AI embodies systems that learn from data and improve over time without explicit manual programming for each new scenario.

AI is often categorized by capability and functionality. According to Russell and Norvig (2021), AI by capability includes Narrow or Weak AI, General AI, and super intelligent AI. Narrow AI refers to systems designed for specific tasks for example, speech recognition or spam filtering where performance is excellent but restricted to limited domains. General AI describes hypothetical systems with human-like cognitive abilities across contexts, able to autonomously reason, plan, and adapt; such AI remains largely theoretical. Finally, super intelligent AI refers to an intelligence that surpasses human capabilities in virtually every domain; while captivating in theory, it raises ethical and safety debates and has not yet been realized in practice. Another common typology is based on functionality and includes reactive machines, limited memory systems, theory of mind systems, and self-aware AI. Reactive machines respond to specific inputs with programmed or learned responses but lack memory of past experiences. Limited memory systems, like most current AI models including ChatGPT retain recent data to inform responses, enabling contextual interaction. More

advanced theoretical categories involve theory of mind AI, which would understand human emotions and mental states, and self-aware AI, which would possess a form of consciousness a concept still purely speculative (Russell & Norvig, 2021). A related classification, particularly relevant for large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, distinguishes symbolic AI, statistical AI, and neural AI. Symbolic AI operates using manually encoded rules and representations and was dominant in early AI research. Statistical AI incorporates probabilistic models for prediction, while neural AI uses artificial neural networks inspired by human brain structures to learn complex patterns from large datasets. LLMs like ChatGPT represent advanced neural approaches, excelling in natural language processing by learning from extensive text corpora.

Level of Awareness of Ethical Concerns Surrounding Artificial Intelligence Integration

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence across various sectors has sparked significant discourse about the ethical implications of these technologies. As AI systems become increasingly sophisticated and ubiquitous, the level of awareness regarding ethical concerns varies considerably across different stakeholder groups, including developers, policymakers, end-users, and the general public. Understanding this awareness landscape is crucial for developing responsible AI governance frameworks and ensuring that technological advancement aligns with societal values. Research indicates that awareness of AI ethical concerns has grown substantially in recent years, though significant gaps remain. A study by Jobin, Ienca, and Vayena (2019) analyzing 84 AI ethics documents found that principles such as transparency, justice and fairness, non-maleficence, responsibility, and privacy emerged as dominant themes across multiple frameworks. This proliferation of ethical guidelines suggests heightened institutional awareness, yet the translation of these principles into practical understanding among broader populations remains inconsistent.

Among technology professionals and AI developers, awareness of ethical concerns tends to be relatively high, though not universal. McNamara, Smith, and Murphy (2018) found that while many AI practitioners recognize ethical challenges, there exists a knowledge gap regarding how to implement ethical considerations in practice. This suggests that awareness alone is insufficient without accompanying frameworks for ethical implementation. The tech industry has responded with the establishment of ethics boards and responsible AI teams, indicating organizational recognition of these concerns, though critics argue these efforts sometimes lack teeth and accountability mechanisms. The academic community has played a pivotal role in raising awareness about AI ethics. Researchers have extensively documented

concerns including algorithmic bias, privacy violations, autonomous weapon systems, labor displacement, and the concentration of AI power among few entities. Hagendorff (2020) conducted a comprehensive review of AI ethics guidelines, noting that while awareness of principles is widespread, there remains considerable variation in how these principles are prioritized and operationalized across different contexts. This heterogeneity in ethical frameworks reflects both the complexity of AI systems and the diverse values of different cultures and organizations.

Public awareness of AI ethical concerns has increased notably, driven partly by high-profile controversies and media coverage. Issues such as facial recognition bias, discriminatory hiring algorithms, and social media manipulation have brought AI ethics into mainstream consciousness. However, Schepman and Rodway (2020) found that while public awareness of AI is growing, understanding of specific ethical implications remains superficial among many individuals. The study revealed that trust in AI systems varied significantly based on application domain, with higher skepticism toward AI in sensitive areas like criminal justice and healthcare. The awareness gap is particularly pronounced regarding subtle ethical issues such as algorithmic opacity and the long-term societal implications of AI deployment. While dramatic scenarios like autonomous vehicles making life-or-death decisions capture public imagination, more insidious concerns like data exploitation, filter bubbles, and behavioral manipulation receive less sustained attention. Mittelstadt, Allo, Taddeo, Wachter, and Floridi (2016) identified six key areas of ethical concern in algorithmic decision-making: inconclusive evidence, inscrutable evidence, misguided evidence, unfair outcomes, transformative effects, and traceability. Public awareness of these nuanced issues remains limited, potentially leaving populations vulnerable to harms they do not fully comprehend.

Ethical Concerns Perceived by Lokoja Residents in Social and Digital Media: Privacy, Bias, and Misinformation

The rapid proliferation of social and digital media platforms has fundamentally transformed communication patterns across Nigerian communities, including Lokoja, the capital of Kogi State. As residents increasingly engage with platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter (now X), Instagram, and TikTok, they encounter a complex landscape of ethical challenges that shape their digital experiences and civic participation. This examination explores three primary ethical concerns; privacy violations, algorithmic bias, and misinformation as perceived and experienced by Lokoja residents, situating these local experiences within broader global digital ethics discourse.

Privacy Concerns in the Digital Age

Privacy represents one of the most pressing ethical concerns for Lokoja residents navigating social and digital media platforms. The concept of digital privacy encompasses the collection, storage, and utilization of personal data by technology companies, often without users' full understanding or informed consent (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). For residents of Lokoja, many of whom have limited digital literacy, understanding how their personal information travels across digital networks remains particularly challenging. Social media platforms operate on business models that fundamentally depend on data extraction and monetization, creating what scholars term "surveillance capitalism" (Zuboff, 2019). Lokoja residents who use these platforms for social connection, business promotion, and civic engagement unwittingly contribute vast amounts of personal data, including location information, purchasing behaviors, social networks, and communication patterns. Research indicates that users in developing regions often face heightened privacy risks due to limited regulatory frameworks and lower awareness of data protection rights (Masur, 2020).

The proliferation of mobile internet access in Lokoja has intensified privacy concerns, as smartphones continuously collect data through various sensors, applications, and permissions. Many residents express anxiety about targeted advertising that seems to "listen" to their conversations, reflecting the opaque nature of algorithmic recommendation systems that process personal data to predict user interests and behaviors (Auxier et al., 2019). This perception, whether technically accurate or not, reveals a fundamental distrust in how digital platforms handle personal information.

Algorithmic Bias and Digital Discrimination

Algorithmic bias represents a second critical ethical concern that affects how Lokoja residents experience social and digital media. Algorithms are the computational decision-making systems that determine what content users see, which advertisements they receive, and how their own content is distributed. They often embed and amplify existing societal biases related to race, gender, geography, and socioeconomic status (Noble, 2018). For residents of Lokoja and similar Nigerian communities, algorithmic bias manifests in several consequential ways. Content moderation algorithms, which determine what posts are flagged, removed, or suppressed, have demonstrated systematic biases against African users and content (Dias Oliva et al., 2021). These systems, often trained primarily on Western data and cultural norms, may misinterpret local languages, cultural expressions, and contextual meanings, leading to unjust content removal or account suspension.

The algorithmic curation of news feeds and trending topics also introduces bias that shapes Lokoja residents' information environments. Recommendation algorithms prioritize engagement metrics, often promoting sensational or polarizing content over factually accurate or locally relevant information (Flaxman et al., 2016). This algorithmic amplification can distort public discourse and marginalize important local issues that lack the viral potential to trigger algorithmic promotion. Additionally, residents perceive bias in how digital platforms value different types of content and users. Content creators in Lokoja observe that their posts often receive less algorithmic distribution compared to content from Western countries, reflecting what some scholars identify as "digital colonialism" in platform governance (Kwet, 2019). This perceived discrimination affects not only individual expression but also local businesses that depend on social media marketing to reach customers.

Misinformation and Information Disorder

Misinformation represents perhaps the most visible ethical concern for Lokoja residents, with significant implications for public health, political stability, and social cohesion. The rapid spread of false or misleading information through social media platforms has emerged as a global challenge, but its impacts are particularly acute in communities with limited media literacy infrastructure and weak fact-checking mechanisms (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). Lokoja residents encounter various forms of information disorder, including misinformation (false information shared without harmful intent), disinformation (deliberately false information intended to deceive), and malinformation (genuine information shared to cause harm) (Tandoc et al., 2018). WhatsApp, which enjoys widespread usage in Lokoja for both personal and business communication, has become a particularly potent vector for misinformation due to its encrypted nature and group sharing features that enable rapid viral spread (Garimella & Tyson, 2018). During health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, misinformation circulating in Lokoja included false prevention methods, conspiracy theories about vaccine safety, and exaggerated claims about traditional remedies (Obi-Ani et al., 2020). Such misinformation directly endangers public health by undermining evidence-based interventions and fostering distrust in legitimate health authorities. Residents report difficulty distinguishing credible health information from misleading content, particularly when false claims are shared by trusted community members or presented with professional-looking graphics.

Empirical reviews

Shittu, Adebayo, Adekule, Yahaya, Ojo, and Ayoola (2025) studied ethical concerns in artificial intelligence usage for news production: A survey of perception of journalists in radio stations in Kwara State, Nigeria. The study used a descriptive survey method among 67 journalists from four NUJ-registered radio stations using questionnaires. Findings showed AI adoption in radio journalism remains limited; many journalists reported occasional use rather than routine implementation and the most cited ethical concerns were loss of editorial independence, job displacement, and bias in AI-generated content.

Khalaf (2025) examined AI ethics awareness in Egyptian social work education. The study used survey research with 172 social work faculty members to measure awareness of ethical implications of AI in higher education activities, using structured questionnaires. Findings showed that faculty exhibited moderate to high levels of awareness of AI ethical issues and significant gaps exist in formal understanding of ethical guidelines for AI in education.

Lawal (2025) studied public awareness of the implications of AI and social media proliferation of disinformation on public safety and Nigeria's national security. The study adopted a quantitative survey of 385 Abuja residents using structured questionnaires; variables analyzed through frequency, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Findings showed that AI-enabled tools accelerate the spread of disinformation, contributing to panic, ethnic and religious tensions, and societal instability and public awareness of AI's role in disinformation exists but is often superficial, with many unable to differentiate AI-driven narratives from organic misinformation.

Ajayi (2024) examined awareness, perception and use of artificial Intelligence tools by LIS educators in Nigerian Higher institutions. The study used a survey research design. Findings showed that high awareness of basic AI tools like search bots and content analyzers but limited use of advanced ethical-AI features, and educators perceive AI as a transformative tool yet recognize limitations related to ethical guidance and integration in pedagogy. The study recommended training of educators on ethical AI tool usage to enhance teaching and research and integrate advanced AI literacy modules into academic curricula to boost competence. The reviewed work focused on educators' professional usage and perceptions, not community-wide ethical awareness among general social media users. The current study contextualizes everyday digital media users' ethical understanding of AI.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Fred D. Davis developed the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as part of his doctoral research, and it was published in 1989. TAM is rooted in the Theory of Reasoned Action and models how users come to accept and use technologies based on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. TAM posits that when users are introduced to new technology, two primary beliefs, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, influence their attitude toward use, behavioural intentions, and actual technology usage. This makes TAM widely applicable to studies examining adoption and ethical perceptions of technology, such as AI on digital media. Wixom & Todd (2005 cited in Ezegwu, Chiaghana, & Nwodu, (2021) posit that the basis of the theory was built on the premise that when users are presented with a new technology, (in this case artificial intelligence) three major factors are considered as determinants of key predictors that influences users' decision on how to and when they use it. These are perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEoU), and Attitude towards user (ATU). In this study, TAM helps explain how Lokoja residents' perceptions of AI's ethical risks and benefits shape their acceptance of AI features on social media platforms.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design to examine awareness of ethical concerns surrounding the use of artificial intelligence in social media among residents of Lokoja. The population comprised all residents of Lokoja, which, according to the National Population Commission (NPC) and World Population Review, is projected at approximately 977,000 in 2026. A sample size of 400 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. A multistage sampling technique was employed, combining stratified, cluster, and systematic random sampling methods to ensure adequate representation. Lokoja was first stratified into major residential and commercial zones based on socio-economic characteristics. Clusters such as streets and neighbourhoods were then identified within each zone. Finally, systematic random sampling was used to select households, with every fifth household chosen based on population density. One eligible respondent (aged 18 years and above and a social media user) was selected from each household.

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was subjected to face validity to ensure that the items adequately measured the intended constructs. Furthermore, reliability testing confirmed that the questionnaire was consistent

and dependable for the study. This methodological approach ensured the credibility and representativeness of the findings.

Table 1: Distribution of the Samples to Studied Areas in Lokoja

Names of the Areas selected	Number of the Questionnaire
1. Lokoja Central	40
2. Kabawa Quarters	40
3. Adankolo	40
4. Owode	40
5. Government Reserved Area (GRA)	40
6. Market Road/Lokoja Main Market Area	40
7. Okene-Lokoja Road Corridor	40
8. Abuja-Lokoja Road Axis	40
9. Mount Patti Area	40
10. Ahamadu Bello Way/Township Area	40
Total	400

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The study shared four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire to the residents in Lokoja on the subject matter; only 372 copies were retrieved, and they were all found useful.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Gender of the Respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Male	206	55
Female	166	45
Total	372	100

Age of the Respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
18-28	55	15
29-39	71	19
40-50	112	29
51& above	134	37
Total	372	100

Marital Status

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Married	252	68
ingle	107	29
Divorced/widow/widower	13	3
Total	372	100

Level of Education of the Respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	19	5
O'level	54	15
OND/NCE	89	24
HND/BS.c	168	45
Postgraduates	42	11
Total	372	100

Occupation of the Respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Civil servants	143	38
Traders/Business	52	14
Students	66	18
Farmers	102	27
Others	9	2
Total	372	100

The data in table two revealed that the male respondents were more in the study (55%). Also, the age bracket of 51 and above was more than that of any other age bracket in the study. This indicates that most of the respondents are advanced, and most of the respondents were married (68%). Further findings showed that the majority (45%) of the respondents were B.Sc./HND holders accounted for more in the study, and the civil servants responded more in the study (38%).

Table 3: Assessment of the level of awareness of ethical concerns surrounding AI integration in social and digital media activities among Lokoja residents

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Aware	106	29
Fairly aware	154	41
Slightly Aware	61	16
Not Aware	32	9
Undecided	19	5
Total	372	100

The data in table three showed the level of awareness of ethical concerns surrounding AI integration in social and digital media activities among Lokoja residents. The data implies that 41% of the respondents are fairly aware of the ethical concerns surrounding AI integration in social and digital media activities in Lokoja, Kogi State.

Table 4: Ethical concerns mostly perceived by Lokoja residents in AI-driven media environments

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Invasion of privacy	116	31
Spread of misinformation	103	27
Bias and discrimination	47	13
Lack of human control	73	20
None of the above	33	9
Total	372	100

The implication of data in table 4 indicated that most of the respondents (31%) are concerned about the issue of invasion of privacy as a major ethical concern.

Table 5: The extent Respondents thinks that AI in Media Threatens Personal Data Security

Response	Frequency	Percentage
To a very large extent	127	34
To a large extent	145	39
To a small extent	56	15
Not at All	28	8
Undecided	16	4
Total	372	100

The data in table five revealed that a significant (39%) number of the respondents said that AI in media threatens personal data security.

Table 6: Lokoja residents' perceptions of accountability and transparency in AI-driven media platforms

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	47	13
Agree	52	14
Disagree	103	28
Strongly Disagree	141	38
Undecided	29	7
Total	372	100

The data in table six revealed that a great number (38%) of the respondents strongly disagree that there is no accountability and transparency in AI-driven media platforms.

Discussion of Findings

The aim of research objective one was to assess the level of awareness of ethical concerns surrounding AI integration among Lokoja residents. The data in table 3 revealed that 41% of Lokoja residents are fairly aware of ethical concerns surrounding AI integration in social media. Within the Technology Acceptance Model, awareness relates to perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, which influence users' acceptance of technology. Limited

awareness suggests that although residents use AI-driven platforms, they may not fully understand the ethical implications, thereby affecting informed acceptance. This aligns with the study by Floridi et al. (2018), which found that public awareness of AI ethics remains moderate globally. Similarly, Adebayo and Abdullahi (2022) observed that Nigerian social media users demonstrate partial awareness of AI-related ethical issues.

The objective of research question two was to identify specific ethical concerns perceived by Lokoja residents in social media. The study identified privacy invasion (31%) and personal data security threats (39%) as major ethical concerns. In TAM, these concerns negatively influence perceived usefulness, as users may view AI technologies as risky. This finding supports West (2019), who reported that privacy and data misuse are the most prominent public concerns about AI systems. Likewise, Olatunji et al. (2021) found that fear of data exploitation reduces trust in digital platforms among Nigerian users.

The objective of research question three was to determine residents' perceptions of accountability and transparency in AI-driven media platforms. Results showed that 38% of respondents strongly disagreed that there is accountability and transparency in AI-driven media platforms. According to TAM, lack of transparency undermines trust, which indirectly affects technology acceptance. This aligns with Diakopoulos (2016), who emphasised that opaque algorithms reduce public confidence in AI systems. Similarly, Eke and Nkwocha (2020) reported scepticism among Nigerian users regarding accountability in automated media content moderation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined awareness of ethical concerns related to the use of artificial intelligence in social media among residents of Lokoja, using the Technology Acceptance Model. The findings indicate a moderate level of awareness, suggesting that while some understanding exists, it is not sufficiently deep or widespread. Key concerns identified include privacy invasion and threats to personal data security, highlighting significant risks associated with AI-driven platforms. The study also reveals a lack of trust, with many respondents perceiving inadequate accountability and transparency in these systems. Overall, the results show notable gaps in knowledge, trust, and governance. The study therefore emphasises the need for greater public awareness, stronger regulatory frameworks, and improved transparency to support ethical AI use and responsible technology adoption.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- a. Government and regulatory agencies should intensify public sensitization campaigns on AI ethics and digital rights.
- b. Social media companies should enhance transparency in AI algorithms and data usage policies.
- c. Stronger data protection laws should be enforced to address privacy and security concerns.

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