The Impact of Social Media on Voting Behaviour in Nigeria: A Study of Selected Voters in Lagos

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A b s t r a c t

The study was undertaken after the March 2019 Nigerian general elections. The main objective of the study was to determine the impact of social media on voting behaviour in Nigeria. The study was guided by the agenda-setting theory. The research methodology adopted was the survey method, with questionnaires as the data collection instrument. Findings from the study revealed that social media did have a positive influence on youths' participation in the political and electoral process, especially in the 2019 Nigerian general elections. Social media influenced youths' choice of political candidate and party but, quite amazingly, did not actually guarantee that youths voted for any political candidate just because he or she has a social media account. The study also revealed that youths regard social media as a credible medium for political discourse, and that social media influences political involvement.

Keywords: *Social media, Young behaviour, Elections*

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Background to the Study

The advent of the internet and technology has exposed most of the global population to different interactive platforms on which different kinds of information are exchanged, which might have a significant effect on human behavior, decision-making, and judgment (CES, 2012). Social media are new information networks and information technology that use a form of communication utilizing interactive and user-produced content to create and maintain interpersonal relationships. The emergence of the Internet as the new mass medium of the 21st century has changed mass media substantially. Information can be distributed at high speed, low cost, and broad scope, and as a result, there is egalitarian access to the production and consumption of news (Sulaiman, 2017).

Nearly every political party in the country used social media to campaign and advance its plans, messages, and manifestos to supporters, including advertising, mobilization and organizing in all the states of the federation, and even fundraising (Ajiteru, 2019). YouTube, and especially Twitter was used to let voters know how each party or candidate felt about important national issues ranging from security to power. Hence, social media became powerful enough to influence voter's decisions and choices, as many voters who had fixed their minds and consciences on voting for a particular party or candidate began to change their minds based on certain information or ideas they got online about the party or candidate (Abalaka, 2018). Information gotten by a particular voter was also not static, as the same voter would use several internet tools and buttons to broadcast the same message to other voters like him through mediums such as blogs, Facebook, Nairaland, chat rooms and so on, to influence them (Sulaiman, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The use of emotional appeals in political campaigns to increase support for a candidate or decrease support for a challenger is a widely recognized practice and a common element of any campaign strategy (Sulaiman, 2017). Campaigns often seek to instill positive emotions such as zeal and hopefulness about their candidate to improve turnout and political activism while raising fear and anxiety about the opposition. Zeal tends to reinforce preference for the candidate and party, while fear and anxiety interrupt voter's behavioral patterns and lead individual voters to look for new sources of information on divergent political issues (Abalaka, 2018). The sources of information available to a voter vary widely and they include traditional media such as TV, radio, and newspapers. However, with the advent of online social media forums, most voters can access information, debate the information, and give feedback on their own views, opinions, and expectations from the party and candidate (Ajiteru, 2019).

Aim and Objectives

The general objective of this study is to determine the impact of social media on voting behaviour in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out if social media influences voter behavior in Lagos State
2. To determine the influence social media has on voter behavior in Lagos State
3. To find out other factors that influence voter behavior in Lagos State

Research Questions
1. Does social media influence voter behaviour in Lagos State?
2. What is the influence of social media on voter behaviour in Lagos State?
3. What are the factors that influence voter behaviour in Lagos State?

Hypotheses

To enable the researcher, assess the effect of social media on voters' behaviour in Lagos state, the following hypotheses will be tested:

Ho: Social media does not have any effect on voters' behaviour in Lagos state.

HA: Social media has effect on voters' behaviour in Lagos state.

Significance of the Study

This study will help shine a spotlight on the impact of social media on voters' behaviour, the decisions they make, and elections based on the information available to voters on the internet. It will also enlighten relevant stakeholders such as political parties, candidates, and even the civil society on how social media can bring about awareness and campaign opportunities if properly utilized (Ajiteru, 2019).

Conceptual Review & Theoretical Underpinnings

Smart Card Reader

There are various views and perspectives on the smart card reader. To this end, there is no unified agreement among scholars as to what the concept is. However, attempts will be made to clarify the concept. Engineering Network Team (2015) argues that the smart card reader is designed to read information contained in the embedded chip of a permanent voter's card issued by INEC to verify the authenticity of the permanent voter's card (PVC) and also carry out a verification of the intending voter by matching the biometrics obtained from the voter on the spot with the ones stored on the PVC (Ajiteru, 2019). The Smart Card Reader (SCR) is a technological device designed to validate and attest to the authenticity of a permanent voter card (PVC), which holds the bio-data of potential voters on election day. The SCR utilizes a cryptographic (secret writing) technology used mostly in devices that are required to carry out protected operations. Its unique components are ultra-low power consumption, the Android 4.2.2 operating system, and a sole core frequency of 1.2 GHz (Ajiteru, 2019). In the case of INEC, the smart card reader actually displays the photograph of the card bearer within seconds of inserting the card into the machine to accredit the electorate before casting his or her votes. The aim of this device is to ensure the principle of one man, one vote and to eliminate double voting. As captured by Sulaiman (2017), the smart card reader works by inserting the permanent voter card (PVC) into the SCR, and within seconds, the machine will detect the authenticity of the card and also display the picture of the bearer. The next step is to cross-reference the finger print of the bearer to confirm if the card truly belongs to the person in possession of it (Abalaka, 2018).

Election

Election is a concept and model in political science literature. As a concept, it generally explains the literal meaning of what an election implies. As Ajiteru (2019), explains, elections

are a mechanism through which politicians can be called to account and forced to introduce policies that somehow reflect public opinion. This emphasizes the bottom-up functions of elections: political recruitment, representation, making government, influencing policies, and so on. According to Sulaiman (2017), elections are defined as mechanisms through which individuals and groups of great political desire can be held to account in public office and forced to introduce policies that reflect the general will of the people. On the other hand, Abalaka (2018) states that elections are a means by which political individuals and parties can communicate with the public to gain support and legitimacy to rule. Ginsberg (1982) states that elections are a means through which the political elites can exercise control over a population. As captured by Emmanuel (2017), elections raised fundamental concerns, such as (1). The public offices were subjected to the elections (2). The qualifications of voters and political candidates (3) the casting of votes, and (4) The competence of the election process as governed by fair and free principles Andrew (1997) sees elections as nothing more than the manifestation of public interest and as a means of peaceful and legitimate transfer of power in a democratic system. To Abalaka (2018), elections are the barometer to measure the political maturity, health, legitimacy, and stability of a democratic government. It is generally held to be the single most important indicator of the presence or absence of a democratic government.

Research Design
The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to effectively address the research problem logically and as unambiguously as possible (Sulaiman, 2017). To this study, quantitative research design, specifically the survey research method, will be used. This is because descriptive research is primarily concerned with the collection and analysis of data for the purpose of describing, evaluating, or comparing current or prevailing practices, events, and occurrences (Ajiteru, 2019). This study will adopt a survey design aimed at collecting data to answer the various research questions it intends to answer. Also, unlike qualitative research, which is subjective in its approach, quantitative research is objective as it is a systematic method of data gathering through carefully drafted questions directed to the sample size.

Research Method
The research method for this study is the survey method. A survey is the collection of data from a large population with the aim of drawing relevant relationships between and among variables. Ajiteru, (2019). It is appropriate to investigate the opinion, perception, attitude, and behavior of a group of people about a particular phenomenon. The survey method was rightly selected because it is the best method to collect data from a large population that cannot be observed directly.

Operationalization of Concepts and Measurement of Variables
The key variables used in this study were operationally defined and measured as follows: Number of hours spent on social media: This was to determine the number of hours' respondents spend on social media. Respondents were given four options: (A) Less than one hour; (B) 1-3 hours (C) 4-6 hours (D) Above 6 hours.

Perception of youths on a politician's image on social media: this section was created to examine how social media influences the perception youths have about politicians. Using a 4-point Likert scale of 1 to 4, where 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, and 4 = strongly disagree, the perceptions were characterized by three underlying factors: *influence, belief, and preference.* Credibility of social media messages: this section aims at determining how credible youths hold social media messages. Using a 4-point Likert scale of 1 to 4, where 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, and 4 = strongly disagree, Credibility was characterized by three underlying factors: *believability, credibility, and preference.*

Instrumentation

Questionnaires were the data collection instrument used for this research. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. It is also a set of questions used to conduct a survey, which is the process of gathering, sampling, analyzing, and interpreting data from a group of people (10 Questionnaire Examples, 2018).

The questionnaire is suitable since the sample elements are undergraduate students. The questionnaire was drafted using the nominal, ordinal, and Likert scale techniques for the section where any of them is most applicable. Ajiteru, (2019). The questionnaire was divided into four sections: A, B, C, D, and E. Section A was designed to collect demographic information about the respondents. Section B of the questionnaire was designed to collect information on respondents' social media usage (Sulaiman, 2017).

Section C of the questionnaire was designed to collect information on the impact of social media on respondents' political participation. Section D of the questionnaire was designed to collect information on respondents' perceptions of politicians' images. Section E of the questionnaire was designed to determine the level of credibility respondents attached to social media messages. To determine the number of questionnaires to be distributed, proportionate representation was used. This means the percentage share of each stratum (faculty) in the total population will serve as a basis to determine the number of questionnaires for each faculty. Thus, to know the number of questionnaires to be distributed in the Faculty of Agriculture, the percentage shares of the said faculty's population from the total population were calculated:

Therefore, % share = $\frac{5304}{44,919} \times \frac{381}{1}$ 381 = 45.

In the distribution of the questionnaire, convenience sampling will be used to pick the respondents in the faculties after being stratified. The respondents were selected regardless of their departments.

Table 1: Distribution of Questionnaires based on Sample Size

FACULTY	POPULATION	NO. OF QUESTIONNAIRES SHARED
Agriculture	5304	45
Arts	4632	39
Basic Medical Sciences	1193	10
Clinical Sciences	1089	9
Comm. and Info. Sciences	2134	18
Education	10377	88
Engineering and Technology	3577	30
Environmental Sciences	1227	10
Law	979	8
Life Sciences	3637	31
Management Sciences	3765	32
Pharmacy	336	4
Physical Sciences	3340	28
Social Sciences	3094	26
Veterinary Medicine	235	3
Total Population	44919	381

Data Collection Process

Data collection was done through the administration of questionnaires at the Ministry of Finance in Lagos State in July 2019. The respondents, as students of the respective faculties of the University, provided the information required of them by the questionnaire. The researcher distributed copies of the questionnaire, ensured proper appropriation, and provided clarity where necessary. Filled questionnaires were either returned immediately after filling or at the convenience of the researcher.

Data Presentation

Data presentation and analysis form an integral part of all academic studies, commercial, industrial, and marketing activities, as well as professional practices. It is necessary to make use of collected data, which is considered raw data and must be processed for any application (Ajiteru, 2019). Data analysis helps in the interpretation of the data and in deciding or answering the research question. Data analysis starts with the collection of data, followed by

data processing and sorting. The data was presented using frequency counts, percentages, and tables.

Data Analysis

A descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze the data gathered through the questionnaire using percentages, frequency counts, pie charts, and tables. The data gathered from the distributed questionnaire were coded and sorted into the IBM SPSS 21 App data processing template and were used to calculate the type of data analysis.

A total of four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the sample population. Three hundred and eighty-one (381) copies of the questionnaire were returned fully answered correctly, while nineteen others were rejected for not being completely answered or having invalid information. However, the 381 copies of the questionnaire returned fully completed out of the 400 distributed represent a response rate of 95.25%, which is very good. The data is presented by means of frequency, percentages, and tables.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The major demographic information sought in this study was the respondent's gender, age group, faculty, and study level. The respondents' demographic profile in this study is presented in frequency and percentage format as explained below:

Gender

The male respondents in this study were 231, which amounts to 60.6% of the entire sample in the study, while the female respondents were 150, which represents 39.4% of the entire research population.

Age Group

Respondents within the age group of 20–24 constituted the highest number of respondents at 170 at 44.6%, followed by the age group of 15–19, which accounted for 169 respondents at 44.4%, and the age group 25–29, which accounted for 42 respondents at 11%.

Faculty

This study focuses on all departments in the research population, which is the Ministries of Finance in Lagos State. Generally, the Department of Veterinary Medicine accounted for the highest number of respondents in this study with a total of 88 respondents (23.1%), while the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine accounted for the least number of respondents with a total of 3 respondents (0.8%). Representation from other faculties is: Agricultural Science 11.8% (45), Arts 10.2% (39), Basic Medical Science 2.6% (10), Clinical Sciences 2.4% (9), Communication and Information Sciences 4.7% (18), Engineering and Technology 7.9% (30), Environmental Sciences 2.6% (10), Law 2.1% (8), Life Sciences 8.1% (31), Management Sciences 8.4% (32), Physical Sciences 7.3% (28) and Social Sciences 6.8% (26) Ajiteru, (2019).

Study Level

The study comprises respondents from the six study levels at the University of Ilorin, where 400-level students accounted for the highest number of respondents at 25.4% (97), while 600-

level students accounted for the least number of respondents at 1.6% (6), while the frequency and percentage distribution of other study levels are: 200-level accounted for 88 respondents at 23.1%, 100-level accounted for 85 respondents at 22.3%, 300-level accounted for 80 respondents at 21%, and 500-level accounted for 25 respondents at 6.6%.

Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	231	60.6
Female	150	39.4
Total	381	100.0
Age Group		
15-19	170	44.4
20-24	169	44.6
25-29	42	11.0
Total	381	100.0
Faculty		
Agricultural Science	45	11.8
Arts	39	10.2
Basic Medical Sciences	10	2.6
Clinical Sciences	9	2.4
Communication and Information Sciences	18	4.7
Education	88	23.1
Engineering and Technology	30	7.9
Environmental Sciences	10	2.6
Law	8	2.1
Life Sciences	31	8.1
Management Sciences	32	8.4
Pharmaceutical Sciences	4	1.0
Physical Sciences	28	7.3
Social Sciences	26	6.8
Veterinary Medicine	3	0.8
Total	381	100.0
Level		
100	85	22.3
200	88	23.1
300	80	21.0
400	97	25.4
500	25	6.6
600	6	1.6
Total	**381**	**100**

Table 3: Respondents level of social media usage distribution of respondents' possession of internet accessible device

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	371	97.4
No	10	2.6
Total	381	100

Distribution of hours respondents spend on social media

Less than one hour	42	11.1
1-3 hours	88	23.1
4-6 hours	116	30.4
Above 6 hours	135	35.4
Total	381	100

Distribution of social media platforms respondents use the most

WhatsApp	250	65.6
Facebook	35	9.2
Instagram	47	12.3
Twitter	46	12.1
Others	3	0.8
Total	381	100

WhatsApp	33	8.7
Facebook	134	35.2
Instagram	84	22.3
Twitter	126	33.1
Others	3	0.8
Total	381	100

Table showing how frequent respondents use social media on their devices

Regularly	310	81.4
Occasionally	57	15.0
Rarely	14	3.7
Never	0	0
Total	381	100

The table shows respondents' levels of social media usage. From the table, 371 or 97.4% of respondents possess an internet-accessible device of their own, while 10 or 2.6% do not have one of their own. Also, 135 or 35.4% of respondents spend above six hours on social media; 116 or 23.1% spend 4-6 hours on social media; 88 or 23.1% spend 1-3 hours on social media; and 42 or 11.1% spend less than one hour on social media daily (Abalaka, 2018).

The table further shows that WhatsApp is the social medium respondents for this study use the most, as 250 or 65.6% of respondents acknowledged it; 47 or 12.3% of respondents use Instagram the most; 46 or 12.1% of respondents use Twitter the most; and only 3 or 0.8 of respondents claim to use other social media platforms. Also, 134, or 35.2 percent, of respondents use Facebook the least, while 126, or 33.1%, use Twitter the least. 84, or 22.3%, of respondents use Instagram the least, while 33, or 8.7%, use WhatsApp the least. Only 3 or 0.8% of respondents claim to use other social media platforms the least (Ajiteru, 2019).

The table sums it up by showing that 310, or 81.4%, of respondents use social media regularly on their device, while 57, or 14%, use social media occasionally on their device. 14 respondents, or 3.7%, rarely use social media on their devices, and there is no respondent who does not use social media on their devices at all.

Analysis of Research Questions
Rq2 Impact of social media on Respondents' Political Participation in 2019 Elections

Table 4: Table showing results garnered from the first research question

Social Media Use	Level of Agreement (%)				Mean	S.D	Overall
(N= 381)	1	2	3	4			%
I followed political news on social media during the electioneering period.	23.1	49.1	14.7	13.1	2.19	.956	54.75
I became aware of political news through the social media.	22.6	56.7	12.6	8.1	2.11	.895	52.75
I share political news on social media.	13.9	36.2	26.0	23.9	2.62	1.018	65.5
Social media helped me to become more politically active during the elections.	27.8	33.6	17.3	21.3	2.28	1.053	57
I commented and participated in political discourses on social media.	13.1	34.9	23.9	28.1	2.63	.988	65.75
Total					2.37	0.982	

*Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree. 2 = Agree. 3 = Disagree. 4 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows the results garnered from the first research question to measure the impact of social media on respondents' political participation. Majority of respondents Strongly Agreed at 27.8% that social media does have an impact on their participation (Mean = 2.37, S.D. = 0.982). Respondents specifically agreed that they followed political news on social media during the electioneering period (Mean = 2.19, S.D. = .956). Also, they agreed on being aware of political news through the social media (Mean = 2.11 S.D. = .895). They agreed that the social media helped them to become more politically active (Mean = 2.28, S.D. 1.053).

Rq2: What are the perceptions of youths about Nigerian politician's image on social media?

Table 5: Table showing results garnered from the second research question

Social Media Use	Level of Agreement (%)				Mean	S.D Overall	
(N= 381)	1	2	3	4		%	
Social media influenced my choice of political candidate.	21.8	34.4	26.5	17.3	2.49	1.104	54.75
Social media influenced my choice of political party.	17.8	33.1	28.9	20.2	2.60	1.085	65
Social media was an avenue for politicians to boost their image to the public.	31.8	49.1	5.5	13.6	1.93	.819	48.25
I believe political candidates who were not active on social media to be unserious about their ambition.	21.0	34.1	19.4	25.5	2.43	1.028	60.75
I would vote for a politician who is on social media instead of one who is not.	17.1	23.6	32.8	26.5	2.75	1.090	68.75
Total					2.43	1.006	

*Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree. 2 = Agree. 3 = Disagree. 4 = Strongly Disagree

Table 4 shows the perception of youths of the image of politicians as it relates to social media. Respondents strongly agreed that social media does influence their perception of politicians at 31.8% (mean = 2.43, SD = 1.006). They specifically agreed that social media influenced their choice of political candidates during the elections (mean = 2.49, SD = 1.104). They also agreed that social media influenced their choice of political party (mean = 2.60, SD = 1.085). Respondents also agreed that social media was an avenue for politicians to boost their image with the public (mean = 1.93, SD =.819). Respondents also believed political candidates who were not active on social media to be unserious about their ambition (mean = 2.43, SD =.028). 4.3.3 RQ3 and 4: Level of Credibility and Believability Respondents Attach to Social Media Messages

Table 6: Table showing results garnered from the third and fourth research questions

Social Media Use	Level of Agreement (%)				Mean	S.D	Overall
(N= 381)	1	2	3	4			%
I believe political news on social	15.5	42.8	24.4	17.3	2.51	1.025	62.75
media. Social media is a credible platform	25.2	52.2	12.1	10.5	2.09	.913	52.25
to get political news. I share political news on social	21.8	58.0	8.7	11.5	2.07	.823	51.75
media. Social media is credible in	24.1	58.8	9.2	7.9	2.02	.830	50.5
encouraging youth's political participation. I prefer political candidates who	30.2	42.3	20.2	7.3	2.18	1.075	54.5
engage youths on social media than those who do not. Total					2.8	1.167	

*Scale: 1 = Strongly Agree. 2 = Agree. 3 = Disagree. 4 = Strongly Disagree

Table 5 shows that respondents attach a high level of credibility to social media messages at 30.2%. (Mean = 2.8, S.D. = 1.167). Respondents agreed that they believe political messages they see on social media (mean = 2.51, SD = 1.025). They believe that social media is a credible platform for getting political news (mean = 2.09, SD =.913). They also believe that social media is a credible platform for political discourse (mean = 2.07, SD =.823). Respondents believe social media is also credible in encouraging youths to participate in politics (mean = 2.02, SD =.830). They also prefer political candidates who engage youths on social media to those who do not (mean = 2.18, 1.075).

Discussion of Results/Findings
The findings of this study revealed some interesting facts based on the data gathered through the research instrument. Discussion of the study's findings will be done in line with the objectives of the study and, more specifically, the research questions. This study is centered on exploring the impact of social media on the level of political participation of voters in Lagos State. Resting heavily on the agenda-setting theoretical paradigm, the study presents findings that are in tandem with what other scholars have found in related studies.

Respondents agreed that social media had an effect on their level of political participation, especially in the 2019 general election. 23.1% of the respondents "strongly agreed" that they followed political news on social media, and 49.1% "agreed" to it. 22.6% of respondents "strongly agreed" that they became aware of political news through social media, 56.7%

"agreed" to it, and 27.8% of respondents "strongly agreed" that social media helped them to become more politically active in the 2019 elections, while 33.6% "agreed" to it (Abalaka, 2018).

These statistics prove that social media did have an impact on youths' political participation in the 2019 Nigerian general elections. To answer the second research question, 21.8% of respondents "strongly agreed" that social media influenced their choice of political candidates in the elections, while 34.4% of respondents "agreed" to it. 17.8% of respondents reported that social media influenced their choice of political party, while 33.1% "agreed" to it. 31.8% of respondents "strongly agreed" that social media was an avenue for politicians to boost their image in the eyes of the public, while 49.1% "agreed" to it. 21% of respondents who "strongly agreed" believed that politicians who were not active on social media were unserious about their political ambition, and 34.1% "agreed" to it (Sulaiman, 2017).

These statistics show that social media projects a positive perception of politicians among youth. To answer the third and fourth research questions, 15.5% of respondents "strongly agreed" that they believe political news on social media, and 42.8% "agreed" to it. 25.2% of respondents "strongly agreed" that social media is a credible platform for getting political news, and 52.2% "agreed" to it. 21.8% of respondents "strongly agreed" that social media is a credible platform for political discourse, and 58% "agreed" to it. 24.1% of respondents "strongly agreed" that social media is credible in encouraging youths' political participation, and 58.8% "agreed" to it. 30.2% of respondents "strongly agreed" that they prefer candidates who engage youths on social media to those who do not, and 42.3% "agreed" to it. These statistics show that youths believe the political news and stories they read on social media and even regard them as credible. It is in tandem with the findings of Abalaka (2018) in the Nigerian general elections, who found that Nigerian youths regard social media as credible.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations
Summary
The study was undertaken after the 2019 Nigerian general elections held in March 2019. The objective of the study was to determine the impact of social media on voting behaviour in Nigeria; to examine the perceptions of Nigerian youths about Nigerian politicians' images on social media; to examine the believability level of political news Nigerian youths read about on social media; and to determine the level of credibility Nigerian youths attach to social media messages. The study was guided by the agenda-setting theory. The research methodology adopted was primarily the survey method, with questionnaires as the data collection instrument. Using the Krejcie and Morgan model for determining sample size, 400 undergraduates of the University of Lagos between the ages of 15 and 29 were drawn as the sample to represent the entire population (44, 919).

Conclusion
Findings from the study revealed that social media did have a positive influence on youth's participation in the political and electoral process, especially in the 2019 Nigerian general elections. Social media influenced youths' choice of political candidate and party but, quite

amazingly, did not actually guarantee that youths voted for any political candidate just because of social media presence. Youths also regard social media as a credible medium for political discourse, and the majority also testified that social media has made them more politically active. Social media had a positive influence on youth participation in the 2019 electoral process, as many youths became aware of political news on social media and also disseminated political news through them. A political candidate's having a social media account did not guarantee that Nigerian youths would vote for him during the elections. Nigerian youths regard social

Recommendations

The following recommendations based on research findings:

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria should strengthen its efforts in information and Communication technology (ICT) in every sector of the country. More and more Nigerian youths are gaining access to the internet every day, and ensuring the information flow on the internet is uninterrupted is key to the information flow in the country.

2. The National Information and Technology Development Agency government should monitor what goes onto social media, as many people will believe what they read or see on it, and the consequences of wrong or misleading information cannot be better imagined.

3. In future elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) should adopt the electronic voting system to allow youths who may not go out to vote physically to do so online. 97.4% of respondents in this study claim to have an accessible device, with 50.5% spending between 1-6 hours on social media daily and 35.4% spending above six hours daily.

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