

Deploying Social Media Tools for Political Awareness Creation Among Mass Communication Students in the University of Jos

Solomon Samuel Gonina^{[a],*}; Satkyes Samuel Mwansat^[b]

^[a] Lecturer II, Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Jos, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.

^[b] Lecturer I, Department of Mass Communication, Faculty of Arts, University of Jos, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.

*Corresponding author.

Received 1 August 2023; accepted 19 August 2023

Published online 26 September 2023

Abstract

The world continues to experience changes in all spheres of human engagement and daily survival. Top on the list are those changes that come with technological advancement is the advent as well as the rapidly increasing deployment of social media tools. Humans have found and are still finding ways to keep up with the changes that daily saturate the digital world. The Nigerian political environment is not left out as it tries to move from analogue to digital operations. Social media usage is one prominent resultant effect of the advanced digital world. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to find out possible benefits of *Deploying Social Media Tool for Political Awareness Creation among Mass Communication Students of the University of Jos*. The study sampled 271 respondents who were students of Mass Communication in the University of Jos. The findings, conclusions and recommendations from this study are quite revealing, as they all speak to the continuing relevance and importance of social media usage as veritable tools for the creation of political awareness.

Key words: Media evolution; Social media; User-generated content; Uses and gratification; Political awareness

Gonina, S. S., & Mwansat, S. S. (2023). Deploying Social Media Tools for Political Awareness Creation Among Mass Communication Students in the University of Jos. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 19(3), 68-75. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/view/13094>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/13094>

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Over the years, social media has evolved to become an indispensable tool of communication. It has continued to occupy a significant proportion of human's daily activities. The phenomenon of social media has catalyzed economic growth and political process in different parts of the world. According to Taye, Pius and Emokiniovo (2020), the rapid development of both technology and knowledge has led to rapid media transformation as new websites and online contents appear each day. McCarthy and Silvestre (2011) defined the social media as interactive platforms which individuals and communities create and share user-generated content. Maduake (2017) described social media as those internet-based tools and services that allow users to engage with each other, generate content, distribute, and search for information online. In other words, the social media are interactive web-based media platforms that offer citizens opportunity and place to connect, share opinions, experiences, views, contacts, knowledge, expertise, as well as other things like job and career tips. They belong to a new genre of media that focuses on social networking, allowing users to express themselves, interact with friends and share information with greater freedom as well as publish their views on issues on the World Wide Web.

According to Abonu, Ogunlade and Yunusa (2015), it is often assumed that the schools serve as potential agents of socialisation which influence the formation of political norms, values and attitudes among students. It is also believed that education is an effective instrument for socialising the young through promotion of desirable socio-cultural values, creation of political awareness which prepare the youth to effectively perform their function to the nation as they grow up. Students involved in politics try to seek ways to get themselves involved in socio-political platforms and with the help of the internet, these platforms and interactions can be possible without physical presence of members of such platforms. Student

unions are common parts of such politics. According Ali (2015), politics is the involvement of more than one party or group into actions ranging from civic engagement to participation in mainstream politics. Political awareness among students is important in order to ensure they understand the political agenda as well as the problems of the nations and their possible solutions. This is because the students are considered as the potential human capital in the future. Therefore, they must be abreast with trends in the political space and be ready to abide by the rules of engagement.

Statement of the Problem

Despite growing evidence of students and youths' activism and mobilization in Nigeria, Nigerian youths have yet to achieve the level of inclusion required to gain representation in politics. Leadership deficits, money politics, poor internal democracy among the older parties and an absence of a strategic political agenda pose ongoing barriers to young people playing a role in national development. Saroha (2016) says for many students, the idea that they can influence decisions made by government seems too abstract. Political participation by citizens is considered a pre-requisite for successful democratic society. As such students need to assume their responsibility as participating citizen. Solhaug, Denk, Olson and Kristensen (2018) posit that political awareness is a key asset in citizens selection of information and orientation toward political issues and possibly toward political participation.

Thus, the use of social media is phenomenal among students of tertiary institutions and Plateau State has a significant percentage of student's population. This is due to the fact that, a number of nationally recognised tertiary institutions are domiciled in the State, namely: NTA College Jos, Nigerian Film Institute, University of Jos, Plateau State University, Federal College Education Pankshin, Plateau State Polytechnic, Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS), Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN) among others. University of Jos is among the biggest universities in Nigeria in terms of population with over forty thousand (40,000) students from all over the country as well other foreign countries. In spite of that the state still witnesses minimal level of students' participation in its political activities probably due to the fact that the social media where students are active has not been sufficiently used in creating political awareness which has created a problem of inadequate civil awareness among students and youths.

Objectives and research questions

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- To ascertain the efficiency of social media in creating political awareness amongst mass communication students University of Jos.
- To find out how social media can be used to promote students' participation in politics in Plateau state.

- To understand students' perception of political awareness.

The study attempts to provide some responses to the following questions:

- How efficient is social media in creating political awareness amongst mass communication students University of Jos?
- How can social media be used to promote students' participation in politics in Plateau State?
- What is the students' perception of political awareness?

Significance and Scope of the Study

The study will be beneficial to students of tertiary institutions, general public, government institutions and future researchers. By reason of this study, tertiary institutions students will understand roles in the political and democratic process of the state. The general public on the other hand will understand their civic responsibilities and roles in state's politics while government institutions like the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) will reel out ways through which technology and social media can be used to improve electoral process. The study will also add to the body of knowledge while serving as reference material for other researchers.

This study's scope is limited to the influence of social media in creating political awareness among students of mass communication, University of Jos. It focuses on political awareness among students as well as its importance in strengthening good governance and democracy as a whole. The study targeted students of Mass Communication, University of Jos. The study covered the period of three months; from March 2021 to June 2021. The study sampled the opinions and views of students of tertiary institutions in Jos, with University of Jos as the target location.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the Uses and Gratification Theory.

Uses and Gratification Theory

The theory is concerned with what people (the audiences) do with the media. It was an attempt to determine the functions that mass communication is serving the audience members. According to Ferguson (2014), the theory posits that the audiences are not passive receivers of media messages but active influencers of the messages and their effects. As actively influencing the effect and the process, media audiences selectively choose, attend to, perceive, retain and react to media messages. Uses and gratification was first described in an article by Elihu Katz in 1959 and employed in research by Blumler and McQuail in 1969.

This theory is relevant to this study because as the theory postulates, people use the media whether traditional or new media, to acquire certain gratifications. That is, when people use the media, they seek some form of

benefits from such usage which could be to get informed, broaden knowledge, socialize and interact. Thus, social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and the likes can become a means of creating and improving political awareness amongst student users. It entails therefore that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), other civil societies and non-governmental organisations could harness social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook creating political awareness among the citizens. This can be done by gathering large number of followers on social media platforms and intimating them on ongoing or planned policies and programmes.

Operational Definition of Key Terms

The following terms have been defined within the context of the study as thus:

Social Media: Internet-based technology that facilitates the sharing of ideas, thoughts and information through the building of virtual networking community.

Students: Huge number of people attending a learning institution comprising mostly of youths.

Influence: The power of social media to cause change in the orientation of students.

Political Awareness: Knowledge about political events, government programmes and policies, political parties' agendas and campaigns, elections, civic responsibilities and salient issues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media, Evolution and Prevalence in Nigeria

The term *social media* refers to the new forms of media that involve interactive participation (Manning, 2014). According to Huang and Lu (2017), social media is a fast-growing stream of media facilitations with basic characteristics. In Manning's opinion, social media as a digital platform, allows people to participate and that participation is never completely passive. Boyd and Ellison (as cited in Sponcil and Gitimu 2015) defined social network sites as public web-based services that allow users to develop a personal profile, identify other users (*friends*) with whom they have a connection, read and react to postings made by other users on the site, and send and receive messages either privately or publicly. Individuals may choose to send private messages, write on other user's walls, organize social activities, and keep informed about other user's daily activities. However, users can limit themselves on what information they would like to share publicly with others. Some items they may choose to include are: "pictures, favorite books and movies, birthday, relationship status, and location" (Manning 2014, p. 4). In other words, social media means those internet-based tools and services that allow users to engage with each other, generate content, distribute, and search for information online" (Madueke 2017, p. 4).

Social media emerged with the advent of the internet and the World Wide Web. They are usually associated with the term *web 2.0* which is used to describe websites that provide opportunity for a user to interact with the sender of a message. Dewing (2012) observes that *Web 2.0* refers to the state of the web from 2004 till date; a period when interactive websites emerged as opposed to *web1.0* which describes the state of the web prior to 2004. Web-based communities, social networking sites, video-sharing sites, Wikis, and blogs, are among examples of web 2.0 sites. Whenever the word *media* is used, traditionally what our subconscious minds capture is radio and television for electronic media while newspapers and magazines stand for print media. According to Anim (2013), the term *new media* emerged to capture a sense that looked quite rapid - on the world of media and communication - from the late 1980s, and began to look quite differently from thenceforth.

The social media in Nigeria is now being used as a political communication tool. Internet access and connectivity have also expanded rapidly in Nigeria. The 2000s saw an unprecedented increase in internet access and use in Nigeria, driven by the proliferation of mobile devices (Nigerian Communications Commission, 2019). This became clear during the 2011 general elections and the trend is increasing as witnessed in the recent elections. The social media in Nigeria is used in so many ways and for different purposes.

Students and Politics in Nigeria

One of the common things in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is students' unionism. It is the breeding ground for students' political orientation and awareness. According to Wonah (2018), students union is a student organisation present in many colleges, universities and high schools. In most cases, students' union is often accorded its own building on the campus. It is committed to effective representation of the students. Thus, the purpose of student's union is to represent students both within the institution and externally; including on local, national and even international issues. It is also dedicated to social and organisational activities in a bid to promote robust and healthy academic environment. It should be noted that some students unions are political or indeed politicised organisations to the extent that they serve as a training ground for aspiring politicians. However, students unions generally have similar aims irrespective of the extent of politicisation, usually focusing on providing students with facilities and support services. The main objective of as students' union is to solve students' problems that can either be related to academic life or have a general political, economic or societal nature. A student's union is expected to impact positively on its immediate environment by improving the school environment through encouraging social, cultural and other extracurricular events that within the community.

It is obvious that students' union in Nigeria was not only committed to the welfare of students but also that of the entire citizens of Nigeria. Consequently, the union enjoyed support from radical intellectuals and academia. The union leaders were purely idealist and fire brands. For instance, under the leadership of Segun Okeowo, the National Union of Nigerian Students (NUNS) became involved in national politics for proper funding of education for Nigerian Students (Okeke, 2010). Nigerian students under NUNS suffered all manners of maltreatment yet remained adamant insisting they were fighting the forces of feudalism, parochialism and tyranny in our political system (Okeke, 2010). To corroborate the above fact about NUNS, Umar (2018) noted that student unionism in Nigeria was known to be a force to be reckoned with. In the sweet old days, students through their unions, were known to stand firm in criticizing the injustices of our leaders, thereby, effecting major changes. There were instances when the authorities clashed with students when diplomatic precautions failed to work; the 1978 ABU students' riot quickly comes to mind. During the uprising, many students' lives were lost while agitating for the ouster of their education minister, Colonel Ahmadu Ali of the infamous *Ali Must Go* riot. It was a landmark achievement by students in Nigeria. It opened up the eyes of our leaders to the fact that students actually know their rights and can fight oppression no matter the intimidation.

Social Media and Political Awareness among Students

Internet is becoming an innovative base by providing a new platform for peoples' discussion and interchanging modern thoughts in new public stratospheres. There appears to be no limits to the power of social media especially if and when it is part of the political process of a nation building. Osahenye (2012) refers this as the unstoppable power of the social media. Social media platforms can foster new relationships, create awareness and even improve productivity. According to Ali and Rehman (2021), the users of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, are grateful to these magical instruments which have provided them an opportunity for easy sharing of their opinions with other people. These customers of social media can easily exchange their ideas and as a result reach on a common conclusion. Online exchanging of ideas is a source of advertisement on internet on one hand and a source of interconnection with the users on the other hand.

Nigerian politicians have since recognised the importance of social media and have adopted it as a major means of reaching the electorate via on-line campaigning. For instance, during the 2011 general elections, many politicians, particularly the presidential aspirants, used social media tools to connect with voters and constituents. Facebook and Twitter appear to be the most widely used social media platforms by the politicians. For example,

in December 2010, it was estimated that Goodluck Jonathan had nearly 300,000 fans on his Facebook page (Asuni, 2011, p.19). Other presidential aspirants like Dele Momodu, Ibrahim Shekarau, Nuhu Ribadu, Atiku Abubakar, and others, all had Twitter and other social media accounts. Political parties like the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN), and Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) were also not left out. Currently, and in the build up to the 2023 general elections, practically all the leading parties such as the All-Progressives Congress APC, the People's Democratic Party PDP, the Labour Party and the New Nigeria Peoples Party NNPP have verified social media accounts which provide the politicians and their parties the opportunity to broadcast messages and recruit a huge number of volunteers to support their campaign.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs the quantitative method of research where survey design is used. This is considered apt for this study which seeks to address the topic *Deploying social media Tools for the Creation of Political Awareness Amongst Mass Communication Students, University of Jos*. This study uses a population that covers both the male and female genders, and a large number of population where accuracy of data gathered from is crucial and thus not compromised, hence the application of quantitative method. Snyder (2019) validates this assertion when he opines that survey gives easier access to new populations, larger sample sizes, more balanced ratio of genders, lower cost, more timely data collection, reliable data, and anonymity of participants, which is why survey research is probably best to use when the researcher wishes to gain a representative picture of the attitudes and characteristics of a large group.

Area, Population and Sample Size of the Study

This study has its area as the Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau state where the University of Jos is located. The study has its population as the students of mass communication department University of Jos. Mukhopadhyay and Gupta (2014) stated that a population is a complete set of elements (persons or objects) that possesses some common characteristic defined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher. Therefore when conducting a study, it is useful to define study populations based on eligibility criteria and the characteristics of individuals that make them appropriate for the study. The major criteria for the selection of this population are that University of Jos is the biggest tertiary institution in Plateau State and mass communication students are considered to be more knowledgeable in media and general communication process, as such they are in a position to give valid opinions and views that will help in sufficiently addressing the issues raised in the study.

Probability simple technique was employed to select

sample for this study. The technique was adopted because it is best suited when choosing a sample from a large population without any form of bias. Rikke and Karin (2017) said one of the enormous advantages of probability sampling technique is that samples are selected in such a way as to be representative of the population and provide the most valid result because they reflect the characteristics of the population from which they are selected. A sample size of 302 respondents was selected of the 1435 population of registered students of mass communication department University of Jos using Taro Yamane's sample size calculator. The sample size was reflective of the 100, 200, 300, 400 and postgraduate levels of the department. 100 level had 70 representative respondents, 200 level with 69, 300 level 70, 400 level 68 and 25 from postgraduate students giving a total of 302 sample size for this study.

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1
Response Rate of the Questionnaire

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Returned and found useable	271	89.7%
Not useable	31	10.3%
Total	302	100%

Survey 2022 University of Jos

Of the 302 copies of questionnaires distributed, 271 were properly filled and returned hence they form the useable items for this study. 31 copies were either not properly filled or not returned. It then implies that this study will reflect the opinions of 89.7% respondents of the total sampled population of 302.

Table 3
How efficient is the social media in creation political awareness among students of Mass Communication, University of Jos?

Are you active on social media?	Yes 271(100%)	No 0(0%)	Neutral 0(0%)	Total 271(100%)
Which of the social media do you mostly use?	Facebook 89(33%)	WhatsApp 46(17%)	Instagram 51(19%)	Total 271(100%)
Do you come across political information on social media?	Yes 258(95%)	No 0(0%)	Neutral 13(5%)	Total 271(100%)
If Yes: How often?	Frequently 194(61%)	Not Often 64(39%)	Others 0(0%)	Total 258(100%)

Source: Survey 2022 University of Jos

Table 3 depicts the efficiency of social media in creating political awareness among students of Mass Communication, University of Jos. It reveals that, 100% of the respondents are active social media users. Also, that 33% of the respondents use Facebook most often

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Table 2
Age of Respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Male	128	47%
Female	143	53%
Total	271	100

Source: Survey 2022 University of Jos

The Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage of the respondents' sex. The researcher sought to know the sex categories of respondents and 128 of them representing 47% were males while 143 respondents representing 53% were females. This means more females took part in the research work.

Table 2
Academic Level

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
100 Level	68	25%
200 Level	76	28%
300 Level	60	22%
400 Level	54	20%
Others (Postgraduate)	13	5%
Total	271	100%

Source: Survey 2022 University of Jos

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Data are presented and analysed based on the research questions for which the questionnaire was structured and administered to in order to elicit answer.

in comparison to other social media tools: 17% of the respondents use WhatsApp, 19% use Instagram and 31% of the respondents use Twitter as social media tools. Additionally, 95% making up for 258 number of the respondents do come across political information on social

media while 39% 64 respondents were neutral as to whether they come across political information on social media or not. In determining the frequency of political information on the social media, 194 respondents said they come across political information on social media on frequent basis while 64 respondents said it is not

often that they come across political information on social media. It then goes to mean that tertiary institution students are active users of social media which Facebook and Twitter are most popular in usage, and that they come across political contents while engaging these platforms.

Table 4
How can social media be used to promote students’ participation in politics in Plateau State?

	Facebook	WhatsApp	Instagram	Twitter	Total
Which of the social media platforms highlights political issues the most?	74(27%)	57(21%)	44(16%)	95(36%)	271(100%)
Do you gain knowledge on political issues and events in Nigeria on social media?	Yes 269(99%)	No 0(0%)	Neutral 2(1%)		Total 271(100%)
Have you ever been influenced by any information on social media to participate in electoral process?	Yes 244(90%)	No 22(8%)	Neutral 5(2%)		Total 271(100%)
Social media can reduce voter apathy?	Yes 196(72%)	No 19(7%)	Neutral 56(21%)		Total 271(100%)

Source: Survey 2021 University of Jos

From the Table 4, the 74 respondents selected Facebook as the platform that highlights more political issues, 57 respondents selected Whatsapp, 44 respondents selected Instagram, while 95 respondents selected Twitter, an indication that Twitter highlights more political issues than the other social media platforms available in the options. Furthermore, 99% of the respondents said they gain knowledge on political issues and events in Nigeria on social media, while 1% were neutral. The table also reveals that 90% (244) of the respondents have been influenced by information on social media to participate in electoral process, 8% (22) of the respondents said they have never been influenced by social media to participate in electoral process, while 2%(5) of the respondents were neutral as to whether they have been influenced by social media to participate in electoral process or not. Additionally, 72% (196) of the respondents agreed that social media can reduce voter apathy, 7% (19) of the respondents did not agree that social media can reduce voter apathy while 21% (56) of the respondents were neutral as to whether social media can reduce voter apathy or not. One can thus assert that social media can create political awareness and the awareness or the degree of awareness can determine the behaviour of citizens towards politics and its processes.

In determining the perception of students of Mass Communication, University of Jos on political awareness, the researcher sought to know what meaning respondents ascribe to political awareness. The Table 5 shows that 14% (37) of the respondents see political awareness as having the ability to understand and participate in electoral process, 13% (34) of the respondents look at political awareness from the perspective of being knowledgeable about political parties and their ideologies, 16% (44) define political awareness as having interest in politics and participating in governance, 20% (55) see it as being

actively involved in political activities, 12% (33) as having passion and zeal to get involved in governance process, while 25% (68) of the respondents perceive political awareness as being aware of the power citizens have with their votes. These imply that students have a good understanding of the concept of political engagements. All the responses pointed toward the direction of active involvement in governance, participation in politics as well as civic rights and responsibilities.

Table 5
What is the perception of political awareness among the students of Mass Communication, University of Jos?

Responses (Themes)	Frequency	Percentage
Political awareness is the Ability to Understand and Participate in Electoral Process	37	13%
Political awareness is the knowledge about political parties and their ideologies	34	14%
Political awareness is having interest in politics and participation in governance	44	16%
Political awareness is the active involvement in political activities	55	20%
Political awareness is the passion and zeal of getting involved in governance process	33	12%
Political awareness is being aware of the power citizens have with their votes	68	25%
Total	271	100%

Source: Survey 2022 University of Jos

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research question one sought to ascertain the efficiency of social media in creating political awareness among students of Mass Communication, University of Jos. Findings from this study show that social media has evolved to become an integral part of students’ day to day

life. It has become so integrated into both their academic and social lives. One can hardly come across a student who does not have at least one social media platform account; this explains why the use of social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter is so rampant amongst students of tertiary institutions with Facebook being the most popularly used by 33% (Table 3). Key players having realized the degree to which social media has evaded the populace, have overtime shifted from face to face interaction to these various social media platforms in a bid to capture and engage their audience. 95% of the respondents confirmed that there is a strong flow of political communication on the social media platforms. Social media now serve as political campaigns and rally grounds for political actors. This supports the submission of Asuni (2011) who observed that politicians in Nigeria now have Twitter and other social media accounts in a bid to establish, pursue and achieve their political course.

This study also found out that there is significant number of tertiary institution students using social media, creating political awareness on social media making as students tend to give strong consideration to issues they come across on social media. 90% of the respondents have been influenced by social media to participate in political process. The finding goes in line with the core assumption of the Uses and Gratification Theory which presupposes that as actively influencing the effect and the process, media audiences selectively choose, attend to, perceive, retain and react to media messages. This also supports the findings of Buhari, Ahmad and Ashara (2014) which summated that students use Social Media regularly. Closely related to this is the finding of this study that revealed how social media has been used by students to not just deliberate on political issues but form groups where those with like opinions discuss further and sharpen their understanding of political trends in the polity.

In determining the perception of political awareness of students of Mass Communication University of Jos, this study also found out that the students have a clear understanding of political awareness and realize that that is the bedrock of democracy. They unanimously agreed that political awareness is essential in democratic process and good governance because it gives citizens the base to express their opinions and participate in governance. It also improves electoral process and systems. These perceptions align with the submission of Claassen (2011) who asserted that political awareness is assumed to play a role in elections and in forming public opinion. The perception also buttresses the positions of Ayo, Olatunji, Duruji and Omoregbe (2014) who observed that the introduction of social media by Nigerian civil society and voters as a tool for efficient election monitoring and reporting has reduced election malpractice to the barest minimum.

Despite the high level of political awareness displayed by the sampled population, and a clear perception of political awareness and the need for the deployment of social media tool to further more improve political awareness and by extension participation amongst students, one will still ask why politics within the University campus is not reflective of the knowledge the respondents possess. Could it be that those who truly take part in politics within the walls of the university reflected here in the sampled population have the knowledge but lack the ability to apply it, or there are other factors hindering them from applying it? This question becomes crucial because knowledge not applied is considered useless. Hence the researcher discovered that although there is vast political awareness and knowledge amongst students of tertiary institution, application of the knowledge to make the political process reflective of the knowledge possessed by these students seems impossible.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Students and youths in general are the backbone of every society. In Plateau State and Nigeria in general, the youths constitute a significant chunk of the entire population. Unlike the entertainment industry, they are less active in political participation. With the world drifting towards political economy, students must be aware of their fundamental roles in promoting good governance, quality leadership and the overall governance process in Plateau State and Nigeria at large. The social media remains an invaluable platform where effective political communication and political awareness can take place.

Recommendations

In line with findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made:

- The Plateau State Independent National Electoral Commission (PLASIEC) and Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) as well as other civil societies and organisations in Plateau State should integrate social media tools like: Twitter and Facebook in their information dissemination systems.
- Rather than chatting and entertainment purpose, students of tertiary institutions should maximise the potential of social media by engaging in political sensitisation among their peers.
- There is need for the general public to key into political awareness and sensitisation programmes in the social media which will help in promoting quality governance and sustainable development of the State.
- Students of tertiary institutions in Plateau State should be encouraged to join students' union government and other students' association as that is the level from

which they could start sharpening their political skills and competences.

• Future researchers should consider using Mixed Methods which will incorporate civil societies and other relevant institutions order to widen the scope of data generation and analytical possibilities

REFERENCES

- Abonu, D., N., Ogunlade, F., O. & Yunusa, B., M. (2015). Assessment of political awareness among students of social studies in Nigerian secondary schools for citizenship. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 1(12), 1-10.
- Ali, S. (2015). *The democratic attitudes of students and their political participation*. Munich: GRIN Verlag.
- Anim, E. (2013) Media Convergence, Social Media and Societal Transformation: *The Nigerian Journal of communication*, 2(1), 1-24.
- Asuni J. and Farris J. (2011), *Tracking social media: The social media tracking centre and the 2011 Nigerian elections*. Abuja: Shehu Musa Yar Adua Foundation.
- Buhari, S., R., Ahmad, I., G & Ashara, B., H. (2018). Use of social media among students of Nigerian polytechnics. *International Conference on Communication, Media, Technology and Design*, 2(3), 24-28.
- Claassen, R. L. (2011). Political Awareness and Partisan Realignment: Are the Unaware Unevolved? *Political Research Quarterly*, 64(4), 818-830.
- Ekpenyong, M. (2013). The need for political awareness for Africa's younger generation. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 7(2), 31-32.
- Ezeah, G. H., Asogwa, C., E., & Obiora, E., I. (2015). Social media use among students of universities in south-east Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 16(3), 23-32.
- Ferguson, R. (2014, October 19). *Uses and gratification theory*. Retrieved March 16 2022 from <https://www.studymode.com/essays/Uses-And-Gratification-Theory-6122564.html>
- Huang, L., & Lu, W. (2017). Functions and roles of social-media in media transformation in China: A case study of "@CCTV NEWS". *Telematics and Informatics*, (34), 774-775.
- Jiang, L. C., Bazarova, N. N., & Hancock, J. T. (2014). The disclosure-intimacy link in computer-mediated communication: An attributional extension of the hyperpersonal model. *Human Communication Research*, 37(1), 58-77.
- Kietzmann, J.H, Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. & Silvestre, B.S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241-251
- Madueke, O. (2017). The role of social media in enhancing political participation in Nigeria. *International Digital Organisation for Scientific Research*, 2(3), 44-54.
- Manning, J. (2014). Social-media, definition and classes. In K. Harvey (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Social-Media and Politics* (pp. 1158-1162). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mukhopadhyay, S., & Gupta, R., K. (2014). Survey of qualitative research methodology in strategy research and implication for Indian researchers. *SAGE Journal*. Retrieved March 22 2021 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0972262914528437>
- Nigerian Communications Commission (2019, May 17). *Internet Access in Nigeria*. Retrieved March 11, 2022 from <https://www.ncc.ng.org>
- Okeke, C. (2010) Student unionism and the politics of today. *NBF NEWS*. Retrieved March 29, 2022 from <https://www.nigerianbestforum.com/blog/studentunionism-and-the-p>.
- Osahenye, K. (2012, February 25). The social media challenge. *The Guardian*, pp.52.
- Rahman, S. & Razali, C. H. (2018). Political awareness among students. *Journal for Social Sciences, University Teknologi MARA Cawangan Pahang*, 22(4), 130-133.
- Rikke, O. & Karin, L. (2017). Workshops as a research methodology. *Electronic Journal of e-Learning*, 15(1), 70-81.
- Saroha, J., K. (2016). Political awareness among youths. *International Journal Engineering and Management Research*, 6(5), 574-576.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104 (68), 333-339.
- Solhaug, T., Denk, T., Olson, M., & Kristensen, N. N. (2018). *Political Awareness, Concept and Measurement*. A paper presented for ECPR general conference. Hamburg, Germany.
- Sponcil, M. & Gitimu, P. (2015). Use of social media by college students: Relationship to communication and self-concept. *Journal of Technology Research*, 1(1), 1-13.
- Taye, B., Pius, I., & Emokiniovo, O., A. (2020). Influence of social media on democratic governance in Nigeria. *International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communications*, 6(1), 13-20.
- Wonah, I., E. (2018). Students Union and Politics in Nigeria. *Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 7(7), 28-32.