

## **Renaissance University Students' Perception of Social Media Use in the 2023 Presidential Election in Nigeria**

---

Ogene Ernest Nwani, Rose Ojabo, Douglas Ike Obike & Rachel Onyeabor Amah

### **Abstract**

This study investigates Renaissance University students' perceptions of social media use during the 2023 Presidential election in Nigeria. Specifically, it aims to determine the extent to which students rely on social media as a source of information, investigate how social media influences their opinion formation, and assess their rating of social media's accuracy as an information source during the election. The research employed a cross-sectional survey method, utilizing questionnaire to gather data from Renaissance University students. Findings indicate that a substantial number of respondents used social media platforms daily to access information during the 2023 election, with 68.0% responding "Very High" and 15.5% responding "High" regarding their reliance on social media. Social media's influence on opinion formation among these students was found to be high, with 65.0% of respondents indicating "High" perception and 28.6% indicating "Very High" perception on their opinion formation. Furthermore, the source of information was a primary factor shaping their trust in social media as an information source during the 2023 presidential election. Regarding the nature of information shared, most respondents noted that texts, pictures, and videos on social media were "accurate". Despite this, a high percentage still rated the overall accuracy of social media information during the election as "High," with 81.6% responding "High" and 7.8% responding "Very High." The study also revealed that a majority of students could distinguish between reliable and unreliable information sources on social media by cross-referencing multiple sources. The study recommends enhancing media and digital literacy programmes in universities to foster critical thinking and source evaluation skills. It also suggests encouraging students to consume information from diverse sources to counteract potential biases. Transparency from social media platforms regarding information sources is advocated to help users make more informed judgments about accuracy. Further research is recommended to explore how users critically engage with online information. Additionally, creating and sharing educational resources tailored to identifying inaccurate information relevant to Nigerian elections is advised. Finally, fostering collaboration among academia, civil society, and social media companies is suggested to develop effective strategies for content moderation and information verification.

**Keywords: Social media, Presidential Election, Perception, Renaissance University students and Opinion formation**

### **Introduction**

Social media has revolutionized information dissemination and consumption, particularly in the realm of politics. During the 2023 general election, social media platforms became prominent sources of news and public discourse, shaping public opinion and influencing narratives. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter (now X), and Instagram democratized information spread during the 2023 general election. Unlike traditional media, social media allows anyone with internet access to share and discuss news and opinions, empowering individuals and facilitating a more inclusive democratic process. It also provided a platform for marginalized voices and grassroots movements. Hashtags like #YouthVote and #WomenInPolitics fostered discussions on diverse representation. Social media facilitated rapid dissemination of breaking news and real-time updates during the 2023 election, particularly during result announcements, promoting political awareness and participation.

A major concern regarding social media during the 2023 election was the formation of echo chambers, where algorithms personalize content, exposing individuals to information aligning with their existing beliefs and leading to a polarized online environment. This can reinforce biases and limit exposure to diverse perspectives. Similarly, the 2023 general election saw an alarming rise in misinformation and disinformation, with false articles, manipulated images, and misleading narratives circulating rapidly and distorting public opinion. The lack of editorial oversight and the speed of content spread make it difficult to contain false information, undermining the integrity of the process. Hence, this study investigates the perception of social media on the 2023 Presidential election, focusing on Renaissance University, Ugbawka.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Social media platforms are undeniably important sources of news. While some argue that they create diversity of voices and participation, others express concern about their ability to manipulate public sentiment through targeted and biased messaging. The spread of misinformation and disinformation on social media during the 2023 election has undermined the accuracy and trustworthiness of circulated information. Public perception of social media coverage is affected by concerns regarding the accuracy and verifiability of news and content. Social media platforms are often criticized for their lack of accountability in regulating content and addressing issues like hate speech, fake accounts, and information manipulation. Public perception of social media coverage is influenced by concerns about the platforms' ability to ensure a fair and unbiased flow of information during the election. Although many studies have explored social media's role in participation, mobilization, and campaigns, a significant gap remains regarding how social media coverage influenced public opinion during the 2023 general election in Nigeria. This study aims to fill that void by specifically delving into the perception of social media's role in the 2023 election, with a particular focus on Renaissance University students.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- i. To examine the extent of reliance on social media as a source of information by Renaissance University students during the 2023 presidential election.
- ii. To investigate the perception of social media as a source of information on opinion formation of Renaissance University students during the 2023 presidential election.
- iii. To determine the students' rating of accuracy of social media as an information source during the presidential election.

### **Research Questions**

- i. To what extent is social media relied upon as a source of information by Renaissance University students during the 2023 presidential election?
- ii. What is the perception of social media on opinion formation of Renaissance University students during the 2023 presidential election?
- iii. What is the level of accuracy of social media as an information source during the 2023 presidential election?

### **Scope of the Study**

This study, which investigates social media's influence on the 2023 presidential election, was narrowed in scope to Renaissance University students, Ugbawka, Nkanu West L.G.A., Enugu State. Thus, the geographical scope of this study is within Renaissance University, Ugbawka.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Concept of Social Media**

Social media refers to internet-based platforms that allow users to create, share, and interact with content and online communities. Boyd and Ellison (2007) describe social network sites as systems that let users build profiles,

connect with others, and explore these connections. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as Web 2.0-driven platforms enabling user-generated content sharing, including text, images, videos, and audio.

### **Social Media and the 2023 Presidential Election**

Social media transformed political communication during the 2023 election, becoming a key source of news and discussion. Platforms offered real-time updates, diverse viewpoints, and enabled citizen engagement. Candidates, notably the "Obidient movement," leveraged social media for outreach and brand building. Enli and Skogerbø (2013) note that social media promotes personalization and interactivity. Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2012) affirm it encourages democratic participation through expression and mobilization.

### **Benefits of Social Media in the 2023 Election**

Social media enhanced democratic participation in the 2023 election through:

- **Transparency:** Real-time sharing helped expose electoral malpractices, enhancing accountability.
- **Citizen Engagement:** Platforms like Twitter and Facebook enabled interaction with candidates and opinion-sharing (Gibson & McAllister, 2017).
- **Inclusivity:** Social media provided access to information for marginalized groups (Chadwick, 2017).
- **Real-Time Updates:** Instant news sharing created a dynamic and informed electorate (Vaccari & Valeriani, 2019).

### **Concerns and Criticisms**

Despite its benefits, social media raised key concerns:

- **Misinformation:** Rapid spread of false news led to public confusion (Lewandowsky et al., 2017).
- **Echo Chambers:** Algorithms often reinforce existing beliefs, increasing polarization (Sunstein, 2017).
- **Privacy:** Data collection for political targeting raised privacy issues (Tufekci, 2014).
- **Manipulation:** Coordinated disinformation campaigns threatened electoral integrity (Howard & Kollanyi, 2016).

### **Perception of Social Media in the 2023 Election**

Public perception of social media in the election is mixed:

- **Advantages:** Platforms are praised for accessibility, immediacy, and direct communication (Dubois & Blank, 2018).
- **Disadvantages:** Concerns include misinformation, polarization, and limited viewpoint exposure (Pew Research Center, 2020).
- **Information Accuracy:** Users often doubt the reliability of social media content (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).
- **Impact on Public Opinion:** Social media shaped opinions and discussions, influencing attitudes and behaviors (Barberá et al., 2015).

### **Empirical Review**

The 2023 Nigerian Presidential Election marked a turning point in democratic engagement, particularly among youths. Social media served as a key space for discourse and mobilization. While no direct studies on Renaissance University exist, research on Nigerian universities provides a strong empirical base for examining student perceptions of social media.

### **Social Media and Peter Obi's Candidature**

Onwumere and Nwafor (2022) surveyed 300 social media users and interviewed 10 informants, finding that 75% became more aware of Obi's campaign via social media, and 65% were more likely to support him. Respondents resonated with Obi's message of hope and viewed him as a solution to Nigeria's challenges.

### Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972/73), which posits that media influences public perception by emphasizing specific issues. On social media, algorithms, hashtags, and framing shape what users see, influencing attention and discussion. Platforms can prioritize or suppress content, affecting visibility and shaping narratives, which are often echoed by traditional media.

### Research Design and Method

A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used to gather data from respondents at a single point in time. According to Bouchrika (2022) and Bhandari (2020), this method is suitable for analyzing relationships among variables. It allows for numerical data collection and analysis to assess patterns in perceptions and behavior.

### Population of Study

The population for this study is students of Renaissance University, Ugbawka. The university has over 620 students, according to the institution's administrative department. Thus, the study population for this study is 620. Pritha (2021) explained that a population is the entire group that you want to draw conclusions about.

**Sample Size** For the purpose of this study, the sample size was 243. Pritha (2020) writes that a sample size is a part of the population chosen for a survey or experiment through an appropriate sampling technique. Taro Yamane's formula was used to determine the sample size for this research as explained below.

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

**Where**  
n = Sample size  
N = Population of the study  
e = Tolerable error (5%)

$$n = \frac{620}{1 + 620(0.05)^2} = 243.14$$

$n \sim 243$

### Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this study was quota sampling. Quota sampling was employed to administer the research instrument to students in the 3 colleges across the institution, i.e., Law (120), Social and Management Sciences (63), and Natural and Applied Sciences (60), respectively.

### Instrument for Data Collection

Instruments for data collection in research are means through which the researcher gathers data, including observations, checklists, interview guides, tests, interview schedules, questionnaires, and so on (Degu and Yigzaw, 2006). For the purpose of this study, copies of the structured questionnaire were used to collect data from the sample size of this study. The questionnaire was structured and designed in a way that will allow the respondents to answer the research questions appropriately. The questionnaire comprises two sections. Section A contains respondents' bio-data in order to elicit respondents' demographic details, while Section B is concerned with questions relating to the research questions.

### Method of Data Analysis

Data can be analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This study adopted a quantitative method for data analysis and presentation. This means descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages) were used, and the data were presented with the aid of tables.

### Data Presentation and Discussion of Findings

This part focuses on the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaires administered to the respondents within the university community. To ascertain the perception of social media on the 2023 presidential election, the researchers administered 404 copies of questionnaires to the students of Renaissance University. After the distribution and collation of the research instrument (questionnaire), 206 copies were correctly filled and retrieved for analysis, while 34 respondents were undecided and 3 were wrongly filled, yielding a return rate of 84.8% for the research. However, frequency and percentage methods were used, and the data were presented with the aid of tables.

#### Data Presentation

##### Analyses of Demographic Variables

**Table 1:0: Respondents Gender**

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	100	48.5	48.5	48.5
Female	106	51.5	51.5	100.0
Total	206	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey 2023

Table 1:0 above shows that 100 respondents, representing 48.5%, were males, while 106 respondents, representing 51.5%, were females.

**Table 1:1: Respondents Age**

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
17 to 22 years	66	32.0	32.0	32.0
23 to 28 years	105	51.0	51.0	83.0
29 to 34 years	29	14.1	14.1	97.1
35 and above	6	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	206	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey 2023

Table 1:1 indicates that 66 respondents, representing 32.0%, were between 17-22 years; 105 respondents, representing 51.0%, were between 23-28 years; 29 respondents, representing 14.1%, were between 29-34 years; while 6 respondents, representing 2.9%, were 35 and above.

**Table 1:2: Respondents Educational Level**

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
100 Level	30	14.6	14.6	14.6
200 Level	65	31.6	31.6	46.1
300 Level	47	22.8	22.8	68.9
400 Level	36	17.5	17.5	86.4
Post Graduates	28	13.6	13.6	100.0
Total	206	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey 2023

Table 1:2 shows that 30 respondents, representing 14.6%, were 100-level students; then 64 respondents, representing 31.6%, were 200-level students; 47 respondents, representing 22.8%, were 300-level students; 36 respondents, representing 17.5%, were 400-level students; while 28 respondents, representing 13.6%, were postgraduate students.

**Data Analysis on the Research Questions**

**Research question 1:** To what extent is social media relied upon as a source of information by Renaissance University students during the 2023 presidential election?

**Table 2:1: The extent of reliance on social media**

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very High	140	68.0	68.0	68.0
High	32	15.5	15.5	83.5
Low	24	11.7	11.7	95.1
Very Low	10	4.9	4.9	100.0
Total	206	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey 2023

In Table 2:1, it was observed that 140 respondents, representing 68.0%, responded “Very High”; then 32 respondents, representing 15.5%, responded “High”; 24 respondents, representing 11.7%, responded “Low”; while 10 respondents, representing 4.9%, responded “Very Low”. This implies that the extent to which Renaissance University students rely on social media as a source of information during the 2023 presidential election was “Very High”.

**Research Question 2:** What is the perception of social media on opinion formation of Renaissance University students during the 2023 presidential election?

**Table 2:2: The Perception of Social Media**

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very High	59	28.6	28.6	28.6
High	134	65.0	65.0	93.7
Low	10	4.9	4.9	98.5
Very Low	3	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	206	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey 2023

In Table 2:2, it was observed that 59 respondents, representing 28.6%, responded “Very High”; then 134 respondents, representing 65.0%, responded “High”; 10 respondents, representing 4.9%, responded “Low”; while 3 respondents, representing 1.5%, responded “Very Low”. This implies that the perception of social media on Renaissance University Students during the 2023 presidential election was “High”.

**Research Question 3:** What is the level of accuracy of social media as an information source during the 2023 presidential election?

**Table 2:3 The Level of Accuracy of social media**

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very High	16	7.8	7.8	7.8
High	168	81.6	81.6	89.3
Low	14	6.8	6.8	96.1
Very Low	8	3.9	3.9	100.0
Total	206	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey 2023

In Table 2:3, it was revealed that 16 respondents, representing 7.8%, responded “Very High”; 168 respondents, representing 81.6%, responded “High”; 14 respondents, representing 6.8%, responded “Low”; while 8 respondents, representing 3.9%, responded “Very Low”. This result indicated that the level of accuracy of social media information among Renaissance University Students during the 2023 presidential election was “High”.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This discussion of findings is based on the analysis from the research on the perception of social media in the 2023 presidential election among Renaissance University students, Ugbawka. A cross-sectional survey research method was employed, and questionnaires served as the research instrument in gathering data from respondents. The study found that a majority of the respondents (68.0% responded "Very High" and 15.5% responded "High") highly relied on social media as a source of information daily during the 2023 presidential election. This indicates a substantial number of the respondents use one social media platform or another daily. This finding aligns with the broader understanding that social media platforms have emerged as prominent sources of news and public discourse, especially during significant events such as general elections. They act as a catalyst for disseminating real-time updates and breaking news to a wider audience, empowering citizens to access diverse perspectives.

As a result, a significant number of the respondents disclosed their perception about social media as a source of information which shaped their opinion during the 2023 presidential election to some extent. Specifically, 65.0% of respondents indicated “High” perception, and 28.6% indicated “Very High” perception on their opinion formation. This supports existing literature suggesting that social media can significantly influence attitudes and behaviors by shaping the information individuals encounter and the discussions they engage in. Studies, like that by Ceron, Curini, and Iacus (2020), also indicate a moderating role of interest in social media and participation. In addition, a larger percentage of the respondents stated that the source of the information was the core factor that influenced their reliance on social media during the 2023 presidential election. This highlights a critical aspect of media literacy among the respondents, where the origin of content plays a more significant role in determining trustworthiness. This is consistent with concerns about the accuracy of information shared through social media, as people often perceive it to be less accurate compared to traditional news sources.

Equally, on the accuracy of social media information, the majority of the respondents noted that texts, pictures, and videos shared on social media during the 2023 presidential election were "partially accurate." While 81.6% rated the level of accuracy as "High" and 7.8% as "Very High," this still implies a degree of caution or discernment from the respondents. This nuanced perception of accuracy is crucial given the prevalence of misinformation and disinformation during the 2023 general election, where false news, manipulated images, and misleading narratives circulated rapidly. This finding contrasts with simple binaries of trust or distrust, suggesting a more sophisticated engagement with online content.

A significant finding is that the majority of the respondents were able to differentiate between accurate and inaccurate sources of information on social media through the use of multiple sources of information. This demonstrates an active strategy employed by students to verify information. This aligns with recommendations that voters should be taught how to identify false information and verify accuracy before sharing. It also suggests that despite the challenges posed by echo chambers and misinformation, users are employing strategies to navigate the complex information landscape.

### **Comparison with Previous Studies and Research Gap**

The findings of this study on the reliance on social media for information, its perception on opinion formation, and the perception of its accuracy generally resonate with broader research on social media's role in elections. For instance, the study by Onwumere and Nwafor (2022) found that social media significantly impacted the perception of Peter Obi's candidature in the 2023 presidential election, with a high percentage of respondents believing social media made them more aware and likely to vote for him. This indicates a consistent trend of social media's

influence on awareness and voter behavior. Other studies also highlight how social media can stimulate expression and participation and facilitate real-time information diffusion.

However, this study contributes to filling a significant gap in the existing literature. While existing empirical studies in Nigeria have touched upon how the perception of social media influences public opinion during the 2023 general election, a significant gap remains. Many studies tend to focus on the content and spread of information, such as the proliferation of misinformation or the formation of echo chambers, and how actors leverage these platforms. This study specifically delves into the perception of social media's role in the 2023 presidential election, with a particular focus on Renaissance University students. The nuanced finding that respondents primarily relied on the source of information as the core factor influencing their trust, and their ability to differentiate accurate information through the use of multiple sources, provides a deeper understanding of user-level critical engagement that is often less explored in the broader literature. While general concerns about accuracy are noted, this study highlights an active coping mechanism employed by users. This study moves beyond simply acknowledging the challenges of misinformation to uncover the active strategies that young voters, specifically university students, employ to navigate and assess the accuracy of social media information during an election. This provides a more detailed insight into media literacy in practice within a specific Nigerian demographic, which is a less explored aspect compared to studies focusing on the sheer volume or impact of misinformation.

### Summary of Findings

Based on the data gathered, presented, and analyzed, the following findings emerged:

1. It is worthy of note that in Table 2:1, 140 respondents, representing 68.0%, responded "Very High" regarding their reliance on social media as a source of information, and 32 respondents, representing 15.5%, responded "High." This totals 83.5% indicating high reliance.
2. The findings from Table 2:2 revealed that 134 respondents, representing 65.0%, disclosed that social media coverage influenced their opinion during the 2023 presidential election to a "High" extent, and 59 respondents, representing 28.6%, showed a "Very High" extent.
3. According to Table 2:3, the findings showed that 168 respondents, representing 81.6%, considered the information they had seen and heard on social media concerning the 2023 presidential election to be "High" in accuracy, and 16 respondents, representing 7.8%, attested "Very High" accuracy.

### Conclusion

It is safe to conclude that social media platforms provide a space for discussions, mobilization, and voter education, leading to increased participation and engagement among voters. Although social media are also a breeding ground for the spread of false information, fake news, and misinformation, which can influence public opinion and create confusion during the electoral process. Despite the challenges attributed to social media, parties and candidates are likely to leverage social media platforms extensively for their campaigns, reaching a broader audience and targeting specific demographics. Essentially, social media tends to have a greater impact on younger populations, and as Nigeria has a significant youth demographic, their perceptions and engagements with content on social media could be crucial.

### Recommendations

- **Boost Media and Digital Literacy Programs in Universities:** Since Renaissance University students actively distinguish accurate from inaccurate sources and use multiple sources for verification, educational institutions should integrate and enhance media and digital literacy programs into their curriculum. These programs should go beyond basic fact-checking to build critical thinking, source evaluation, and an understanding of how algorithms and "echo chambers" work.
- **Encourage Diverse Information Consumption:** The study found that students use multiple sources to verify information, showing they recognize the limitations of relying on just one platform.

Recommendations should encourage users, especially young voters, to actively seek out different perspectives and information from various accurate sources, both online and offline. This can help counteract the effects of echo chambers and strengthen their existing critical assessment skills.

- **Advocate for Transparency from Social Media Platforms Regarding Information Sources:** As the source of information significantly influenced students' trust, social media platforms should be urged to implement clearer features that help users easily identify the original source and context of shared content. This would enable users to make more informed judgments about accuracy.
- **Support Research into How Users Critically Engage with Online Information:** The study points to a "nuanced perception of accuracy" and an "active coping mechanism" used by students. Future research should explore these user-level strategies in more depth, understanding how different demographics and educational backgrounds navigate the complex online information landscape during elections, and how these skills can be further improved.
- **Create and Share Educational Resources on Identifying Misinformation Specific to Nigerian Elections:** Building on the finding that "texts, pictures and videos shared on social media during the 2023 presidential election were accurate," and the general presence of misinformation, tailored resources should be developed. These resources could specifically address common misinformation tactics seen during Nigerian elections (e.g., false prophecies, manipulated images, misleading narratives) and provide practical steps for verification.
- **Foster Collaboration among Academia, Civil Society, and Social Media Companies:** To tackle the challenges of misinformation and promote informed discussion, there should be greater cooperation between universities, civil society organizations (especially those involved in voter education and fact-checking), and social media companies. This collaboration can lead to more effective strategies for content moderation, media literacy campaigns, and quickly correcting false information.

## References

- Adegboyega, O. I., & Ogunsanwo, A. O. (2021). The impact of social media on political discourse in Nigeria. *Journal of Information Technology Impact*, 21(1), 1–12.
- Allcott, H., & Gentzkow, M. (2017). Social media and fake news in the 2016 election. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(2), 211–236.
- Asemah, E. S., Nwammuo, A. N., & Nkwam-Uwaooma, A. O. A. (2017). *Theories and models of communication*. MATKOL Press.
- Barberá, P., Jost, J. T., Nagler, J., Tucker, J. A., & Bonneau, R. (2015). Tweeting from left to right: Is online political communication more than an echo chamber? *Psychological Science*, 26(10), 1531–1542.
- Bhandari, P. (2020). What is quantitative research? | Definition, uses & methods. Scribbr. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/quantitative-research/>
- Bouchrika, I. (2022). Types of research design: Perspective and methodological approaches. Research.com. Retrieved from <https://research.com/research/types-of-research-design>
- Boyd, D., & Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1), 210–230.
- Ceron, A., Curini, L., & Iacus, S. (2020). Social media and political participation: The moderating role of political interest. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 25(1), 33–45.
- Chadwick, A. (2017). *The hybrid media system: Politics and power*. Oxford University Press.
- Dubois, E., & Blank, G. (2018). The echo chamber is overstated: The moderating effect of political interest and diverse media. *Information, Communication & Society*, 21(5), 729–745.
- Enli, G. S., & Skogerbø, E. (2013). Personalized campaigns in party-centred politics: Twitter and Facebook as arenas for political communication. *Information, Communication & Society*, 16(5), 757–774.
- Flaxman, S., Goel, S., & Rao, J. M. (2016). Filter bubbles, echo chambers, and online news consumption. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 80(S1), 298–320.

- Gibson, R. K., & McAllister, I. (2017). *Populist political communication in Europe*. Routledge.
- Gil de Zúñiga, H., Puig-i-Abril, E., & Rojas, H. (2012). Weblogs, traditional sources online and political participation: An assessment of how the internet is changing the political environment. *New Media & Society*, 14(2), 244–261.
- Guess, A., Lerner, M., Lyons, B., & Nyhan, B. (2020). The influence of news media on political persuasion: Evidence from a randomized field experiment and online survey. *Science Advances*, 6(14), eaay3539.
- Howard, P. N., & Kollanyi, B. (2016). Bots, #StrongerIn, and #Brexit: Computational propaganda during the UK-EU referendum. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Ibrahim, J., Hassan, I., & Okoli, C. (2023). The impact of social media on voters' choice of the 2019 Nigerian Presidential Election. *Centre for Democracy and Development*, 1(2), 17–25.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59–68.
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241–251.
- Lauren, T. (2022). Cross-sectional study, definition, uses & examples. Scribbr. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/cross-sectional-study/>
- Lewandowsky, S., Ecker, U. K., & Cook, J. (2017). Beyond misinformation: Understanding and coping with the “post-truth” era. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, 6(4), 353–369.
- Lilleker, D. G., Tenscher, J., Štětka, V., & Škarabela, B. (2018). Political communication and mediated publicness in the era of social media: Conceptual reflections and the case of the 2014 European Parliament elections. *Journal of Communication*, 68(2), 243–263.
- Mangold, W. G., & Faulds, D. J. (2009). Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix. *Journal of Media and New Media*, 52(4), 357–365.
- Ogunlesi, A. (2023). The perception of social media on youth participation in the 2023 Nigerian presidential election. *Journal of African Studies*, 1(1), 43–49.
- Onwumere, O. J., & Nwafor, C. C. (2022). Assessing the perception of social media on Peter Obi candidature in 2023 presidential election. ProjectClue - Undergraduate Project Topics. Retrieved from <https://www.projectclue.com/mass-communication/project-topics-materials-for-undergraduate-students/assessing-the-perception-of-social-media-on-peter-obi-candidature-in-2023-presidential-election>
- Pew Research Center. (2020). Social media and the 'spiral of silence'. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2020/09/22/social-media-and-the-spiral-of-silence>
- Pritha, B. (2020). An introduction to quantitative research. Scribbr. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/qualitative-research/>
- Sunstein, C. R. (2017). *#Republic: Divided democracy in the age of social media*. Princeton University Press.
- Tufekci, Z. (2014). Engineering the public: Big data, surveillance, and computational politics. *First Monday*, 19(7), 3–9.
- Tumasjan, A., Sprenger, T. O., Sandner, P. G., & Welpe, I. M. (2010). Predicting elections with Twitter: What 140 characters reveal about political sentiment. *ICWSM*, 10(1), 178–185.
- Vaccari, C., & Valeriani, A. (2019). Chatbots and social media automation: Examining the impact on journalistic routines. *Digital Journalism*, 7(3), 380–398.

---

Ogene Ernest Nwani is from the Mass Communication Department, Renaissance University, Ugbawka Enugu State.

Rose Ojabo is from the Mass Communication Department, Renaissance University, Ugbawka Enugu State.

Douglas Ike Obike of the Department of History and International Relations. Renaissance University Ugbawka

Rachel Onyeabor Amah is from the Mass Communication Department, Renaissance University, Ugbawka Enugu State.