

**TITLE PAGE**

**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON VOTER'S BEHAVIOUR IN THE 2015  
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN ILORIN-METROPOLIS.**

**BY**

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## Abstract

*The study is a survey aimed at examining the influence of social media on voter behavior in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis. The rationale behind the study was to determine the extent at which use of Facebook and Twitter has influence on voters' choice of presidential candidates and turnout as well. The study employed the use of mixed method in which questionnaire and interview were used respectively. 384 respondents selected through random sampling responded to 384 copies of questionnaire administered. The study was anchored on the uses of agenda setting theory. Findings show that the use of Facebook and Twitter has 8.6% influence of voters behavior. It also reveals that social media was used to attack opponents, spread false rumours, hate and inciting messages. In view of the findings of this study, it was therefore concluded that social media (Facebook and Twitter) has influenced on voter behavior. It is also recommended that urgent review of the various media laws to address the peculiar technicalities involved in monitoring and moderating the use of different social media platforms.*

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

It is an incontestable fact that election is very important to the principle and practices of democracy all over the world. This becomes even clearer when seen in the light of the fact that election is central to the existence stability and development of democracy. This belief is shared by Akubor (2015:1), where he opined that the collapse of primordial traditional system and the emergence of modern state and the major advancement made in terms of the popular will as the source of sovereignty, as opposed to the whims and caprices of rulers, election has offered a way through which the people exercise their right to determine those they intend entrusting with the mantle of leadership. It can be deduced from the author's opinion that elections could be best considered as one procedure of aggregating preferences of a particular kind, as it offers choice to the electorates who can chose between two or several alternatives.

Elections are the centerpiece of democracy; through voting, people can make their voices to be heard in terms of deciding which candidate should occupy identified positions at every level. By so doing, the people exercise control of the destiny of their country. Therefore, elections are the electorate's source of power but they have to know where the candidates or the parties stand on various issues that are of concern to them so that they can be guided accordingly in the process of voting candidates into office. Hence, it's obviously and worthy to note that those running for various positions must state their positions and sell themselves to the electorate through electioneering campaign.

Mangold and Faulds as cited by Kayode, André & Margaret (2015:1), posits that the concept of social media involves the use of Internet based applications and services for communication, collaboration, creation and exchange of contents by individuals and groups. The main focus of social media is the communication that takes place, how the communication takes place and the relationships that develop based on these communications. Social media allow individuals and groups to develop, maintain and stay connected to a network of other individuals and people with common interests. However, there are broad categories of Social Media tools in question include Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Instagram tools to mention a few. They consist

of our everyday tools for mobile communication sufficiently tweaked and repurposed for political communication. Often times, they do not require much overhead in terms of cost, neither is their use constrained by geographic space and time. Their main requirement is technical competence, analytical competence and interpretive capability.

In more recent time, the quest to solicit for support or votes of the electorate has made candidates seeking for political position to identify new media particularly the social media as a potent tool of electioneering campaign. This fact on the importance of social media to electioneering campaign is agreed upon as Bandipo (2016:1), recognized social media as a tool for promoting democracy emphasized upon the need for quality teachers when he stated that;

*“Through the media, the voice of the people, as well as their thoughts on political issues is resonated. There is also an apparent synergy between the new media tools available today and the political life of people, and it typically sets the stage for a potent, interactive and virulent version of political communication.”*

Similarly, Austin (2008) as cited in Okolo, Ugonna, Nebo and Obikeze (2017:16) asserts that, “The use of social media platforms are important tools within political communication campaigns to secure victory and encourage interaction between political parties/candidates and voters, and most times to portray positive image of the political candidates.” Social media are new information network and information technology using a form of communication utilizing interactive and user-produced content, and interpersonal relationships are created and maintained. Typical social media network services could be content sharing, web communities, and Internet forums (Austin, 2008 as cited Okolo et al, 2017:16).

Furthermore, the social media are playing a dominant role in political mobilization, participation and electioneering campaigns in both developed and developing countries across the continent of the world. It is on record that since President Barrack Obama of the United State of America efficient use of the social media, there has been a growing use of new media technologies in facilitating political communication in contemporary times. Obama’s victory is largely attributed to the massive deployment of social media by his campaign organization which provided inspiration to other world leaders. Throughout history, political campaigns have evolved around the advancing technologies that are available to political candidates. As



technology develops, politicians are able to deploy them to facilitate the dissemination of their manifestos (Emruli& Baca, 2015: 155).

As the political communication landscape becomes more complex, the networked population gains greater access to information, more opportunities to engage in public speech, and enhanced ability to undertake collective action (Shirky, 2011). This fact has been buttressed by Chou et al in Onyechi and Obono (2015) that social media have enabled users' direct participation and interaction about contemporary political issues. Through these media tools, the public are no longer passive because they utilize the platform to actively participate in the political process. Social media put enormous power in the hands of the ordinary citizen to capture and upload events without gatekeepers. Accordingly, politicians explore this medium in the awareness that their utterances and remarks can go viral (Day, 2012) and they are capable of jeopardizing their opponents' political career, restate their position and convince supporters about expected political conduct, especially in a violence terrain.

From the opinion of scholars above its rational for one to infer that the popularity of social media among politicians has immensely increased due to the vast potentials inherent in them for campaigning. Accordingly, many Nigerian politicians are exploiting the opportunities offered by social media for on-line electioneering. The 2011 general elections were the first litmus test of the use of social media by political parties, political candidates, and the civil society organizations. The election was historic in the sense that it was the first time ever that new media technologies like Facebook, Blogs, LinkedIn and other social networks facilitated political communication and participation in Nigeria (Dagona, Karick, & Abubakar, 2013:2). Thus, these new media technologies have redefined methods of political communication in contemporary times and thereby led to significant shift towards the utilization of these modern tools in the electoral process.

More so, it was evidenced in the recent March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Presidential elections in Nigeria where political parties, including the two prominent parties took to social media platforms such as online networking sites, blogs, mobile newspapers, news ads, etc. to campaign and mobilize not only youths but all class of internet users to vote for them. This brought about a variety of interesting news and drama online providing opportunity for users to read, respond, interact, argue and trash out issues online. Twitter, facebook, blogs, online newspapers etc. became

platforms for people to air their thoughts on various candidates, and sway others towards their line of thinking with various debates, hashtags and online campaigns. This brought all Nigerians together irrespective of political divide, ethnicity and religion on national issues.

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

However, this new paradigm shift has challenged previous methods used for political communication where television, radio and newspapers dominated coverage of political campaigns, and thus became the primary source of election-related information. It is upon this paradigm shift that this study seeks to appraise the influence of social media on voter's behavior in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Nigerian 2015 presidential election was undoubtedly unprecedented this is due to the fact that for the first time in the country, social media was extensively used to attract voters to take part in the electioneering. This can be deduced following the fact that according to ([www.internetworldstats.com/af/ng](http://www.internetworldstats.com/af/ng)) internet uses in Nigeria as of 2015 was 92, 699, 924 (51.1% penetration rate) as compared to 200,000 users (0.1%) as of end of December in the year 2000; many of which are very active in social media. The importance of social media was even appreciated by the presidential, Muhammed Buhari, winner in the 2015 election who in his inaugural speech is quoted to have said "I thank those who tirelessly carried the campaign on the social media".

It has also been observed that social networking platforms particularly Facebook and Twitter has become a very important tool for political mobilization globally. It is gradually becoming a dependable tool in changing the opinions and influences of the public. Realizing the efficacy of this medium, some Nigerian politicians quickly embraced it and exploited it extensively for their political campaigns in the 2015 Presidential election. 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 (Brader, T. 2006). Campaigns often seek to instill positive emotions such as zeal and hopefulness about their candidate to improve turnout and political activism while seeking to raise fear and anxiety about the opposition. Zeal tends to reinforce preference for the candidates and party, while fear and anxiety interrupt voters behavioural patterns and leads individual voters to look for new sources of information on divergent political issues (Marcus et al, 2000). Sources of information available to a voters vary widely including the traditional media such as TV, radio and newspaper. However, the advent of social media platforms has made it possible for political information to reach large audience, access information, debate on the information and also give feedback on his own views, opinions and expectations form the party and candidate.

Although the social media has helped in increasing the popularity of candidates and their parties, it has the capacity to make or mar their chances and voter's perception of the party or candidates. Rumors, falsehood, propaganda and derogatory information about individual candidates or parties are commonplace online and spread faster than anticipated, often with disastrous outcomes. This is largely attributed to the lack of editorial filtering, and the anonymity of most online users. The internet encourages anonymity of its users, which means that those who write and comment often use nicknames or aliases. Hence, anonymity provides an excellent opportunity for writing false stories or spreading rumors about candidates and their parties and this often leads to rancor fear and anxiety about the opposition party.

This is presumed to have a huge influence on voter behaviour, as most voters who read stories online have a tendency to believe such stories without crosschecking facts and take decisions based on this propaganda. This is a widely known fact among political parties and they use it to their advantage in bringing down their opponents. Previous research has found that it is possible to influence a person' attitudes toward a political candidate using carefully crafted

information about such candidate online, which in turn may influence the voter's behavior towards the candidate. Social media can also be used by various parties to propagate false news and propaganda about the opposition in order to disfavor such party or candidate in the eyes of the electorates while exonerating theirs. This has a huge influence on voter behaviour as many voters make decisions based on such news they read online.

Most research study did fail to primarily work on if social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter influenced the voter's behavior of electorate. This problem led to the essence for this study to evaluate the extent to which social media influenced voter's behavior in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of the study are;

- i. To determine the extent at which the usage of Facebook and Twitter influence voter's behavior in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis.
- ii. To determine the challenges associated with the use of social media in electioneering process in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis.
- iii. To assess the advantage social media had over other forms of media particularly broadcast and print media.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions were proposed to guide this study;

- i. To what extent does the usage of Facebook and Twitter influence voter's behavior in Ilorin-Metropolis in the 2015 presidential election?
- ii. What are the challenges associated with the use of social media in electioneering process in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis?
- iii. What are the advantages that social media posed over other forms of media particularly broadcast media and print media?

### **1.5 Research Hypothesis**

The following null hypothesis were formulated for the study:

- H01.** There is no significant relationship between voter's behavior and Facebook usage in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis.
- H02.** There is no significant relationship between voter's behavior and Twitter usage in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Being a relatively new field in the ever-dynamic field of politics in Nigeria, the findings of the study is significant for a variety of reasons. Within the context of election, the role of media has been oversimplified as a discourse, by scholars and researchers. It is no doubt since most studies conducted on the of role of media in election in Nigeria, especially on Nigeria's 2015 Presidential Election have mostly targeted at offering a qualitative chronicle of the chain of events, without critical analysis of the factors influencing voter's behavior. Scholarly works on Nigeria's 2015 presidential election broadly centred on the lessons learnt, the historical antecedents, prospects of Nigeria's election, debate on importance of social media as a tool for electioneering campaign among others.

In relation to the aforementioned, scholars who have also attempted to offer a more critical analysis in of the 2015 presidential election have remained fixated on the role of states and media, with little or no emphasis on the influence social media as another actor in election, coupled with the relationship between social media and voters behaviour. Therefore, the significance of this study stems from various reasons differentiating it from other studies; it does not only aim at looking into the roles of social media in election, but also targets understanding what are the rationale behind voter's choice of candidate as well as participation. Additionally, from an individual perspective, it seeks to understand the extent at which social media influenced voter's behaviour. This will rectify such shortcomings by going beyond mere narration to employing a quantitative and analytical understanding of influence of social media on voter's behaviour, while proffering necessary recommendations for implementation. In similar vein, recommendations proffered within this study are expected to be accessed and analyzed by policy analysts with a view to providing pragmatic solutions on how social media can better be utilized in Nigeria election and also foster democratic consolidation. On a wider scope, the study is also of benefit to researchers, analysts and students in political science who are targeted at conducting further studies, while adding to existing body of knowledge in the field.

## 1.7 Scope of study

The scope of this study is restricted to the influence of social media on voter's behavior in the 2015 presidential election with particular emphasis on opinion survey of all the accredited voters in Ilorin-Metropolis in the 2015 Presidential election.

It is no doubt that the issues on the 2015 Presidential Election in Nigeria are wide, hence the need to analyze all issues inherent in the election becomes unattainable. Therefore, in order to avoid an unreasonably large scope, certain delimitations have been made. The study specifically focuses on addressing the influence of social media on voter's behaviour in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis. Additionally, the study will only be limited studying the influence of Facebook and Twitter as a social media platforms used in the election. The rationale behind this choice is that facebook and twitter is adjudged to be the most frequently used social media platforms by Nigerians as provided by, Asuni and Farris (2011:4); "over 3million people have Facebook accounts, while about 60,000 people are on Twitter". Additionally, these choice will enable the researcher carryout thorough research on the influence these social media platforms (facebook & twitter) in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis.

This study focuses on the analysis of influence of social media on voters behaviour for a number of reasons; social media in recent time has been a potent tool utilized for electioneering purpose globally. To achieve this objective, this study does not aim at identifying and explaining the recorded successes or failures of the social media on election, due to the fact that spanning academic documents in the field of political science have addressed such issues. Therefore, it is important to shift the analysis of social media from a success-failure research, to focus on a more investigative analysis of how effectively has social media influenced the behavior of voters in terms of choice of candidate and participation in election.

## 1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Human beings think and view phenomenon in and from different perspectives, as a result of this, there are some terms or concepts used in this work that has ambiguous meaning and need to be clarified and explained as it is used in this work:

**Democracy:** it refers to the political system in which the people of a country rule through any form of government they choose to establish.

**Influence:** This means the power to affect somebody's actions, character or belief especially by providing them an example to follow. West and Tunner (2010:268) describe influence as a legitimate and an expert power.

**Election:** this term refers to a post mortem that investigates the record of office holders whose actual performance may have little to do with promises made when they were previously elected. This is a way of censuring, reposing function in a ruler that is accepted and ejecting an unpopular leader.

**Social Media:** For the purposes of this project, social media have been defined as “online tools and Web sites that facilitate social interaction as well as content sharing. Social media in this study refers to Facebook and Twitter.

**Facebook:** is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. According to statistics from the Nielsen Group, Internet users within the United States spend more time on Facebook than any other website.

**Twitter:** is a free micro blogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called tweets. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and devices.

**Electioneering Campaign:** It refers to an organized effort by a political party or candidate for public office to attract the support of voters in an election. This term is equally used synonymously in this study with political campaign.

**Voter's Behaviour:** this refers to some set of individual beliefs that determines decision making process especially with public decision makers, who are voted by the electorates and it is determined by the level of individual freedom to vote in a society. Where such individual right is guaranteed, democracy will definitely take place.

## 1.9 Organization of the Study

The following chapter outline has been provided to guide the reader with an impending understanding of what constitutes each chapter and how the chapters further explains the study.

The chapter one provides an overview of how the study has been organized. This chapter is made up of the background of the study, purpose and scope of the study, and the objectives to be achieved by the study. The research questions were also introduced here, along with the research objectives. The chapter ended with an outline of the chapters and how they are organized.

The chapter two essentially provided all the relevant literature for the study. This chapter was divided into main headings and subheadings to elucidate the reader's understanding of the various aspects related to the use of social media and how it was being used in Nigeria and other parts of the world.

The chapter three focused on research methodology which provides answers to the research questions that were presented in chapter one. It also captured both quantitative and qualitative research approaches that was employed in this study. It includes the research design, population of study, sample size and technique, instruments of data collection and methods of data analysis.

The chapter four deals with the presentation and analysis of data, which includes the presentation of the sample profile and demographics. This was followed by the analysis of results through the use of SPSS Version 23.

The chapter five, which also happens to be the final chapter, concludes the study. The conclusions arrived at was be based on the analysis of the data collected and presented in the previous chapter. The conclusion was done in relation to the research findings. Furthermore, the chapter ended by suggesting some recommendations that was also based on the finding of the study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter is aimed to provide a comprehensive and clear picture of the related studies and to show how the present study contributes in extending the knowledge in the attempted area under study titled “The Influence of Social Media on Voters Behaviour in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-Metropolis.

#### 2.1 Conceptual Clarifications

##### 2.1.1 Election

The concept of election is associated with so many meanings such that it is hardly difficult to say its exact meaning. According to Omonijo et al. (2007) cited in Ayo (2012), election is the act of choosing public officers to fill vacant posts by vote, it is an act of choosing those that govern a state; it may be conducted periodically. Elections are central in the institution of democratic representative governments. The reason is that, in democracy, the authority of the government derives solely from the consent of the governed. The principal mechanism for translating that consent into governmental authority is the holding of free and fair elections. Corroborating Omonijo’s submission, Ujo (2004) sees, “election is one procedure of aggregating preferences of a particular kind and a process of choosing between alternatives.” Elections can be done in practice only through forms of procedure accepted as binding within the political society. Chukwu (2007) cited in Mato (2009:16) asserts that election is regarded as the central institution of democratic government. This assertion is significant considering the fact that in a democracy, the authority of the government derives solely from the consent given by the governed to the leaders. The primary mechanism for obtaining and translating that consent into governmental authority is holding genuinely democratic elections (Mato, 2009:16).

Election is an important hallmark of enthroning and sustaining democracy in societies like ours. Umechuhwu (2004:32) avers that election is paramount and highly significant in any given society. It is the time when leaders who pilot the affairs of a nation are elected. It is also the time when all the eligible voters exercise their rights as citizens to participate in the

government. That is, the right to vote and to be voted for. Also writing on the importance of election, Umar, (2000:1) admits that elections give the people control over their governments by enabling them decide on who should be their law makers and decision makers. Hence election provides the electorates the opportunity to vote their representative into office for a particular length of time. An election can be seen as the process of selecting leaders through voting. According to Clotefelters and Prysby, cited in Lawal (2003:127) election can be described as mechanism which permits the largest possible part of a population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office. Lawal (2003) further states that election performs the important functions of leadership selections; it enables the electorate to indicate, and by implication, underscore their preference of a particular leader or leaders who they consider worthier than others for a specified public office.

Okwodu, cited in Lawal (2003:126) defines electoral system as the process by which the citizens of a state vote, to elect people to represent their interests and opinions in government. Thus, for this purpose, the territory of the state is normally divided into various electoral constituents, the inhabitants of which vote for one of the various candidates to become their representative. Election is the celebration of the fact that in final analysis, sovereignty resides with them and they have the last say on the conduct of affairs of the nation. It is on this premise that Egwemi (2013), avers that elections are an important component of democracy and without periodic and regular elections, democracy gradually loses its value and appeal.

### **2.1.2 Electioneering Campaign**

As noted by Asemah, Nwamuo and Edegoh (2014) a political campaign is an organised effort which seeks to influence the decision making process within a specific group. In political or electoral campaigns representatives are chosen or referendums are decided. In modern politics, the highest profile political campaigns are focused on candidates for the head of state or head of government, usually a President or Prime Minister. The campaign messages often contain the issues that the candidate intends to share with the electorates. The messages which often centre on policy issues, summarize the main ideas of the campaign, and are often frequently repeated to create a lasting impression in the minds of voters (Asemah, Nwamuo and Edegoh, 2014). Most campaign messages are detailed in order to attract the largest number of voters possible.

Electioneering campaign is the practical manifestation of ‘politicking’ in the electoral process (Okoye, 1996, cited in Okoli and Iortyer, 2014). It involves an effort to persuade or dissuade prospective voters in an attempt to gain partisan advantage in the electoral process (Bassey, 2013). The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA) (2014), otherwise known as the McCain Feingold law defines electioneering communications as:

- i. broadcast ads (television and radio)
- ii. airing within 30 days of a primary election or 60 days of a general election
- iii. that mention or refer to a federal candidate
- iv. and are aimed at 50,000 or more members of the electorate of the office the candidate is seeking.

It therefore implies that electioneering campaign like election itself is highly regulated in most democracies in the world. Chile (2011:151) notes that campaigns refer to “a systematic effort in coordinating all relevant activities over a long period of time, to obtain a specific all-encompassing objective”. In agreement with this position, Okoli and Iortyer (2014:1) brilliantly opine that electioneering campaigns mean “the sum total of activities by which politically interested actors seek to canvass and win votes for a preferred candidate or political party. It also involves the partisan activities of the opposition party or parties dedicated towards wresting power from the incumbent party through strategic campaigns and mobilisation”. This means that electioneering campaign has to do with political parties engaging in purposeful activities geared towards winning both the confidence and votes of voters in an election.

Brian (2009) posits that “campaigns are the purchase and use of advertising space, paid for advertisements or commercial rates in order to transmit political messages to a mass audience” (as cited in Alom, 2013:155). The point that is being made here is that political campaigns are organised to sell political candidates and political parties to the electorates. The overriding objective of all electioneering campaigns is to win the loyalty and support of the largest number of voters possible so that they will ultimately vote that candidate or political party campaigning in an election. So, as Alom (2013) rightly observes electioneering campaign provides political parties and candidates with the avenue to present to the electorate more information about the manifestoes and qualities of candidates, thereby placing them in a better position to assess the programmes of the parties and candidates and hence make a better choice.

### 2.1.3 Social Media

Social media has become an integral part of life as social websites and applications proliferate exponentially. It is the collection of online communication channels dedicated to community-based inputs, interactions, content sharing and collaborations. Though it has no definite meaning, it is generally accepted as a medium of communication. Dominick (2008) argues that social media have altered the way communication is done; it has changed the idea of community and have greatly impacted on the culture of people. Omojuwa (2011) specifically define social media content as the many tools and space that help amplify the voice of ordinary Nigerians by bringing their news to homes, offices, and places most of them would ordinarily not have reached. Hence, Osa-Brown and Emenike postulate that the aggressive use of social media has changed the way some business people communicate with their customers. Likewise, consumers use social media to take charge of their shopping.

In the light of the above, Raji-Oyelade (2012) equally refers to social media as the practice and tools of retrieving and disseminating information, narratives, histories, performances and ideas in a way that both collation and delivery, as primary acts of writing are qualified in the immediacy of virtual or mass circulation. Social media in the context of this study includes the use of telephone and Internet to optimize interaction in the exchange of information, ideas, news, feelings and opinions. They are devices used to overcome constraints of space and time in enhancing social interaction. Internet is a multi-dimensional communication high way, highly decentralized and concentric in form. It is the Internet that breeds the new media.

Similarly, Fagorusi (2013: 15) describes the term social media as “the interactive form of communication that uses the Internet”. Thus, the social media includes podcasts, Rocs feeds, social networks, text messaging, blogs, websites, wikis, virtual worlds and other social forms. Telephone and the Internet have made social media such as twitter, video, my space, sharing sites, you tube sites, Aigg, flick, LinkedIn, face-book and Skype possible for global use either in the realm of business, politics, education or international relations. He also opines that the cause of globalization has been furthered by the new media which has made connectivity realizable. According to him, the social media has brought about flatness of the world with the understanding that from one end of the world, one can see the other. This has further given credit

to McLuhan global village postulate. The social media has been made possible and elastic due to invention of the computer, the installation of satellite in space, the digital world and new knowledge in telephony.

In the researcher's explanation, it may simply connote "within group interactive communication". The "group" in this definition represent "social" content of the definition. According to SuomenToivo–Think Tank (2012), social media are new information network and information technology using a form of interactive communication skills, where users produce the content of information and interpersonal relationships are established and maintained in the process. A typical social media services could be content sharing, web communities, or an Internet forum (Sanastokeskus, 2010). In the same vein, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), defined social media as a group of Internet-based application that are built upon the ideology and technology of web 2.0 and allows the generation and exchange of its content. On the social media, the users are not passive like in the case of Television, Radio, and Newspaper, rather they are active in the formation and exchange of information (Sweetser and Lariscy, 2008).

Looking at social media from a more practical point of view, Sweetser and Lariscy (2008: 179) define social media as a "read-write Web, where the online audience moves beyond passive viewing of Web content to actually contributing to the content". One thing that is common in most definitions of social media is the point that it is based on user-generated participation. The opportunity to enjoy user-to-user interaction distinguishes social media from the traditional media which is characterized by top-down news dissemination arrangement (Clark and Aufderheide 2009). Another attribute of the social media which distinguishes it from the traditional media is the choice it accords to its users. Choice enables people to access the information they like to learn about through the social media, eliminating the gatekeeper role of traditional media. On one hand, the choice offered by social media reduces the shared experience that viewers of particular traditional media channels usual have; on the other hand, it creates a network of individuals with like interests and similar preferences.

Two primary tools that have enabled people to socialize and connect with each other online are social networking sites and electronic messaging. More than half of America's teens and young adults send electronic messages and use social networking sites, and more than one-third of all internet users engage in these activities (Jones and Fox 2009). In Nigeria, over 3million people have Facebook accounts, while about 60,000 people are on Twitter (Asuni and

Farris 2011: 4). Most people who use social media tools access them mainly through computers and mobile devices such as phones and Tablet PCs. Analysts suggest that majority of phone purchases in the coming years will be more for using online networks rather than making phone calls (Baekdal 2008). Thus, phone communication is now tending toward one-to-many sharing rather than the usual one-to-one conversation.

Social media has shaped political communication in four major ways. Firstly, it has deepened segmentation of audience triggered by the rise of network television channels and specialized magazines and websites. Segmentation of audience is a product of two main elements of the social media: diversification of coverage and selective exposure (that is, finding information that aligns with the predispositions of individuals) (Stroud 2008). Social media makes it possible for its users to read and discuss specific issues and then connect with other individuals who share their beliefs. This has the possibility of creating individual voters that are fixated on specific issues and who may not be able to relate with the wider issues that are part of a general election. The existence of different media and brands of information platform can slit political communication into different segments - all addressing the same issues from different perspectives.

The second way social media has shaped political communication is by weakening the gate keeping capacity of the traditional media. Before the emergence of social media, the traditional media played a key role in deciding what is sufficiently important to be aired to the public. This gatekeeper role of the traditional media enables it to set the agenda of public discourse. In the 1970s, McCombs and Shaw (1972) as cited in Okoro (2017:119) asserted that “the mass media force attention to certain issues. They build up public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know about, [and] have feelings about”. McCombs and Shaw insist that a small number of mass media news producers dominate the market, and therefore, audiences only get information about what the media decides is important enough to be covered. By presenting politicians with a platform to speak directly to their constituents and potential voters without the traditional media intermediary, the social media has largely curtailed the agenda setting role of the traditional media (Gillin 2008).

Related to the weakening of the gatekeeper role of the traditional media is a third effect of social media on political communication. The practice of breaking news through the social

media rather than press releases in the traditional media has gained currency in recent times. Press secretaries are increasingly losing their control as gatekeepers, and individuals now have more liberty to frame and prime issues they consider important. In all, the use of social media limits the control of traditional press secretaries over the outflow of information, and also decreases the dependence on traditional media for up-to-date content. Although the lack of control over the content of social media may be positive in the sense that it allows for greater freedom of information, there are also the dark sides of this phenomena. The social media has been misused in many ways including using social media platforms to spread false information, abuse political opponents, and incite violence. This, therefore, highlights the need for a reflection on how to balance individual freedom and responsibility in the use of social media. Social media outlets have a responsibility to develop and implement social networking guidelines for their users.

Finally, Ojebuyi (2012:56) posits that the emergence of the new media does not suggest the disappearance of the traditional ones, rather the convergence of the old and the new media has created a complementary phenomenon where the strength of one genre takes care of the flaws of the other. The Internet and traditional media are converging as conventional media organizations create their own websites and also collect information from other sites. Hence, social media has emerged as the new influencer in social, economic and political settings. Research has shown that increasing use of social media for political communication has led to declining newspaper readership and television viewership in many countries (Australian Media and Communication Authority 2007). Under this circumstance, the social media may likely continue to dominate political communication, and to serve as a tool for gathering and disseminating political messages.

#### **2.1.4 Voting Behavior**

Voting behavior is generally conceived as political behavior, because most political activities deal with voting. In a political approach to voting behavior, Goldman (1966) in his work on political behavior, believed that it determines decision making process especially with public decision makers, who are voted by the electorates. But in the work of Deiner (2000), voting behavior is largely related to democratic principles and individualism. In this assertion, the behavior of voters is determined by the level of individual freedom to vote in a society. Where such individual right is guaranteed, democracy will definitely take place.



In a process of typifying different levels of voting behavior, Andreadis (2005) has intellectually categorized areas through which voters can choose differently in an electioneering process. For him, under presidential and legislative elections, voters' orientation is to select representatives on the basis of their political beliefs. In local elections voters select candidates that can serve them better and they are capable to do so. Under referendum, voters vote for or against a particular policy, relying primarily on the efficacy of the policy.

The above typologies of voting behavior were identified by Andreadis (2005) in Cypriot referendum of 2004. In a study carried out by Winkielman and Knuson (2007) of post war japan, findings showed that, voting behavior was significantly determined by "affect" factor. It was also discovered that people in the rural areas favored socialist parties while people in the rural areas chose conservative parties. This shows that, rural people are likely not to take political ideology, campaigns and party programs, but psychologically deals with emotional ties especially of what affects them. Scholars such as Healy, Malhota and Hyunjung (2010) are of the view that, voters may use affect as a result of political sophistication and have political stimuli that may result in an emotional political bias. Some of the mechanisms of affect as it relates to voting behavior may include: surprise, anger, anxiety, fear and pride (Gomez, Hansfor and Krauss: 2007).

Researchers such as Miller (2011), Gomez, Hans and Krauss (2007) have emphasized on affect as a determinant of voting behavior, believing that, anger may not allow people to vote for, especially the government in power whose policies or actions could not make them happy and take them out of anger. Anxiety would determine voting behavior in a manner making the voters vote for a candidate whose policy they "prefer" (miller, 2011), while people with fear, may require in-depth analysis and explanations before they vote for a party or candidate (Ladd and Lenz, 2011; Gomez, Hans and Kraus 2007). The influence of affect as it relates to pride results in a massive voters support. This psychological work stipulates that those candidates with pride (for example john McCain and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu) may mobilize a large number of voters in an electioneering process, because they feel the emotional attachment and political stimuli of such pride (Panagopoulos, 2010; Finn and Glaser, 2010).

Implicitly voting implies confidence in choice and decision: it also implies a burning expectation, which motivates a voter to designate on who best would fulfill his desire. Psychologically, voting should include the assistance of an undecided issue, the perception of that issue and the general framework within which solutions to that issue are possible.



Additionally, voting according to Ejiofor (2007) implies the existence of fundamental freedoms although in newer and more disguised dictatorships. There are attempts to combine compulsion and choice that is to present voters the object, which they must accept because it is though good for them. The single and lone candidate election is a case in point the presentation negates that freedom which gives meaning to any choice.

Ejiofor (2007) further listed the factors that are related to voting behaviour in elections;

- i. **Fear:** Fear based on psychological literatures, especially in the works of Maddux and Rogers (1983), DeHoog, Stroebe and John (2005) “is a persuasive message that attempts to arouse fear in order to divert behavior through the threat of impending danger or harm”. Just as a natural impulse, it is aroused by an impending danger or harm. The danger here is what the Nigerians experienced in the previous government. The relationship between fear and voting behavior was intellectually provided by Ruiter and Abraham (2005) Walkters (2000) Peters, Ruiter and Kok (2014). Their argument is that, people change behaviorally as a result of risk and vulnerability against a particular action. If Nigerians were vulnerable for example, under the previous regime, their lives were then at risk and vulnerable. The inference of this relationship, was given by Witte and Allen, 2000), who believe that, fear “presents a risk, presents the vulnerability to the risk, and then describes a suggested form of protective action”. The protective action here represents the shift or the change in voting behavior and pattern.
- ii. **Insecurity:** The issue of security is a sensitive one in every socio-economic formation. People must be strengthened to have sense of belonging and feel strong to withstand certain security challenges. According to Erich Fromm (2000) the feeling of inferiority is an integral part of insecurity. When Nigerians in the northeastern part of the country began to feel inferior in their sense of living due to displacement, unavailability of food, water and medical facilities as a result of the insurgency, which represents insecurity.
- iii. **Expectations:** The bounded rationality model somehow deals with forecast of even less sophisticated scheme (Evans and Honkapohja, 2001) as expected by a people under a particular government. This model may seesuch people not to expect even more and higher deliveries from the government (Homes and Sorger, 1998) but little expectation as contained in the constitutional framework as the government should discharge its own

duties according to the law. Even this was somehow lacking, hence-the behavioral change in voting process of Nigerians as the case may be.

- iv. **Economic Situation:** While adopting the structuralist position of economic crisis, failure and poverty, Rank and Herschl (2006) is of the view that, the government is at fault whenever there is unemployment, economic recession, poverty, low per capita income and other related issues. For example, when the Russian economy was crumbling, the Russians became very much concerned about the future of their federation. With the emergence of president Putin, who strengthened the economic structure of Russia, Putin was able to mobilize voters during elections (even though there were allegations of riggings). Putting continues to be a great political figure of Russia for his determination not to see Russia down.
- v. **Political Socialization:** Political socialization as a process of molding individual's character, attitude and conduct to make him become a proper member of the society, plays significant role in election periods. Socialization as defined, is a "lifelong process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs and ideologies, providing an individual with the skills and habits necessary for participating within their own society" (Clause, 1968). It is therefore, "the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained" (Macioni, 2010).

### 2.1.5 Social Media and Electioneering/Political Campaign

Globally, the importance of social media cannot be overemphasized as individuals, groups, organizations and even nations are taking advantage of the opportunities provided by social media and other e-media platforms to mobilize millions of people to support and advance their course. In the political sphere it has become a veritable tool for interacting and mobilizing citizens towards active participation in the political process and democratic projects. It is through the media that people are able to participate freely in discussions relevant to public interest. In other words, social media is a form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share ideas, personal messages and other media content. By so doing, social media has actually succeeded in breaking the traditional media method of top-down information dissemination or passage to give way to user-participation method.

The use of social media in today's campaign is not only important but it is critical; millions of people are involved in using social networks daily. It is the contemporary opportunity for political parties to be in touch with large numbers of voters quickly, constantly and at a low cost (Olabamiji, 2014). A political candidate may have a million subscribers on his/her Facebook account, but would be able to reach 10 million or even a 100 million people that persuades more followers because of his/her activities online. Through social media, many people get to see large numbers of campaign content coming through, whether they like it or not. Adelabu (2011) notes that the success of President Obama's Presidential campaigns in 2008 and his eventual emergence as first black president of the United States was largely credited to his active use of Facebook to mobilise millions of volunteers, voters and to lobby for financial support. Indeed, politics has evolved greatly in the recent decade with the advent of the new technology. With it, information sharing has greatly improved, allowing citizens to discuss ideas, post news, ask questions and share links. With social media, politicians reach the masses with the aim of assessing the political atmosphere even before venturing into the campaign. Social media is perhaps the best tool to assess the popularity of a candidate especially by the young people and craft the best language to use as a campaign slogan (Ibagere, 2013).

Social media also provides politicians with the opportunity to be informally free with the public. This free connection through social media helps politicians to communicate their humour, indicating their approachability and accessibility to the public. With social media, politicians appeal to citizens; this makes them seem more personable and gives them the advantage of keeping in constant contact with their supporters. Social media grants many people the chance to participate actively and get involved fully in the political discourse by adding their voices on issues posted on the social media sites. Thus, advancing the tenets of participatory democracy that sees media as a debate avenue and aids tremendously in actualising public-sphere journalism. Although this quality of political engagement is still to have a solid ground in the Nigerian political forum. Adeyanju and Haruna (2012) argue that it affords electorates a friendlier avenue of assessing candidates for political offices and promoting transparency in governance. Therefore, creating a user-friendly social media strategy for use during political campaigns is not only vital but has become an essential part of majority of political candidate's plan to get into office in present day Nigeria and seemingly the rest of the world. This is evident from the fact that social media sites often get more traffic congestion than an official campaign

website of political parties; this in its self indicates the importance for candidates to get connected to these sites (Olabamiji, 2014).

In Nigeria, apart from elections and electioneering campaigns, young Nigerians congregate on social media platform like Tweeter, Facebook, whatsapp to express their views on matters they feel are not well handled by government. For instance, through the platform in 2010, a protests tagged ‘Enough is Enough’ (EiE) initiated by Reclaim Naija project was organized by internet savvy Nigerians to monitor elections (Macnamara, 2008:4). The group particularly used tweets and Facebook messages to whisk up interest and motivate them to go out and vote. This platform was also noted to have been instrumental to the eventual National Assembly resolve to name the then vice president Goodluck Ebele Jonathan as president on continuous hospitalization of late President Umaru Musa Yaradua. More so, ‘Occupy Nigeria’ slogan was initiated via twitter to organize and mobilize people for mass protest against former President Goodluck Jonathan because of fuel subsidy removal in 2012. On that note, African Practice (2014:) asserts that the ability of the ‘Occupy Nigeria’ movement to force government to rescind in their decision to remove subsidy showed the people’s capacity to actualize their demand for change from the government at any time.

In a similar vein, the former Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan joined the fray when at the 26th convocation ceremony of the University of Port Harcourt, he promised that he would open a Facebook Page to interact with millions of Nigerians and also said:

*As I said on that day, there is an unchangeable power of good in the Nigerian nation and her youth and through this medium. I ... want Nigerians to give me the privilege of relating with them without the trappings of office.*

To achieve this dream of reaching out without the bureaucracies associated with his office, he set up the web page ([www.goodluckjonathanfor2011.com](http://www.goodluckjonathanfor2011.com)) that is similar to Facebook on September 15, 2010 and thereafter declared his interest to contest for the number one person in the country. President Jonathan, apparently aware of the tremendous impact of social networking sites, chose to bid his electoral fortune through digital interface. Additionally, the former Governor of Lagos State Raji Fashola was also one of the social media savvy. His

Facebook page draws a lot of accolades on his performances, and points out things Lagosians want to see or change. Other candidates like Nuhu Ribadu of ACN and some Governors joined the bandwagon with varying degrees of impact.

The Nigeria's 2015 electioneering campaign followed the trend of the 2015 election in its usage of social media as, opposition presidential and vice presidential candidates were very involving in their twitter accounts in which they engaged youths directly with the 'change' slogan they floated. Upon this massive youth engagement, many young people turned volunteers, campaigners and actively canvassed votes for them. Nairaland forum in 2015 (Akintide, 2015:4) revealed the opposition presidential candidate and his vice on 900 and 430 tweets respectively recorded a massive 117,000 and 80,000 respectively followers in five months of opening the account. The trend invariably weakened the traditional gate-keeping role of the media. On the other hand, President Goodluck Jonathan's twitter page that popularized him into winning the 2011 presidential election was virtually abandoned after the elections. This neglect sent a very bad signal on the perception of people towards the then president. Consequently, the forum reported; retweets on the page concerning the purported corrupt officials in Jonathan's government was a sure sign to the then president to wake up; but he never did. Even at that, Sahara reporters – which made its name in 2009 as the source to uncover the Nigerian underwear bomber that tried to bomb a US – bound flight with explosives; became the most populous social media and website with numerous followers (Rokaech (1989), cited in Emetumah, 2016:5. The site gave people the opportunity to give eye witness accounts that formal outlets may be afraid to air.

However, with the power of new digital technologies such as social media, there seems to be a new paradigm in political participation. Bottom-up communication has found its way into political circles in many countries where electorates are more empowered to express and enforce their political views (Abdelhay, 2012; Howard and Parks, 2012; Zuniga et al., 2010). It has also been observed that social media can be used by the electorate to gain enough momentum that can affect the political system and structures. Moreover, it has been noted that even the minority and previously ostracised groups can now have a meaningful influence on politics (Howard and Parks, 2012). This can be seen in the increased participation of young adults in political processes. This is directly induced by their use of social media (Baumgartner and Morris, 2010).

From the above it can be deduced that social media has the following impacts on governance:

- i. **Political participation:** governments have provided formal online channels for citizens to report crime, comment on policy, or petition for change. Largely this is restricted to small elite of internet users, and government websites are not popular. Citizens often use social media to organise between themselves for activism and protest.
- ii. **Transparency and accountability:** citizens have used social media to communicate report and map issues in society, which has increased pressure on governments to respond.
- iii. **Peace building:** social media have been used to monitor violence, which can support peace building, although media can also be used to incite violence.
- iv. **Private sector:** social media used by businesses can increase transparency and customer communication, as well as create new forms of leadership.
- v. **Internal governance:** new legislation and regulation of social media is controversial. Some online hate speech constitutes a crime, and some governments have shut down internet services in an attempt to control social media.

#### 2.1.6 Legal Framework for the Use of Social Media in Elections

Electoral Act 2010 is the legal framework that governs the conduct of elections in Nigeria. However, the Act did not provide specific guidelines on the use of social media in elections. Instead, it contains a number of sections that made references to the use of electronic media in the conduct of elections. These include:

- i. Section 100(4) of the Electoral Act 2010 which allows for the use of public electronic media for electioneering campaigns.
- ii. Section 101(1) which prohibits the broadcast, publication, advertisement or circulation of any campaign material over the “radio, television, newspaper, magazine, handbills, or any print or electronic media whatsoever called” during 24 hours to the opening of polling.
- iii. Section 154 which empowers INEC to make use of electronic media to conduct civic education and public enlightenment.

- iv. Section 34 which requires INEC to “publish by displaying or causing to be displayed at the relevant office(s) of the Commission and on the Commission’s website, a statement of the full names and addresses of all candidates standing nominated”, at least thirty days before the day of the election.
- v. Section 71 which require INEC to “cause to be posted on its notice board and website, a notice showing the candidates at the election and their scores; and the person declared as elected or returned at the election”.
- vi. Section 56 (2) which states that INEC “may take reasonable steps to ensure that voters with disabilities are assisted at the polling place by the provision of suitable means of communication, such as Braille, large embossed print or electronic devices or sign language interpretation, or off-site voting in appropriate cases”.
- vii. Section 52(1) (b) which states that “the use of electronic voting machine for the time being is prohibited”.

A close look at the way the term “electronic media” was used in the Electoral Act indicate that the Act is mindful of the opportunities provided by the electronic media and that it considers electronic media to be crucial in four major areas. Firstly, the Electoral Act envisages a key role for electronic media in campaigning; that is why it allows for use of electronic media (and by implication social media) in campaigns. Secondly, the Act anticipates that INEC’s capacity to provide civic education and enlightenment can be improved by the use of electronic media. Thirdly, the Electoral Act sees a role for electronic media in improving the transparency of the electoral process – this explains the requirement that vital information be disseminated through INEC’s website. Finally, the Act considers electronic media a useful tool that can be used to facilitate the participation of various segments of the society, particularly of People Living with Disabilities (PWDs), in the electoral process. This explains the provision which encourages INEC to provide electronic devices that could assist PWDs at the polling stations. One overarching point that can be drawn from the foregoing analysis is that there is a positive outlook for the use of electronic media to enhance the efficiency of the electoral process.

This positive outlook is however dimmed by the conservative stance of the Electoral Act on the issue of electronic voting, which is the highpoint of e-electioneering. Section 52(1) (b) of the Electoral Act prohibits the use of electronic voting machine. Many observers see this action

as a contradiction of the positive inclination that the Electoral Act has shown towards electronic media. But a deeper consideration of the reasons for the prohibition of electronic voting in Nigeria would point to fears by some politicians that electronic voting machines could be subjected to abuses, and considering the level of technological advancement in the country, security agencies and the judiciary may not be able to respond to such abuses.

Although the Electoral Act referred to some of the core issues relating to the use of electronic media in elections, yet, some vital elements did not receive attention. For example, Section 100 of the Electoral Act provides the guidelines for election campaigns, outlining regulations of the use of media during campaigns. Many expect the Electoral Act at this point to provide specific guidelines to govern the use of social media in elections. But that section was silent on the use of social media. As the experience of the 2011 elections has shown, social media has become a crucial tool for political campaigns as increasing number of politicians and political parties are creating websites, utilizing electronic messaging and social networking tools. INEC therefore needs to begin early to regulate the use of social media in elections in order to ensure that the Commission is not overwhelmed by the rapid evolution of social media technology.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

A number of theories have been developed to help understand the ways in which the use of social media has aided electioneering campaign and consequently improves the level of political participation in a democratic society. This section therefore reviews three major theories;

- i. Agenda Setting theory
- ii. Economic theory
- iii. Technological Determinism Theory

### **2.2.1 Agenda Setting Theory**

The Agenda setting theory of the media according to Zhu and Blood (1997:111), “is the process whereby the news media lead the public in assigning relative importance to various public issues”. This is because the action of the media is towards influencing people’s perception of what is important, acceptable, or desirable. Attention is drawn to certain aspects of reality and



away from others, thus influencing people in terms of what to think. This agenda-setting function of news casting can be achieved deliberately or accidentally by the size of headlines, order of appearance, choice of words, and length of coverage and this is possible because of the active audience which are conceived as selective in their programming choices and interpretation, motivated by different demands, and resistant to direct media influence; in contrast to the concept of mass audiences whom many perceived as passive and easily swayed. The concept represents a new way of thinking about audiences and their relationship to media communication. Folarin (1998:68) in his own view notes that “Agenda setting implies that the mass media predetermines what issues are regarded as important at a given time in a given society”.

In Folarin’s submission, the media through its educative and enlightenment functions brings to light different issues of importance during elections. Elections are paramount to the success of any democratic engagement in any country. Different media are usually employed by politicians, civil society groups, electoral bodies, government and its agencies in the quest for successful free and fair elections. Agenda setting does not ascribe to the media the power to determine what people actually think but it does ascribe to them the power to determine what people are thinking about. They set the agenda for political campaigns. Daniel (2003:121) argues that:

*The mass media force attention to certain issues and they build-up public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting that individuals in the mass media should think about, know about and have feelings about.*

### **2.2.2 Economic Theory**

The economic theory of democracy in the parlance called the “rational choice theory”, sees the interplay between politicians and electorates, political parties and voters or consumers and producers as players within a democratic environment and each has an interest which he tries to achieve. According to this theory, a political party wants to maximize supports by defining its manifesto and programs in order to gain support. While electorates or voters expect political utility which is satisfaction of their needs. Voters will go for a political party or a candidate that

will provide such utility for them. Prominent among scholars of the economic theory of democracy are: Antony Downs (1957) and Kenneth Arrow (1951). They both believe that if rational choice can determine the level of market, it can also determine voting behavior. In the argument of Downs (1957, 295-296): Our main thesis is that parties in democratic politics are analogous to entrepreneurs in a profit seeking economy. So as, to attain their private ends, they formulate whatever policies they believe will gain the most votes, just as entrepreneurs produce whatever products they believe will gain the most profits for the same reason. In order to examine the implications of this thesis, we have assumed that citizens behave rationally in politics.

This theory is premised on three basic principles which are: (a) both political parties and voters are rational, because each has an interest to maintain, Political parties to maximize supports, while voters for political utility, which is the satisfaction of their needs as electorates (b) the political system implies a certain degree of consistency that supports predictions of decisions. This comes in where parties fulfill their promises and the electorates give their supports, which produces balance of trade (c) despite the degree of consistency, there exists uncertainty. Uncertainty as there is tendency for parties not to translate their programs into action, which will directly change the voting behavior of the voters (Downs, 1957).

### **2.2.3 Technological Determinism Theory**

The concept “technological determinism theory” explains the setting of this study. The theory which was propounded by Marshall McLuhan (1964), a Canadian communication scholar, who observed new media technologies in communication, would soon determine social changes, turning the world into a global village. He believes socio-political, economic and cultural changes are inevitably based on development and diffusion of technology. McLuhan argued technology undoubtedly causes specific changes on how people think, how society is structured and the form of culture created. This theory portends that, given the emergence of Internet and its adoption and relevance in mobilizing people for political activities, there is bound to be an impact on the electoral process and overall political environment. Communication is the basic tenet of technological determinism theory. The theory seeks to explain social and historical phenomena in terms of the principal determining factor (technology). The theory states that communication technologies in general are the prime causes

of changes in society. Reinforcing this position, Chandler (1995) affirms that technological determinists interpret technology in general and communication technologies in particular as the basis of society in the past, present and even the future. However, as far as communication is concerned, we are increasingly dealing with a world without frontiers. The amazing technological revolution, which McLuhan was so fascinated about, has not stood still, same goes to the people that handle the process and what they do (Oliver, 2011).

According to Baran (2004, p. 22), technological determinism is the thinking in some quarters that it is machine and their development that drive historical, economic political and cultural changes. There is however, a perspective to technological determinism, which sees technology as more neutral and claim the way people use it is what gives it significance. This perspective that accepts technology as one of the many factors that shape historical, economic, political and cultural changes is ultimately determined by how much power it is given by the people and cultures that use it (Baran, 2004). These two perspectives of technological determinism pose an important question: are we more or less powerless in the wake of technological advances like Internet? If we are at the mercy of technology as the former perspective argues, the culture that surrounds us will not be of our making, and the best we can hope to do is to make our way reasonably well in a world outside our own control. But if these technological advances are indeed neutral and their power resides in how we choose to use them as maintained by the latter perspective, we can utilize them responsibly and thoughtfully to construct and maintain whatever culture we want. In relation to this study therefore, the theory presupposes that since there are other countervailing factors that restrain and shape the effect or influence of new media, the latter perspective of this theory is more appropriate in this study.

#### **2.2.4 Application of Agenda Setting Theory to Influence of Social Media on Voters Behaviour**

Theoretical framework paradigms that could be used in analyzing the role of the social media on voters behaviour in elections abound but the theoretical framework of this study will be limited to the Agenda Setting Theory. The rationale behind adopting the Agenda Setting Media Theory in this study is because it explains the role or function of the media in determining public agenda before, during and after elections. It further describes the influence of the media in molding and shaping the opinion of the public towards some topical issues, of which election is

paramount. In fact, the main trust of the agenda setting theory is that the mass media set agenda on the burning issue in the society for public discourse.

Furthermore, the Agenda Setting Theory has been viewed in different ways. McCombs, et al (1997:38) make the distinction between the first and second levels of agenda setting. The first level agenda setting deals with objects on the media and public agenda. This is the traditional domain of agenda setting research in which the media are seen as influencing what issues are included on the public agenda. On the other hand, the second level of agenda setting looks at attributes of these objects. At this level, the media not only suggest what the public should think about but also influence how people should think about the issue.

According to Folarin (1998:68), the elements involved in agenda setting include:

- i. The quality or frequency of reporting
- ii. Prominence given to the reports – through headline, display, pictures and layout in newspapers, magazines, films, graphics or tuning on radio and television
- iii. The degree of conflict generated in the reports; and
- iv. iv. Cumulative media specific effects overtime.

The media, most especially social media, through the above elements can colour events by using them in a particular way or refusing to use them at all. These significantly shaped the conduct and the outcome of the 2015 Nigeria's Presidential election.

## **2.3 Review of related Empirical Studies**

This present research study is about the Influence of Social Media on Voters Behaviour in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. Knowledge is dynamic and hence there will always be improvement, criticism and update in all researches. This is why it's referred to as Research. Hence in this context the present study moves to review empirical studies that are similar, directly and indirectly related to the present study on an International (Global), African and Indigenous level.

### **2.3.1 Review of Empirical International literature**

Larsson and Moe (2011) noticed that, social media are increasingly becoming popular among politicians and their organizations as a means to disseminate political messages, learn

about the interest and needs of constituents and the broader public, raise funds, and build networks of support, but that most of the researcher find it hard to identify the most utilized social media tool for electioneering. Thus, they found it necessary to conduct a research on the use of social media for political communication. They carried out a study on Twitter use during the 2011 Swedish election and found that Twitter also serves as a channel for disseminating political information and not for political dialog with the electorates. Their study revealed that Swedish political elites see Twitter as a medium to communicate political contents to the people and not necessarily as a tool to engage the electorates in political conversation.

The above study is similar to the present study but in their research they only analyzed the use of Twitter as a tool of disseminating political information which aids electoral success with no emphasis laid on other social media tools such as Facebook.

Alex (2010), conducted a study on “Facebook, Twitter And Barack Obama: New Media And The 2008presidential Elections”. This study examines the role of new media in the 2008 Presidential election, asking the question of whether the consumption of both new media and old media in the 2008 Presidential election have a significant effect on a person's likelihood to engage in the political process by voting, or whether disparities exist by type of media. Through a quantitative analysis based on data provided by the Pew Center’s Internet and American Life project, this study finds that contrary to the popular rhetoric, old media consumption still remains dominant in explaining voting behavior. This study characterizes new media as that which is two-way in communication and has low barriers to entry and virtually zero marginal cost of participating -- as contrasted with old media which remains cost-prohibitively expensive.

This above study is relevant to the present study as it guided the researcher recognizing the importance of social media in an election campaign, as the effective usage of both Facebook & Twitter served as potent tool of electoral success of President Barrack Obama.

Neha (2014) carried out a study with the purpose of establishing the Effect of Social Media on Individual Voters in India. This research studies whether political campaigns that are more social media savvy ultimately garner more votes. Secondly, the study also seeks to ascertain if use of Facebook and Twitter for sending messages to potential voters for their support – can positively affect only the younger persons possibility to cast a vote or it has affecton all age groups. The sample size for this study was 150 Indian citizens who were above

the 18 years age who agreed to take part in the quantitative element of this research investigation. The research was conducted using a cross-sectional quantitative (Survey Questionnaire) design. Survey methodology is behavior-oriented research that focuses on the actions of the respondents. Probability sampling technique has been used to identify the sample from the overall population. The research shows that due to the presence of social media in Indian politics and political campaigning, the influence on individual voter behavior is limited. Moreover, they consider it is very important for a political leader to have a profile on these social networking sites. Lastly, although twitter has most number of registered users in India, as per the survey response Twitter is the site, which is never used even once a month by most of the respondents.

This above study is similar to the present study, as it is evident from the study that the major portion of the active users on social networking websites became heavily reliant on social media for seeking updates regarding political leaders. The present study differs slightly from the previous study as it will equally examine the influence of social media on voters behaviour.

Abdillah (2014) carried out a study titled, "Social Media as Political Party Campaign in Indonesia". The researcher explores the advantages and social media implementation of any political party in Indonesia legislative elections 2014. The researcher visited and analyzed social media used by the contestants, such as: Facebook, and Twitter. The researcher collected data from social media until the end of April 2014. This study discusses the use of social media by political parties and their features. The results of this study indicate that social media are; effective tool for current and future political campaigns, reach the voters and supporters instantly, used by Political parties to show their logo/icon, and last but not least quick count results also show that political parties which using social media as part of their campaigns won the legislative elections.

The present study differs from the above study in terms of methodology as this study explores both the use of qualitative and quantitative methods of data gathering.

Kayode et al (2015) conducted a study, in South Africa, with the objective of this research meant to analyze the effect of the Use of Social Media for Political Marketing. This study indicates that the electorates utilized the Internet, mobile technologies and social media extensively. It further indicates that the electorates are willing to engage and be engaged on

political issues through social media. A conceptual framework for the use of social media for political marketing proposed at the end of the study suggests strategic, tactical and operational considerations. The social media strategy should also be synchronised with the other marketing efforts.

The above research is similar to the present study, as the present study sees social media as a tool for political marketing which has in recent times served as avenue for electorates to engage in political issues. Nevertheless, this present study intends to examine how social media influenced the behaviour of voters.

### **2.3.2 Empirical studies in Nigeria**

Okoro and Nwafor (2013) conducted a study titled “social and political participation in Nigeria during the 2011 general elections: The lapses and the lessons”. The objectives of the study were to find out the role played by social media in the political participation of Nigerians, observe the lapses in the use of social media during the elections, and the lessons learnt from social media use in the course of the election. The study was anchored on the uses and gratifications theory. The survey research method was used. The findings of their study revealed that 93% of the respondents attested to the fact they used social media for political participation during the election. Respondents also said they used different social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, SMS calls, and YouTube to participate during the election. The study also identified some lapses in the cause of the use of social media in the electioneering process.

Although the above study is similar to the present study as it both considered the importance and lapses in the use of social media for electioneering campaign, but this study examines uses agenda setting theory as its theoretical framework.

Edegoh and Asemah (2014) also conducted a study titled Social media use among students of private universities in Anambra State, Nigeria in which they surveyed 600 students using the questionnaire to find out the most frequently visited social medium by students, among others. Finding of their study revealed that the most visited social medium by students of privately owned universities in Anambra State is Facebook {291(50%)}. Edegoh and Asemah (2014) also reported that other social media used by the students they investigated include Wikipedia {150(26%)}, YouTube {53(9%)}, Twitter {35(6%)}, and Myspace {41(7%)}. However, the present study differs from this study in the aspect of its methodology as the present



study will consider both qualitative and quantitative approach in gathering data to answer research questions raised in this study.

Edegoh and Anunike (2016), in their study examined voters' assessment of social media use for the 2015 electioneering campaigns by the two leading political parties in Nigeria. The major objectives of the study were to determine the extent to which the two leading political parties in Nigeria (and their candidates) made use of the social media for their electioneering campaign activities and to ascertain the specific activities they purveyed through the social media. The study was anchored on the Agenda-setting theory of the mass media, adopted quantitative research approach, surveyed 105 respondents purposively drawn from Awka, Onitsha and Nnewi (the three main urban towns in Anambra State), and used the questionnaire as instrument of data collection. The percentage method was also used to analyse data. Findings of the study show that the two leading political parties in Nigeria did not use the social media much in the electioneering campaigns of the 2015 elections, that the candidates of the two leading political parties utilised the social media more than candidates of other political parties in the election, and that the activities they disseminated in the social media bordered mainly on announcement of party flag bearers, accusations and counter accusations of electoral fraud being strategised by the other political party or INEC's connivance with one party or the other to rig the election.

This study is similar to the present study, but they did not make inferences to other stakeholders (such as INEC, media expert, political analyst/expert) in electioneering on social media can better be utilized for electioneering process. Hence, the present study shall include a qualitative approach in its data gathering as interviews will be conducted to solicit for opinion of other relevant stakeholders in election apart from the electorates.

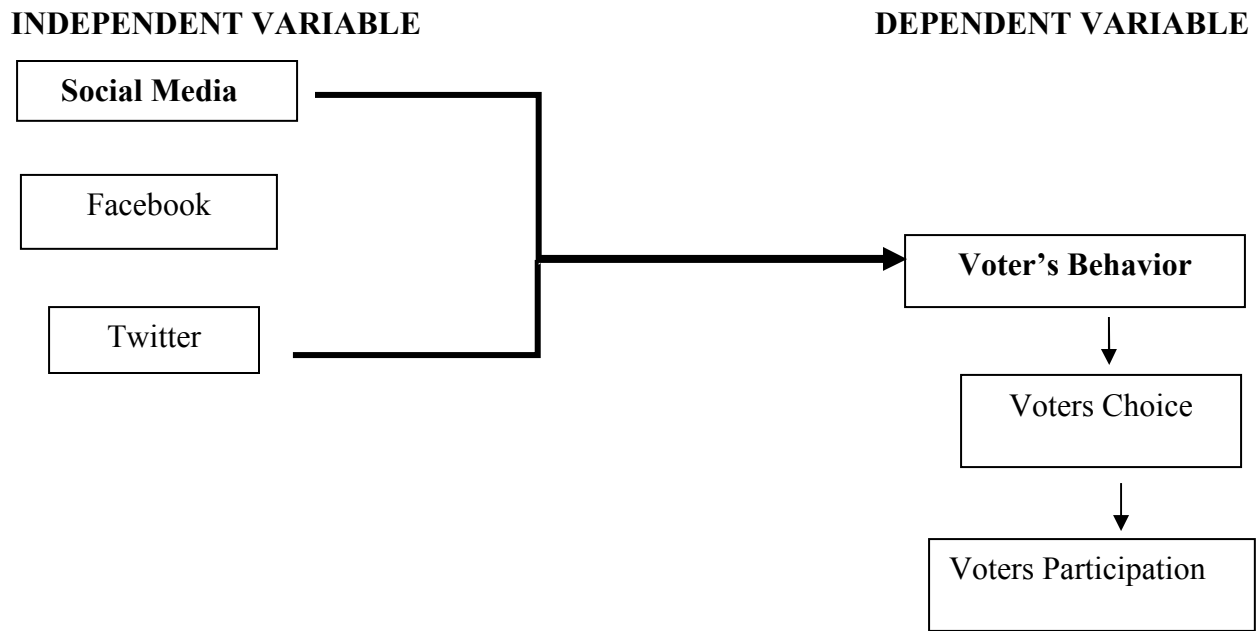
#### **2.4 Implications of the Literature Reviewed on the Present Study**

This study reviews a wide range of empirical studies that examined the use of Social Media in influencing the behaviour of voters in order to draw conclusion about the extent to which these new instruments are in fact linked with behaviour of voters in the 2015 Presidential election. There is no doubt that Social Media have the potential to innovate, accelerate, enrich, and deepen skills, to motivate and engage more political participation as well as improve good governance.



Despite the availability of literatures on social media, there is no comprehensive knowledge of how this “new form of media” has influenced the voting behaviour of voters in terms of choice and political participation. and this is the literature have been inconclusive on the subject matter as researcher will always create areas for further study in which the current study seeks to fill the gaps as identified in the empirical review above. Most of the studies reviewed were done in using only a quantitative approach to the study. The present study shall consider the usage of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in gathering necessary data required for this study. It is also necessary to note that there is no exact work done in the area of the present study that adopted similar method as evidenced in the review. The figure below provides further focus of the study:

**FIGURE 1: VARIABLE TABLE**



As shown in figure 1 above, the independent variables for the study are facebook and twitter while the dependent variable is voters behaviour.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter explain in details the methods and procedures the research study employed. It also described the method adopted in carrying out the research.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The research design is an ex-post factor study which will employ a combination of the quantitative and qualitative research methods. Many researchers have pointed out the importance of mixed methods particularly in comparison to mono-methods (Creswell, 2003; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004) like the quantitative or qualitative research. Mixed methods research involves combining qualitative and quantitative models of research so that evidence may be supported and knowledge is increased in a more meaningful manner than either of the two research designs could achieve alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

The limitations of mono research designs informed the use of mixed method in this research; Quantitative research design provides a more scientific, reliable and concrete answer to the research questions which is viewed as a more scientific way of measuring research variables through the use of statistical tools. However, its design does not provide rich and in-depth analyses of individual phenomenon. Conversely, the qualitative research design provides a subjective approach to answering research questions; the analyses of complex situations may not always need the use of statistical or quantifiable tools. In most cases, qualitative approach is used to substantiate the quantitative approach by providing contributory factors and interpretations. These, therefore emphasize rationale behind the combination of both methods in this research, as quantitative outcomes of the study can be reinforced by the qualitative approach.

#### 3.3 Population for the Study

The target population of this study comprised all the accredited voters in Ilorin-Metropolis in the 2015 general elections. According to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), as contained in the summary of the results of 2015 Presidential Election (see Appendix I), Ilorin-Metropolis accredited 181,935 voters for the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin Metropolis. Ilorin metropolis comprises of Ilorin South, Ilorin East and Ilorin West local government areas. A letter was written and addressed to the Resident Electoral Commissioner,

Independent National Electoral Commission, Ilorin, Kwara State (see Appendix II) and after it was processed, the 2015 Presidential Election list of registered and accredited voters of Ilorin Metropolis was given to the researcher. Below table contains the records of registered and accredited voters of Ilorin-metropolis in the 2015 Presidential Election:

**Table: 3.1: Target population.**

| S/N | Name Of LGA  | Number Of Registered Voters | Number Of Accredited Voters |
|-----|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.  | Ilorin-East  | 122,221                     | 48,240                      |
| 2.  | Ilorin-South | 117,577                     | 42,456                      |
| 3.  | Ilorin-West  | 194,522                     | 91,239                      |
|     | TOTAL        | 434,320                     | 181,935                     |

**Source: INEC.**

### 3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample is a subset of a population selected to participate in the study, it is a fraction of the whole, selected to participate in the research project (Brink 1996:133; Polit & Hungler 1999:227). Based on the tables of required sampled size for a specified stated population, as stated in research-advisors (2006), a sample size of three hundred and eighty-four (384) accredited voters was used as the sample for the study. However, this research study employed a multistage sampling technique: with the first stage involved selection of three local governments that make up of Ilorin metropolis, second stage employed simple random technique to select respondents from each LGA. This was done to give equal chance for all electorates to be selected in the area of study. Below table contains the list of sampled respondents:

**Table: 3.2: sampled population and sample size.**

| Location                              | Name Of LGA  | Number of Accredited Voters | Number of Sampled Voters |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ILORIN<br>METROPOLIS,<br>KWARA STATE. | Ilorin-East  | 48,240                      | 102                      |
|                                       | Ilorin-South | 42,456                      | 90                       |
|                                       | Ilorin-West  | 91,239                      | 192                      |
|                                       | <b>Total</b> | <b>181,935</b>              | <b>384</b>               |

The sample of the study consists of three hundred and eighty-four (384) accredited voters.

A total of 9 (nine) people was considered for interview to fulfill the qualitative aspect of the study. Respondents in this category will be illustrated in table 3.3 below:

**Table: 3.3 below contain the target population for interview and sample size.**

| S/N | Target Population for interview | Sample size |
|-----|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1.  | Academicians                    | 2           |
| 2.  | I.C.T Experts                   | 2           |
| 3.  | Media Experts                   | 2           |
| 4.  | Nigerian Labour Congress        | 1           |
| 5.  | INEC Staffs                     | 2           |
|     | Total                           | 9           |

The table above explains in the numbers of people considered for interview as well as the category of people they are drawn.

### 3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

Close-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview are employed as the instruments of data collection in this study. The rationale for adoption of use of questionnaires in this study is due to its comparative research advantage over other instruments; it is a way of sourcing vital information which cannot be obtained through the use of library materials, it respects the anonymity of respondents and provides a method through which the anonymity of the respondents can equally be measured.

In designing the questionnaire, the researcher put the research objectives and related questions. This, therefore, determined the nature and type of survey questions that asked from respondents. Each item on the questionnaire will be measure with a close-ended 5-point Likert scale and other nominal scale. It allows respondents to select the degree to which they agree or disagree on a question, ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The instrument will be named Electorate Questionnaire (EQ).

The questionnaire was divided into two (2) sections; Section A involved demographic information which the study aims to elicit personal data from the respondents. It includes the age, sex, educational level and Occupation.

Similarly, for the interview, a semi-structured interview guide will be prepared, consisting of latent issues raised in the interview. The decision to use semi-structured method centred on the fact that it allows for the extraction of in-depth information from the respondents

and the flexibility of gauging and probing certain necessary issues which needed more exploration. The semi-structured questions dwelt on issues pertaining to how the use of social media in the 2015 Presidential Election.

### **3.6 Validation of the Instrument**

This has to do with the investigation of the data collected. It is an attempt to satisfy how empirical the sources of data are, whether the data collected is a real evidence of what is being studied. The instrument used in this study was given for vetting to my supervisor who is an expert in the field of Political Science as well as Measurement and Evaluation. This was done in other that the face and content validity of the instruments be thoroughly scrutinized. When this was done, all necessary corrections and modifications, made by my supervisor was effected and also the items or research statement(s) were reconstructed based on the satisfactory comments of the supervisor.

### **3.7 Reliability of the Instrument**

Reliability of any instrument aims at testing the consistency or stability of the test score over time and to indicate that the items were reliable within the acceptable limits. The questionnaires and interview adopted as instrument designed to collect data for this study are considered to be very reliable.

In ensuring the reliability of the questionnaires, it will therefore, be administered on electorate with a minimum age of 18years and minimum qualification of secondary school leaving certificate to ensure they have actual knowledge about the questions they were asked. To ensure data gathered through questionnaire are reliable a pilot study was carried out on small sample from the target population. This was done to enable the researcher to determine the reliability of the instrument i.e. able to measure what it is supposed and meant to measure. This also help the researcher to know if the items in the questionnaire are free from ambiguity. This is made the questionnaire flexible for corrections and for kick-off in the field work. Also, data collected from the pilot study was used to calculate the reliability coefficient using Cronbach Alpha.

### **3.8 Administration and Collection of the Instrument**

The researcher makes personal visit to each of the selected local government to administer question on the electorate who were either indigenes/residents in such locality. The

EQ was given to the electorates to respond to them and whilst they are answering it, the researcher waited for immediate collation. All this, the researcher visited the sampled local governments within a duration of three weeks i.e. one week for each selected local government.

### **3.9 Procedure of Data Analysis**

The study examined five (5) statistical tests; reliability test, Descriptive statistical analysis, Normality test, Linear Correlation analysis, Regression analysis using SPSS Version 23. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the study variables particularly the sample profile. Regression analysis was used to test the research hypotheses, determine the existence of a significant relationship between the variables under study and to ascertain the predictive power of dependent and independent variables. Findings from qualitative research were analyzed thematically and used in building upon the quantitative findings.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

The research seeks permission to conduct the field work by obtaining a cover letter from the Department of Politics and Governance, Kwara State University, Malete. Additionally, voluntary participation in the study was ensured by explaining the benefits of the research to the respondents and also assuring them of anonymity and confidentiality. The participants will be informed that participation in the study is voluntary and were free to withdraw at any point in time, without explanations, justifications or repercussions. This is in concordance with ethical considerations presented in other researches (Doyle 2007; Locke et al 2013) such as, voluntary participation, no harm to respondents, anonymity and confidentiality, identifying purpose and sponsor, and analysis and reporting.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses in the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the findings quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative analysis of the data is carried out using SPSS Version 23. The study examines five (5) statistical tests; reliability test, Descriptive statistical analysis, Normality test, Linear Correlation analysis, Regression analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the study variables particularly the sample profile. Regression analysis was used to test the research hypotheses, determine the existence of a significant relationship between the variables under study and to ascertain the predictive power of dependent and independent variables. Findings from qualitative research were analyzed thematically and used in building upon the quantitative findings.

#### 4.2 Pilot Study

A pilot study is a small-scale model of the actual data collection process of the study in order to discover the possible limitations, uncertainty and problems that may arise in all aspects of the research process. Hence, the pilot study enables the researcher to make appropriate corrections before collecting the data. A pilot test should be conducted prior to collecting the actual data (Blessing et al, 2009). This enables the researcher to refine the questions in the questionnaire so that the respondent does not have any problem answering the questions as well eliminating any problems involved in data recording.

Questionnaire designed for the study consists of five sections (A-E), categorized according to the research questions. The first section covers demography of respondents, while the following sections focused on accountability of troops during peacekeeping, factors motivating accountability during peacekeeping, domestic work environment of the troops and attitude towards misconduct respectively. Prior to the administration, a face validity test was conducted in order to critically ascertain whether the questionnaire covers the stated research question and also remove questions irrelevant to the study in a bid to avoid what Gray (2004:207) defined the “Zone of Neglect” and “Zone of Invalidity”.

For the pilot test, 30 questionnaires were self-administered to and collected from electorates in Ilorin-metropolis. The respondents include electorates from Ilorin-east, Ilorin-south

and Ilorin-west local government respectively. The purpose of the pilot study was to identify potentially difficult, misinterpreted, ambiguous questions and also the time taken to answer the questions.

According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2007:154), reliability refers to the “the extent to which a measuring instrument contains variable errors, that is, errors that appear inconsistently between observations either during any one measurement procedure or each time a given variable is measured by the same instrument”. Cronbach Alpha is the most commonly used reliability measure in research. The Cronbach coefficient is an indicator of the internal consistency of the instruments which the values vary on a scale of 0 to 1; the closer the score is to 1, the more reliable it will be considered. The following tables detail the reliability scores of the dependent and independent variables.

#### 4.2.1 Reliability Test – Dependent Variable

**Table 4.2.1 Pilot Test of Reliability – VOTERS BEHAVIOUR**

##### Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | Number of Items |
|------------------|-----------------|
| .767             | 6               |

##### Item Total Statistics

|   | Scale Mean<br>if Item<br>Deleted | Scale<br>Variance if<br>Item Deleted | Corrected<br>Item-Total<br>Correlation | Cronbach's<br>Alpha if<br>Item<br>Deleted |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Political party of candidate inspired your choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election        | 8.4667                           | 2.740                                | .481                                   | .815                                      |
| The personal integrity of candidate inspired your choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election | 8.4000                           | 1.972                                | .661                                   | .629                                      |
| Political campaigns messages received on social media   | 8.0667                           | 2.754                                | .723                                   | .601                                      |



|   |         |        |      |      |
|---|---------|--------|------|------|
| platforms aided my choice of candidate  |         |        |      |      |
| The manifesto of candidates influenced my voting decision in the 2015 presidential election       | 8.4000  | 1.972  | .661 | .629 |
| Lack of interest in politics constitute a reason for low voters turnout in election.              | 10.1000 | 15.884 | .566 | .640 |
| Lack of adequate provision of security for electorates makes people participate less in election. | 10.0000 | 15.579 | .717 | .587 |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The table 4.2.1 shows the reliability test result of the Dependent variable; Voter's Behavior. The scale scored a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.767 using six items. Therefore, since the result is above 0.6, it is considered acceptable in accordance to the standard. Also, the item total correlation also shows that the variables have high correlations with one another ranging from .4 to .7. No values were removed and therefore, the score and six items are used for the actual survey.

#### 4.2.2. Reliability Test – Independent Variables

**Table 4.2.2: Pilot Test of Reliability – FACEBOOK**

Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .730             | 6          |

Total Item Statistics

|  | Scale Mean if Deleted | Scale Variance if Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Every adult of 18years in Ilorin-Metropolis has a facebook account | 39.9333               | 33.651                    | .118                             | .745                             |

|  |         |        |      |      |
|--|---------|--------|------|------|
| Facebook is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis                        | 40.5000 | 33.983 | .053 | .759 |
| Facebook changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election  | 39.6000 | 32.386 | .326 | .718 |
| Facebook pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them and make informed political decision in the 2015 presidential election | 39.8667 | 30.464 | .281 | .729 |
| Political discussion on facebook in the 2015 Presidential elections is more robust and informative                                       | 39.9333 | 27.995 | .521 | .687 |
| Use of facebook for political campaigns arouses electorate interest in politics  | 40.1667 | 29.040 | .521 | .690 |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.2.2 shows the reliability test result for the independent variable; Facebook. It scores a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.730 using six (6) items and is considered reliable measurement. The items are also properly correlated with one another. Additionally, none of the variables were removed and therefore used for the actual survey.

**Table 4.2.3: Pilot Test of Reliability – TWITTER**

Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .790             | 6          |

Total Item Statistics

|  | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Every adult of 18years in Ilorin-Metropolis has a twitter account  | 38.3667                    | 16.171                         | .623                             | .753                             |
| Twitter is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis | 38.3000                    | 18.217                         | .252                             | .796                             |
| Twitter changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election                 | 38.9000                    | 16.300                         | .391                             | .786                             |
| Twitter pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them in the 2015 presidential election               | 38.0000                    | 18.276                         | .355                             | .784                             |
| Political discussion on twitter in the 2015 Presidential elections is more robust and informative                | 38.5667                    | 16.530                         | .565                             | .761                             |
| Use of twitter for political campaigns arouses electorate interest in politics                                   | 38.9667                    | 17.206                         | .342                             | .788                             |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.2.3 shows the reliability test result for the independent variable; Twitter. It scores a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.790 using six (6) items and is considered reliable measurement. The

items are also properly correlated with one another ranging from .2- .6. Additionally, none of the variables were removed and therefore used for the actual survey.

**Table 4.2.4 Pilot Test of Reliability – CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE**

Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach's Alpha <sup>a</sup> | N of Items |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| .722                          | 5          |

Item-Total Statistics

|  | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Lack of internet access constitutes challenges to social media usage in 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin metropolis                  | 10.0000                    | 15.684                         | .491                             | .673                             |
| Social media is easily used to smear opponents in the 2015 Presidential election   | 10.6000                    | 18.989                         | .267                             | .757                             |
| Social media is used to spread false information in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis.                                 | 10.1000                    | 18.200                         | .421                             | .697                             |
| Social media is used to spread hate speeches in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis.                                     | 10.1000                    | 15.884                         | .566                             | .640                             |
| Lack of adequate regulations of social media constitute a challenge to its usage in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis. | 10.0000                    | 15.579                         | .717                             | .587                             |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.2.4 shows the reliability test result for the challenges associated with social media. It scores a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.722 using ten (5) items and is considered reliable measurement. The items are also properly correlated with one another ranging from .2- .7. Additionally, none of the variables were removed and therefore used for the actual survey.

**Table 4.2.5: Pilot Test of Reliability – SOCIAL MEDIA AND TRADITIONAL MEDIA**

| Reliability Statistics  |                            |                                |                                  |                                  |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha  | N of Items                 |                                |                                  |                                  |
| .737  | 5                          |                                |                                  |                                  |
| Total Item Statistics   |                            |                                |                                  |                                  |
|   | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
| Social media provide additional political information which traditional forms of media do not provide in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis.                                     | 18.2333                    | 2.461                          | .627                             | .646                             |
| Aspirants who effectively use social media had more votes in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin metropolis than those who used other forms of media.  | 17.9667                    | 2.723                          | .431                             | .715                             |
| I believe that social media is a strong tool for reaching more people and creating awareness for political purposes than traditional media  | 17.9333                    | 2.202                          | .594                             | .651                             |
| With social media Nigerians were better mobilized for political participation in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin metropolis than the previous elections in which traditional media was used. | 17.9667                    | 2.585                          | .431                             | .717                             |
| Social media provides a level playing ground to all aspirants in the 2015 Presidential election than traditional forms of media.  | 17.7667                    | 2.668                          | .430                             | .716                             |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.2.5 shows the reliability test result for the advantage of social media over traditional media. It scores a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.74 using five (5) items and is considered reliable measurement. The items are also properly correlated with one another ranging from .4 - .6. Additionally, none of the variables were removed and therefore used for the actual survey.

**Table 4.2.6 Summary of Reliability Test for Pilot Study**

| Variables                            | Initial Number of Items | Final Number of Items | Cronbach Alpha |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1 Voters Behaviour <sup>2</sup>      | 3                       | 6                     | 0.77           |
| 2 Facebook <sup>1</sup>              | 8                       | 6                     | 0.73           |
| 3 Twitter <sup>1</sup>               | 8                       | 6                     | 0.79           |
| 4 Challenges of social media         | 4                       | 5                     | 0.72           |
| 5 Social media and Traditional media | 7                       | 5                     | 0.73           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>30</b>               | <b>28</b>             |                |

Note: <sup>1</sup>Independent and <sup>2</sup>Dependent Variable

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The summary of the results of the reliability test as displayed in Table 4.2.6 shows that the questionnaire is reliable; the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency of the whole survey ranged from 0.72 to 0.79. According to studies, levels of 0.70 or more are considered a good reliability.

## 4.3 Descriptive Analysis

### 4.3.1 Response of Questionnaire Administered

| Questionnaires Administered | Frequency  | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Return                      | 380        | 98.9       |
| Non-return                  | 4          | 1.1        |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>384</b> | <b>100</b> |

The above table shows that a total of 384 questionnaires was administered, 380 were returned and 4 were not returned. The analysis is based on the 380 questionnaires that were returned.

### 4.3.2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The first section (SECTION A) of the questionnaire captures demographic characteristics of the respondents. The respondents are asked to provide their sex, age, level of education and occupation. Table 4.3.1 provides the distribution of their responses;

**Table 4.3.2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

| <b>Sex</b>                    | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Male                          | 226              | 59.5%             |
| Female                        | 154              | 40.5%             |
| Total                         | 380              | 100               |
| <b>Age Group</b>              | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| 18-30 years                   | 192              | 50.5%             |
| 31-40 years                   | 117              | 30.8%             |
| 41-50 years                   | 56               | 14.7%             |
| 51years & above               | 15               | 3.9%              |
| Total                         | 380              | 100               |
| <b>Education</b>              | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| Secondary                     | 65               | 17.1%             |
| University/ Polytechnic Level | 263              | 69.2%             |
| Others                        | 52               | 13.7%             |
| Total                         | 380              | 100%              |
| <b>Occupation</b>             | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| Employee                      | 132              | 34.7%             |
| Self-Employed                 | 60               | 15.8%             |
| Unemployed                    | 52               | 13.7%             |
| Student                       | 136              | 35.8%             |
| Total                         | 380              | 100               |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

In terms of the sex of the respondents, the table above shows that majority of the respondents are male with an overwhelming frequency of 226(59.5) while female has a frequency of 154 (40.5%). This is due to the fact that the male respondents made themselves more available to the study.

The table 4.3.1 also displays the age group of the respondents; the figure indicates that individuals between the ages of 18-30years constitute most of the response in this survey with fifty percent (50.5%). Individuals between the age of 31-40years were also widely represented with a response of thirty (30.8%) percent. 14% constitutes individuals between the ages of 41-50 while 3% represents individuals between ages of 51 & above.

Additionally, the table also displays educational qualification of the respondents; most of the respondents (69.2%) have qualification up to the polytechnic/university level. This is followed by 17.1% of the respondents who hold secondary school certificates and 13.7% who have other educational qualifications. Therefore, from indication all educational levels were duly represented in this questionnaire.

The occupation distribution indicates that responses were made of people who are employed, self-employed, unemployed and employed. This is key to allow the study to do a cross analysis to understand the level of impact on different fragment of the sample. As shown on the table, there are more students (35.8%) and employees (34.7%) than those who are either unemployed or self-employed.

#### **4.3.3 Objective One: To determine the extent at which the usage of Facebook and Twitter influence voter's behavior in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis.**

Variables 1-18 in Section B was tailored to seek information regarding the respondents' opinion on influence of facebook and twitter usage on voter's behavior. Also, interview was conducted with nine individuals in other to corroborate findings from both methods. The below tables hereby provides a breakdown of their responses.



**Table 4.3.3: Political party of candidate inspired your choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 57        | 15.0       |
| Agree             | 51        | 13.4       |
| Undecided         | 80        | 21.1       |
| Disagree          | 90        | 23.7       |
| Strongly Disagree | 102       | 26.8       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

From table 4.3.3, findings from the table above reveals that majority of the respondents disagree regarding the opinion that political party of candidate inspired their choice of candidate in the 2015 Presidential election. 15.% strongly agree with the notion and 13.4% agree while 23.7% disagree and 26.8%strongly disagree. Only 21% of the total population were undecided on the issue.

**Table 4.3.4: The personal integrity of candidate inspired your choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 145       | 38.2       |
| Agree             | 78        | 20.5       |
| Undecided         | 30        | 7.9        |
| Disagree          | 75        | 19.7       |
| Strongly Disagree | 52        | 13.7       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

From table 4.3.4, findings demonstrate affirmative responses regarding the opinion that personal integrity of candidate inspired their choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election. 38.2% strongly agree with the notion and 20.5% agree. However, a quarter of the total population does not hold the same opinion, as 19.7% out of the 100% respondents disagree while 13.7 strongly disagree. Only 7.9% of the total population were undecided on the issue.

**Table 4.3.5: Political campaigns messages received on social media platforms aided my choice of candidate presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 85        | 22.4       |
| Agree             | 105       | 27.6       |
| Undecided         | 40        | 10.5       |
| Disagree          | 85        | 22.4       |
| Strongly Disagree | 65        | 17.1       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

From the table above statement regarding whether political campaign messages on social media platforms aided their choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election, half of the total population (50%) strongly agree/agree with the statement while 39.5% strongly disagree/disagree and 10.5% are undecided.

**Table 4.3.6: The manifesto of candidates influenced my voting decision in the 2015 presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 69        | 18.2       |
| Agree             | 31        | 8.2        |
| Undecided         | 51        | 13.4       |
| Disagree          | 146       | 38.4       |
| Strongly Disagree | 83        | 21.8       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.3.6 above, sought to know whether manifesto of candidate influenced their voting decision in the 2015 presidential election. From the table, 18.2% strongly agree with the notion, 8.2% agree, 21.8% strongly disagree and 38.4% disagrees. Only, 13.4% were undecided on the statement.

**Table 4.3.7: Lack of interest in politics constitute a reason for low voter's turnout in election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 100       | 26.3       |
| Agree             | 140       | 36.8       |
| Undecided         | 25        | 6.6        |
| Disagree          | 50        | 13.2       |
| Strongly Disagree | 65        | 17.1       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The above table sought to whether lack of interest in politics constitute a reason for low voter's turnout. From the table, 26.3% strongly agree with the notion, 36.8% agree, 17.1% strongly disagree and 13.2% disagrees. Only, 6.6% were undecided on the statement.

**Table 4.3.8: Lack of adequate provision of security for electorates makes people participate less in election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 100       | 26.3       |
| Agree             | 103       | 27.1       |
| Undecided         | 32        | 8.4        |
| Disagree          | 82        | 21.6       |
| Strongly Disagree | 63        | 16.6       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

From the table above statement regarding whether lack of adequate provision of security for electorates makes people participate less in election, more than half of the total population (53.4%) strongly agree/agree with the statement while 38.2% strongly disagree/disagree and 8.4% are undecided.

**Table 4.3.9: Every adult of 18years in Ilorin-Metropolis has a Facebook account.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 105       | 27.6       |
| Agree             | 115       | 30.3       |
| Undecided         | 15        | 3.9        |
| Disagree          | 80        | 21.1       |
| Strongly Disagree | 65        | 17.1       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

A larger percentage, (slightly more than average, 57.9%) of the respondents agree (both strongly agree and agree) that most adults who are of voting age in Ilorin has a Facebook account. Meanwhile, 38.2% disagreed while 4% remained undecided on the question. From this, it can be inferred that truly, adults of voting age in Ilorin have a facebook account.

**Table 4.3.10: Facebook is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 87        | 22.9       |
| Agree             | 143       | 37.6       |
| Undecided         | 32        | 8.4        |
| Disagree          | 66        | 17.4       |
| Strongly Disagree | 52        | 13.7       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.3.10 above captures the respondents' level of agreement on whether or not Facebook is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 presidential election. The table shows that 60.5% (agreed and strongly agreed) that it was so. While 31.1% disagreed; 8.4% of the respondents remained undecided. Thus, it is clear that more than 50% of the

respondents reported that Facebook is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 presidential election.

**Table 4.3.11: Facebook changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 137       | 36.1       |
| Agree             | 178       | 46.8       |
| Undecided         | 16        | 4.2        |
| Disagree          | 24        | 6.3        |
| Strongly Disagree | 25        | 6.6        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

From the above table, a very significant 82.9 % the respondents report that Facebook changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election. 12.9% disagreed and 4.2 are undecided about it. This is an indication that Facebook changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election base on the view of the respondents.

**Table 4.3.12: Facebook pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them and make informed political decision in the 2015 presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 137       | 36.1       |
| Agree             | 156       | 41.1       |
| Undecided         | 38        | 10.0       |
| Disagree          | 25        | 6.6        |
| Strongly Disagree | 24        | 6.3        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.3.12 above showed that, 77.1% (strongly agreed and agreed) that Facebook pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them and make informed political decision in the 2015 presidential election. 10% remained neutral while 12.8 disagreed. The percentage of those that agreed is very significant and it can be concluded that the respondents agreed.

**Table 4.3.13: Political discussion on Facebook in the 2015 Presidential elections is more robust and informative.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 104       | 27.4       |
| Agree             | 137       | 36.1       |
| Undecided         | 33        | 8.7        |
| Disagree          | 71        | 18.7       |
| Strongly Disagree | 35        | 9.2        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The above table indicates that 63.5% of the entire respondents ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that political discourse that holds on Facebook platforms are more robust and informative than those on mainstream media. 27% disagreed while 8% are neutral. Based on statistics, this study concludes that political discussion on Facebook is more robust in the 2015 presidential election.

**Table 4.3.14: Use of Facebook for political campaigns arouses electorate interest in politics.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 121       | 31.8       |
| Agree             | 129       | 33.9       |
| Undecided         | 20        | 5.3        |
| Disagree          | 70        | 18.4       |
| Strongly Disagree | 40        | 10.5       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The above table reveals that 65% (agreed and strongly agreed) affirm that the use of facebook aroused the interest of the Ilorin people to participate in politics. 28% are not in support while 5% are neutral. Thus, facebook as a tool has succeeded in creating political interest in the respondents.

**Table 4.3.15: Every adult of 18years in Ilorin-Metropolis has a twitter account.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 35        | 9.2        |
| Agree             | 85        | 22.4       |
| Undecided         | 20        | 5.3        |
| Disagree          | 110       | 28.9       |
| Strongly Disagree | 130       | 34.2       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

A larger percentage, (more than average, 63.1%) of the respondents agree (both strongly disagree and disagree) that most adults who are of voting age in Ilorin has a twitter account. Meanwhile, 31.6% agreed while 5.3% remained undecided on the question. From this, it can be inferred that, adults of voting age in Ilorin does not have a twitter account.

**Table 4.3.16: Twitter is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 69        | 18.2       |
| Agree             | 31        | 8.2        |
| Undecided         | 51        | 13.4       |
| Disagree          | 146       | 38.4       |
| Strongly Disagree | 83        | 21.8       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.3.16 above captures the respondents' level of agreement on whether or not twitter is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 presidential election. The table shows that 26.4% (agreed and strongly agreed) that it was so. While 60.2% disagreed; 13.4% of the respondents remained undecided. Thus, it is clear that more than 50% of the respondents were of the opinion that twitter was not the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 presidential election.

**Table 4.3.17: Twitter changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 81        | 21.3       |
| Agree             | 98        | 25.8       |
| Undecided         | 48        | 12.6       |
| Disagree          | 55        | 14.5       |
| Strongly Disagree | 98        | 25.8       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

From the above table, a significant 47.1% of the respondents report that twitter changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election. 40.3% disagreed and 12.6% are undecided about it. This is an indication that twitter slightly changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election based on the view of the majority of the respondents.



**Table 4.3.18: Twitter pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them and make informed political decision in the 2015 presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 110       | 28.9       |
| Agree             | 35        | 9.2        |
| Undecided         | 20        | 5.3        |
| Disagree          | 130       | 34.2       |
| Strongly Disagree | 85        | 22.4       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.3.18 above showed that, 38.1% (strongly agreed and agreed) that twitter pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them and make informed political decision in the 2015 presidential election. 5.3% remained neutral while 56.6% disagreed. The percentage of those that disagreed is very significant and it can be concluded that the respondents disagreed.

**Table 4.3.13: Political discussion on twitter in the 2015 Presidential elections is more robust and informative.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 60        | 15.8       |
| Agree             | 88        | 23.2       |
| Undecided         | 80        | 21.1       |
| Disagree          | 103       | 27.1       |
| Strongly Disagree | 49        | 12.9       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The above table indicates that 39% of the entire respondents ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that political discourse that holds on twitter platform are more robust and informative than those on mainstream media. 40% disagreed while 21.1% are neutral. Based on statistics, this study

concludes that political discussion on twitter was not really robust in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin metropolis.

**Table 4.3.14: Use of twitter for political campaigns arouses electorate interest in politics.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 57        | 15.0       |
| Agree             | 90        | 23.7       |
| Undecided         | 51        | 13.4       |
| Disagree          | 80        | 21.1       |
| Strongly Disagree | 102       | 26.8       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The above table reveals that 38.7% (agreed and strongly agreed) affirm that the use of twitter aroused the interest of the Ilorin people to participate in politics. 47.9% are not in support while 13.4% are neutral. Thus, twitter as a tool has not succeeded in creating political interest in the respondents in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis.

#### 4.3.4 Qualitative Analysis of Interviews

Following the analysis and findings as shown from the tables above, the study further did interview to further provide explanatory perspective using epic data from interview with respondents. This aspect of the objective is analyzed in three major themes, and nine individuals were interviewed. The themes are:

- i. Influence of Social Media on Voting Decisions of Electorates
- ii. Influence of Social Media on Voters' Interest in Politics
- iii. Creation of Awareness about Election and the Candidates on Social Media

#### 4.3.4.1 Theme One: Influence of Social Media on Voting Decisions of Electorates

On this theme, the interviewees have different perspectives as to whether or not social media played any key role in influencing their choice of candidate in the 2015 General Elections in Ilorin-metropolis. Below are the verbatim responses of the different interviewees:

**Interviewee 1:** *Yes, social media really influenced my decision during the 2015 election.*

**Interviewee 2:** *Yes! Social media greatly influenced voter decision in the 2015 presidential election.*

**Interviewee 3:** *Yes, because many people tend to believe what they read on social media and lots of news (both real and fake) were circulated to influence the minds of voters. I believe it worked.*

**Interviewee 4:** *Yes; many voter tend to listen to radio, television, newspapers and surf the internet to acquire new fact about the activities of government at wide length due to the fact that they can't reach every geographical location at the same time to observe what is happening, as such the social media aid them to cover the intent and gave them the feedback*

**Interviewee 5:** *If we are measuring the effect of social media on the decision of who to be voters, then, i will say it has 5% influence on their choice of candidates. Election in this part of the world is a function of sentiments and not what the aspirant have in stock that which is what social media can avail the voters. So before elections, minds are made up such that no matter what you say about a particular aspirant on social media, little defect will it have. I have been maintaining a position that responses to issues on social media is a function of interest and not objectivity.*

**Interviewee 6:** *I don't think it affected the elections in any significant manner*

**Interviewee 7:** *Yes it did, but not very strongly in Ilorin.*

**Interviewee 8:** *Agree*

**Interviewee 9:** *Yes*

#### **4.3.4.2 Theme Two: Influence of Social Media on Voters' Interest in Politics**

**Interviewee 1:** *Yes it does. More people are now more interested and educated about politics*

**Interviewee 2:** *Social media has been the major instruments used by politicians both governments of the day and the opposition party to arouse the interest of the voters through a series of propaganda and blackmail as well as showcasing their achievements in order to win the heart of the voters.*

**Interviewee 3:** *Social media has had large impact on voters interest in politics and governance. Though, the extent is arguable. One thing however is certain, more people are able to find out more about politics and governance through social media. The only worry is how much of what they found out is true or fake*

**Interviewee 4:** *The simple fact is that it give high level of political orientation to the citizens and enables the elements of willingness in them to participate in the government of their state.*

**Interviewee 5:** *Yes, it does. The amount of revelation and information rolled out in there arouses consciousness so this and this were happening? So amount was doled out, and so on. Bring about interested interest turns participation.*

**Interviewee 6** *I think it did.*

**Interviewee 7** *Yes it does. It informs the people of Ilorin on the need for participation.*

**Interviewee 8:** *Yes*

**Interviewee 9:** *Agree*

#### **4.3.4.3 Theme 3: Creation of Opportunity to Assess Candidates Better**

**Interviewee 1:** *I do not believe so. I think it only created an unverified perception of the candidates. Those who supported a party painted it in a positive way, while painting others in a negative way.*

**Interviewee 2:** *Yes! Social media made it possible for electorates to access the capability and credibility of candidates through a series of information and antecedent of each candidate published on social media*

**Interviewee 3:** *No. There were lots of unverifiable claims online. These make it difficult to truly assess candidates*

**Interviewee 4:** *Not really; the social media only focus on those candidates in power, by elaborating on their positive vibes and negative attributes. But state little about those newly contesting which do not enable citizen to know much about their personality*

**Interviewee 5:** *Yes, it does to some extent, the choice of aspirants was weighed using the information their agents give out, but like I have said it doesn't in any way result to votes. But then, you will know about the aspirant, his biography, antecedent in a bid to further project what he can bring to the table*

**Interviewee 6:** *I think there was more active participation of citizens in the electoral process and social media was one of the potent tools used to drive that*

**Interviewee 7:** *Yes, it does.*

**Interviewee 8:** *Yes*

**Interviewee 9:** *Strongly agree*

#### **4.3.5 Analysis of Themes for Objectives One**

According to the interview responses in italics above, the study draws the inference that on the theme on Influence of Social Media on the Electorates' Decision in the 2015 Presidential Election, majority of the respondents affirmed that truly, their decisions were influenced by social media. This is evident in responses such as '*social media really influenced my decision*', '*Social Media greatly influenced voter decision*', '*I believe it worked*', '*social media aided them*' '*yes it did*', '*agree*' and '*yes*' from interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9. However, Interviewees 5 and 6 had their reservations as to how social media influenced decisions in the 2015 elections. One key issue that influenced the interviewee 5's decision was that "*Election in this part of the world is a function of sentiments and not what the aspirant have in stock that which is what social media can avail the voters. So before elections, minds are made up such that no matter what you say about a particular aspirant on social media, little defect will it have. I have been maintaining a position that responses to issues on social media is a function of interest and not objectivity*". On the other hand, Interviewee 6 says if at all that social media had any influence

on the electorates decision, it was such insignificant to the victory of the eventual winner. The response reads *“I don't think it affected the elections in any significant manner”*

Therefore, interview responses show that a larger portion had their choices influenced by contents emanating from social media platforms (Facebook & Twitter).

The second theme which focused on the role social media played in creating more political awareness and interest among the people, all the nine interviewees agreed that social media played a key role in creating awareness and arousing political interest among the electorates. Interviewee 1 made a statement that *“More people are now more interested and educated about politics”*, interviewee 2 submitted that *“More people are now more interested and educated about politics”*, same with interviewee three who said *“Social media has had large impact on voter's interest in politics and governance,”* all show that social media played a key role. Responses of interviewees 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 have been earlier reported verbatim under section 4.3.4.3.

Analyzing the third theme which sought to know if social media provided a better platform for objective assessment of the candidates who contested in the 2015 elections, the interviewees couldn't find a major common ground. While interviewees 5, 7,8 and 9 believe that social media allowed for better assessment of the candidates, interviewees 1,2,3 and 4 were of the other opinion. The response of Interview 6 could not be placed in context of the question or theme. Take for instance, key issues raised by interviewees 1, 2, 3 and 4 which informed why they concluded that social media didn't create a better platform for assessment of candidates include: *“it only created an unverifiable perception of the candidates, there was lots of unverifiable claims which make it difficult to truly assess candidates and social media only*

*focused on those candidates in power by elaborating their positive vibes but said little about the new candidates”* On the other hand, interviewees 5,7,8, and 9 backed their decisions with combined reasons such as “ *you will know about the aspirants, their biography antecedents, it made it possible for electorates to assess the capability and credibility of the candidates through series of information and their antecedents which are available online”* Thus, the respondents are split in the two dominant perspective and so, this study would just conclude that they are indifferent on this theme, while emphasizing that those who disagreed had more justifications than their counterparts.

In conclusion therefore, interviews findings show that social media influenced the decisions of people, it created more political awareness and interest but failed to portray reliable details about candidates in the election.

#### **4.4 Analysis of Objective Two**

To achieve this objective, the study posed statements of assumption to the respondents and asked them to state their level of agreement on a five-point scale. This objective was to identify the challenges posed by social media during the 2015 presidential elections. Also, interview was conducted with nine individuals in other to corroborate findings from both methods. The tables below explain the different responses from the Likert scaled questions.

**Table 4.4.1: Lack of internet access constitutes challenges to social media usage in 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin metropolis.**

|                   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 74               | 19.5              |
| Agree             | 149              | 39.2              |
| Undecided         | 2                | 0.5               |
| Disagree          | 91               | 23.9              |
| Strongly Disagree | 64               | 16.8              |
| Total             | 380              | 100%              |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The table shows that 19% strongly agreed that absence of access to internet constituted a major challenge to the electorates in the usage of social media in the 2015 presidential election, 39% agreed, 23%disagreed, 16,8% strongly disagreed and less than a percent is undecided. From this, it is evident that the respondents consider lack or low internet access as a challenge to the use of social media in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis.

**Table 4.4.2: Social media is easily used to smear opponents in the 2015 Presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 120       | 31.6       |
| Agree             | 174       | 45.8       |
| Undecided         | 41        | 10.8       |
| Disagree          | 27        | 7.1        |
| Strongly Disagree | 18        | 4.7        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

77.4% agreed that social media was used to spread false and misleading information in the 2015 presidential election while barely 11.8% disagreed.

**Table 4.4.3: Social media is used to spread hate speeches in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 134       | 35.3       |
| Agree             | 110       | 28.9       |
| Undecided         | 62        | 16.3       |
| Disagree          | 54        | 14.2       |
| Strongly Disagree | 20        | 5.3        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The table above indicates that 64.2% agreed that social media was used to promote hate speech and other information capable on inciting or provoking violence among the electoratesin the 2015 election while barely 19% disagreed.



**Table 4.4.5: Lack of adequate regulations of social media constitute a challenge to its usage in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 128       | 33.7       |
| Agree             | 106       | 27.9       |
| Undecided         | 103       | 27.1       |
| Disagree          | 24        | 6.3        |
| Strongly Disagree | 19        | 5.0        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The above table reveals that 61.6% of the respondents agreed that lack of regulations of social media constitute a challenge to its usage in the 2015 presidential election, 11.3% disagreed while 27.1% were undecided. In essence, the lack of regulation and gatekeeping in the creation and distribution of contents available on social media is a major challenge.

#### 4.4.1 Qualitative Analysis of Objective Two

Just like the first objective which was answered through the analysis of the Likert responses and the interview responses, objective two shall continue in this pattern. Objective two as earlier established shall focus more on the challenges associated with the use of social media by electorates in the 2015 general elections in Ilorin metropolis. To answer this in a qualitative manner, the questions and responses were divided into two major themes for thematic analysis.

The themes are:

- i. Usage of Social Media for fake news, hate speech and Propaganda Purposes
- ii. Absence of Regulation for Social Media
- iii. Other related challenges

#### 4.4.2 Theme One: Propaganda

This theme aims at eliciting response from the interviewees on how they think the social media platforms are being used for propaganda purposes by Nigerian politicians. Below are the responses of the interviewee:

**Interviewee 1:** Yes I do

**Interviewee 2:** *As said above, Social media is the major tools used as a medium of propaganda by all political parties*

**Interviewee 3:** *YES. Social media was a very effective propaganda tool in the 2015 elections. Especially in the hands of the then opposition APC. Many facts and fiction were widely spread through social media and not all could be responded to by the ruling party*

**Interviewee 4:** *You see, Media is a universal tools control by who know who and favour who know who, can u contest for a post and your mutual friend media station, blogger, site; post or say negative things about you? Such as the presidential election be it good or bad the media support will say positive things about the President. And say negative things about other aspirant.*

**Interviewee 5:** *Yes, most times. But the working minds will always have a way of sieving information to get the real one.*

**Interviewee 6:** *Most certainly.*

**Interviewee 7:** *Yes social Media has been a tool for propaganda, and was used during the 2015 election.*

**Interviewee 8:** *Yes*

**Interviewee 9:** *Strongly agree.*

#### 4.4.3 Theme two: Absence of Regulation

**Interviewee 1:** *Despite the fact that propaganda is a major instrument in electoral politics, rumor mongering was a major problem in 2015 elections.*

**Interviewee 2:** *Lack of regulation of social media has been the major challenges to the usage of the platform. Fake news, fake videos and propaganda has caused a lot of electoral problems in the society.*

**Interviewee 3:** *The general challenge due to lack of regulation of social media has always and will always be in the area of misinformation. Fake news as it is now called is widely circulated and gets accepted easily. This was a big threat in 2015. For example, the polity was heated up several times when unsubstantiated claims about the incumbent were circulated*

**Interviewee 4:** *Regulations you said? It does not have any effect.*

**Interviewee 5:** *There is a regulation that guides social media usage in 2015, Section 59(1) of the Criminal Code provides that, "Any person who publishes or reproduces any statement, rumour or report which is likely to cause fear and alarm to the public or to disturb the public peace, knowing or having reason to believe that such statement, rumour or report is false shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for three years." as amended in 2015. So there is a rule and law in place. Only we are a people who give in not to the laid down rules.*

**Interviewee 6:** *It afforded the spread of fake news and often sensationalism in a bid to arouse sympathy. But the question is who regulates the social media?*

**Interviewee 7:** *It was a medium used to spread false information and misrepresentation*

**Interviewee 8:** *There is a lot of fake news and propaganda on social media, and most can't differentiate between social media news and verifiable news from genuine sources, people tend to use sentiments via the social media to sway voters, also, the spread of fake results on the social media is also a challenge*

**Interviewee 9:** *Negatively.*

#### **4.4.4 Theme Three: Other Challenges Identified by Respondents**

**Interviewee 1:** *Other challenges I think social media posed was the flux of unverified information and lack of gatekeeping of information on the platforms.*

**Interviewee 2:** *Another challenge associated with social media usage on an election matter is the act of circulating fake results in favour of a particular party even before the authorized body (INEC) announces the said result*

**Interviewee 3:** *Social media usage for election purposes still has quite a number of challenges to overcome:*

- 1. The electoral process itself needs to be highly digitalised to make it ready for IT adaptation.*

*2. The electoral body needs to be very active online. For example, the website and social media handles of INEC were not giving real time updates about the elections. Or this reason , many adhoc updaters sprang up.*

*3. Before social media roles in our elections can be accepted and reliable, there has to be concerted efforts to sanitize news dissemination to minimise fake news.*

*4. The trust of people in social media needs to be worked on. There are still a large number of Nigerians who believe that social media is for trivialities and hence do not subscribe to it. This category of people will no doubt avoid its application in our electoral process.*

**Interviewee 4:** *Devalue one's dignity, character assassination, and bad image printing.*

**Interviewee 5:** *Lack of proper dissemination of information, rumour and lack of ability to sieve information that goes into the platforms are other challenges.*

**Interviewee 6:** *Distortion of information, generating tension and voter apathy (most people prefer to follow the update on their phone rather than going out to vote).*

**Interviewee 7:** *Propaganda, false information, circulation of wrong election results. It was also used to facilitate electoral violence and partisanship.*

**Interviewee 8:**

**Interviewee 9:** *Promotes hate speech*

#### **4.4.5 Analysis of Themes for Objective Two**

This interview was divided into three major theme and responses were gathered through interview with nine different persons. Their views are contained thematically above. The first theme which focused on whether or not social media was used as a tool for propagating propaganda. Interesting, all the nine interviewees agreed that all political parties and candidates that contested in the elections agreed that social media was a major tool for propaganda before, during and after the elections. Some of the responses are in italics below:

*“Social media is the major tools used as a medium of propaganda by all political parties; Social media was a very effective propaganda tool in the 2015 Presidential election., Many facts and fiction were widely spread through social media; Yes,*

*most times. But the working minds will always have a way of sieving information to get the real one. Yes, social Media has been a tool for propaganda, and was used during the 2015 presidential election.”*

Many of the respondents also believed that absence of regulation was another reason why falsehood, hate speech and fake news thrived on social media. Interviewee 2 noted that

*“Lack of regulation of social media has been the major challenges to the usage of the platform. Fake news, fake videos and propaganda has caused a lot of electoral problems in the society.”*

Furthermore, interviewee 3 commented that;

*“The general challenge due to lack of regulation of social media has always and will always be in the area of misinformation. Fake news as it is now called is widely circulated and gets accepted easily. This was a big threat in 2015 presidential election”*

Still on this, interviewee 6 mentioned that:

*“It afforded the spread of fake news and often sensationalism in a bid to arouse sympathy. But the question is who regulates the social media”* Interviewee 7 described it as *“It was a medium used to spread false information and misrepresentation”*

Thus, it is clear that the interviewees all considered absence of regulation as a challenge. Lastly, the third theme was an open comment session where the interviewees were allowed to identify other social media related challenges encountered during the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin. Many challenges were brought forth which include:

*“flux of unverified information and lack of gatekeeping, circulation of fake results, poor updates from social media handles of INEC, defamation and devaluation of people’s dignity, character assassination and bad image printing, rumours, misinformation and disinformation, creation of fear and tension as well as voter apathy, propaganda, facilitation of electoral violence and promotion of hate speech.”*

In summary, issues related to challenges posed by social media in the 2015 presidential election are lack of regulations of social media platforms, spread of falsehood and propaganda,

fake news, misinformation and disinformation, spread of unverified information that creates fear and tension, facilitation of electoral violence, cyber bullying, stalking, character assassination and hate speech.

#### 4.5 Objective Three: Issues on Advantage of Social Media and Traditional Media

This objective aims at understanding the advantages social media has over traditional media such as print and electronic media or vice versa in the conduct of the 2015 Presidential Election. The following tables below have been used to determine this.

**Table 4.5.1: Social media provide additional political information which traditional forms of media do not provide in the 2015 Presidential election.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 172       | 45.3       |
| Agree             | 136       | 35.8       |
| Undecided         | 34        | 8.9        |
| Disagree          | 24        | 6.3        |
| Strongly Disagree | 14        | 3.7        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

The table above shows 81% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that social media provided more political information about the election and candidates in the 2015 general election than traditional media especially print and broadcast media. 8% were undecided while 10% disagreed. Based on this range between the percentages of the respondents that agreed and disagreed, this study concludes that the respondents believe that social media provided more political information in the 2015 presidential election.

**Table 4.5.2: I believe that social media is a strong tool for reaching more people and creating awareness for political purposes than traditional media.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 73        | 19.2       |
| Agree             | 136       | 35.8       |
| Undecided         | 51        | 13.4       |
| Disagree          | 68        | 17.9       |
| Strongly Disagree | 52        | 13.7       |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Barely 5% above the average of the respondents (55%) agreed that social media is a strong tool for reaching more people and creating awareness for political purposes than traditional media. On the other hand, 31.6% of the respondents disagreed to this assumption while 13% remained neutral. The range between the percentage of respondents that agreed and those that disagreed is just 8%. This margin is insignificant on a frequency statistics scale. This study therefore, concludes social media was a strong tool for reaching more people and creating awareness for political purposes than traditional media.

**Table 4.5.3: With social media Nigerians were better mobilized for political participation in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin metropolis than the previous elections in which traditional media was used.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 142       | 37.4       |
| Agree             | 166       | 43.7       |
| Undecided         | 44        | 11.6       |
| Disagree          | 18        | 4.7        |
| Strongly Disagree | 10        | 2.6        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

More than 2/3 of the respondents agreed that social media mobilized more people for political participation in the 2015 presidential election than the traditional media. 81% of the respondents agreed to this statement while just 7% disagreed. Thus, social media mobilize people during elections and encourage participation than the mainstream media.

**Table 4.5.4: Social media provides a level playing ground to all aspirants in the 2015 Presidential election than traditional forms of media.**

|                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 126       | 33.2       |
| Agree             | 143       | 37.6       |
| Undecided         | 40        | 10.5       |
| Disagree          | 53        | 13.9       |
| Strongly Disagree | 18        | 4.7        |
| Total             | 380       | 100%       |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

18% disagreed that social media provided an equal platform for all political candidates and parties to communicate and patronize the electorates during the 2015 presidential election than the traditional media. Meanwhile, 70.8% agreed that social media provided free, fair and equal opportunities to all candidates and parties during the elections. Thus, social media is an equal playing ground for all for candidates and parties.

#### 4.5.5 Qualitative Analysis of Objective Three

This objective also compared the roles social media and conventional media platforms played in the 2015 Presidential Election in areas of providing an equal ground for all political candidates and party; thus, this objective has only single themes.

- i. Equal Privilege and Opportunity to all Candidates than Conventional Media



#### 4.5.5.1 Theme Three: Equal Ground for Campaign than Traditional Media

This theme sought to know which of the two platforms provide an equal opportunity to all parties and candidates to share their political campaign messages. The responses are as shown below:

**Interviewee 1:** *Yes*

**Interviewee 2:** *Yes*

**Interviewee 3:** *Yes it does*

**Interviewee 4:** *Yes*

**Interviewee 5:** *Yes, it does; this is because nobody its usage and its time are not regulated. You sell your aspirant as much as you want with as much time as you have. So, I believe it does.*

**Interviewee 6:** *It gave an alternative to aspirants to sell themselves to the electorate*

**Interviewee 7:** *Well, I think it does. After all, most pro-party activities were facilitated through the social media*

**Interviewee 8:** *Yes*

**Interviewee 9:** *Disagree*

#### 4.5.5.2 Analysis of Theme

This theme sought to know which of the platforms provided more equal opportunity for politicians and political parties to share campaign messages. According to all of the responses, it shows that 8 out of 9 of the respondents agreed that social media does that more than conventional media platforms. Some of the responses are summed up as follows:

*“Yes, it does; this is because nobody its usage and its time are not regulated. You sell your aspirant as much as you want with as much time as you have. So, I believe it does. Well, I think it does. After all, most pro-party activities were*

*facilitated through the social mediaIt gave an alternative to aspirants to sell themselves to the electorate”*

In conclusion, of this objective, respondents agree that social media provides an equal, free and fair opportunity for every political party and candidates to share and connect with the electorates than the mainstream media.

#### **4.6 Assumptions of Normality**

In Parametric statistics, it is an important requirement that the sample data should be normally distributed, thus being homogeneous and continuous. This is because departures from normality of variables can diminish the observed correlations and distort the outcome of the research (Renee and James, 2011). Therefore, assumption of normality is important in running correlations and identifying the quantity of the distributions of skewness and kurtosis.

Skewness has to do with the symmetry of the distribution. A positively skewed distribution has scores clustered to the left, while a negatively skewed distribution had scores clustered to the right, with tail extending to the left. This indicated that a normally skewed data involves a perfectly symmetric distribution. Kurtosis involves the peakedness of the distribution. A positive kurtosis is indicated by a peak, while a negative kurtosis is indicated by a flat distribution. Kurtosis that is normal involves distribution that is bell-shaped and not too peaked or flat (Meyers et al, 2013). However, both skewness and kurtosis are zero (0) in a normal distribution, so the farther away from zero, the more non-normal the distribution.

This research adopts both numerical and graphical methods of testing normality as proposed by Park (2008). While numerical method provides an objective way of data interpretation, graphical method helps to visualize the distributions of the variables thereby making it easy to interpret. Table 4.6.1 shows the result of normality test of dependent and independent variables in this study;

**Table 4.6.1: Normality Test of Dependent and Independent Variables**

|                              | N         | Minimum   | Maximum   | Mean      | Std. Dev  | Skewness  |            | Kurtosis  |            |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
|                              | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic | Std. Error |
| <b>DEPENDENT VARIABLE</b>    |           |           |           |           |           |           |            |           |            |
| VB_AV<br>(Voter's Behavior)  | 380       | 2.00      | 4.33      | 3.1018    | .49598    | .206      | .125       | -.430     | .250       |
| <b>INDEPENDENT VARIABLES</b> |           |           |           |           |           |           |            |           |            |
| FB_AV<br>(Facebook)          | 380       | 2.00      | 4.67      | 3.5285    | .50633    | -.314     | .125       | -.284     | .250       |
| TW_AV<br>(Twitter)           | 380       | 1.17      | 4.50      | 2.7022    | .69623    | .212      | .125       | -.377     | .250       |
| <b>Valid N</b>               | 380       |           |           |           |           |           |            |           |            |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.6.1 shows the summary of the normality test (Skewness and Kurtosis) based on the analysis constructed from the table. Therefore, overall interpretation indicates that for all the variables, the degree of skewness for independent and dependent variables are normal. It is concluded that the assumptions of normality in this research are not violated. The result is also complimented by graphical representation in Appendix IV, showing the bell-shaped display of the variables.

#### 4.7 Pearson Correlation Analysis

This is used to show the degree of linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Represented with a symbol  $r$ , spanning from the range of -1.00 to +1.00, a correlation coefficient indicates the direction and magnitude of the relationship between the two variables. The closer it is to 1.00, the more likely the relationship is statistically significant (Iversen and Gergen, 2012).

**Table 4.7: Pearson Correlation Analysis between variables**

| Descriptive Statistics |        |                |     |
|------------------------|--------|----------------|-----|
|                        | Mean   | Std. Deviation | N   |
| VB_AV                  | 3.1018 | .49598         | 380 |
| FB_AV                  | 3.5285 | .50633         | 380 |
| TW_AV                  | 2.7022 | .69623         | 380 |

|       |                     | VB_AV  | FB_AV   | TW_AV   |
|-------|---------------------|--------|---------|---------|
| VB_AV | Pearson Correlation | 1      | .257**  | .173**  |
|       | Sig. (2-tailed)     |        | .001    | .000    |
|       | N                   | 380    | 380     | 380     |
| FB_AV | Pearson Correlation | .257** | 1       | -.133** |
|       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .001   |         | .010    |
|       | N                   | 380    | 380     | 380     |
| TW_AV | Pearson Correlation | .173** | -.133** | 1       |
|       | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000   | .010    |         |
|       | N                   | 380    | 380     | 380     |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.7 represents the means, standard deviations and correlations among all variables in the study. It was conducted to examine the correlation coefficient among the study variables. Indications from the table show that facebook has the highest correlation (.257) with the dependent variable (Voter's Behavior). The above table equally shows that there is a positive relationship between twitter and voters behaviour. The relationship between these two variables are significant with a probability value of 0.00. On the otherhand, political information on twitter equally has a positive relationship (.173) with voters behaviour. The level of significant with a probability value of 0.01.

#### 4.8 Multiple Regression Analysis

The Multiple Regression Analysis analyses the overall correlation between sets of dependent and independent variables. It is symbolized with a capital R, which depicts the correlation coefficient (Rubin and Babbie, 2010). Correlation coefficient signifies the strength of

relationship between two variables and how much variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables. In order to identify such strength, a requirement was explained in the Table 4.8.1;

**Table 4.8.1: The Strength of Relationship between Two Variables**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>R = + 1</b> | <b>Perfect positive linear relationship</b> |
| <b>R = - 1</b> | Negative Linear Relationship                |
| <b>R = 0</b>   | No correlation                              |

Source: Rubin and Babbie, 2010. Research Methods for Social Work

Table 4.8.1 explains the strength of relationship between two variables. A correlation coefficient (R) of +1 signifies a positive linear relationship, while an R value of -1 signifies a negative linear relationship. However, the result has no correlation when the R value is equal to zero (0).

Similarly, the use of R square is a method used to evaluate the overall predictive accuracy of a model. It is a statistical descriptive measure of how good a regression line approximates real data points with any value between zero and one. The nearer it is to one (1), the better it is in predicting a model (Pallant, 2010). The value determines how much of the variation in one variable is caused by other variable. Therefore, in an effort to determine the relationship between the variables in this study, a regression analysis was run for the two variables and the result presented in the table focusing on the model summary, analysis of variances (ANOVA) and coefficients table;

**Table 4.8.2: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics |          |     |     |               | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------|---------------|
|       |                   |          |                   |                            | R Square Change   | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |               |
| 1     | .293 <sup>a</sup> | .086     | .081              | .47549                     | .086              | 17.686   | 377 | 2   | .000          | 1.703         |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

- a. Dependent Variable: VB\_AV  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), TW\_AV, FB\_AV

The table 4.8.2 shows the summary of regression analysis conducted with SPSS version 23 in determining the relationship between Voter's Behavior and usage of Facebook and Twitter to influence electorates. The summary of the table indicates that the R value between the dependent and independent variables was 0.293, which demonstrates low correlation between the variables. The R Square revealed that 8.6% of the variation in the dependent variable was justified by the two independent variables. Durbin Watson was 1.703 which fell within the acceptable range.

**Table 4.8.3: Summary of Coefficient and Model Summary**

| Model    | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t    | Sig.   | Collinearity Statistics |      |       |
|----------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------|--------|-------------------------|------|-------|
|          | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |      |        | Tolerance               | VIF  |       |
| <b>1</b> | (Constant)                  | 3.130      | .209                      |      | 14.991 | .000                    |      |       |
|          | FB_AV                       | .138       | .049                      | .239 | 2.839  | .000                    | .982 | 1.018 |
|          | TW_AV                       | .170       | .035                      | .141 | 4.804  | .005                    | .982 | 1.018 |

- a. Dependent Variable: VB\_AV  
 Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

On the other hand, table 4.8.3 above represents the summary of Coefficients-Collinearity Analysis and Model Summary which is used to answer the research hypothesis. It equally showed that the two predictor variables have significance effect on the criterion variable.

#### 4.9 Hypothesis Testing

This section focuses on testing the research hypotheses as proposed in this study. SPSS version 23, particularly regression analysis is also used to test the hypotheses.

**Decision Rule:** The strength of evidence in support of a null hypothesis is measured by the p-value. If the p-value is less than the significance level (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. However, if the p-value is higher than the significance level, the null hypothesis is accepted.

#### 4.9.1 Summary of Research Hypotheses

The study examines two (2) hypotheses based on influence of Facebook and twitter on voter's behavior in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis. Below are the results of the hypotheses.

**Table 4.9 Summary of Hypothesis Result**

|                       | DESCRIPTION  | RESULT                               | DECISION        |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>H0<sub>1</sub></b> | There is no significant relationship between voter's behavior and Facebook usage in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis. | <b>Beta =.239</b><br><b>p = .000</b> | <b>Rejected</b> |
| <b>H0<sub>2</sub></b> | There is no significant relationship between voter's behavior and Twitter usage in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis.  | <b>Beta =.141</b><br><b>p = .005</b> | <b>Rejected</b> |

Source: Primary Data from this project, 2019

Table 4.9. shows the summary of the two null hypotheses stated in this research.

Based on the decision rule of p-value of 0.00, the first null hypothesis H0<sub>1</sub>, which states that there is no significant relationship between voter's behavior and Facebook usage in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant relationship between Facebook usage in election on Voter's Behavior.

Also, based on the decision rule of p-value of 0.05, the second null hypothesis H0<sub>2</sub>, which states that there is no significant relationship between voter's behavior and Twitter usage in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-metropolis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant relationship between twitter usage in election on Voter's Behavior.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The chapter summarizes and concludes the findings of the study as stipulated in the research objectives. It also includes the relevance, significance and implications of the research, while explaining its limitations and suggestions for future research.

#### 5.2 Summary and Discussion of Findings

With the expansion in the roles of media in election in Nigeria, social media has been perceived as an important tool of political campaigns due to the significant contributory role it plays in influencing voter's behavior, its ability to make information larger audience and as well the easy access everyone has to it with little cost. The concept has gained a widespread acceptance globally due to the vital roles it has been playing in election.

A detailed review of literature in chapter two has facilitated the discovery of previous conceptual, empirical and theoretical scholarship on social media use in election; although the concept of social media has been critically examined in the literature. Empirically, it is understood that the application of social media in the conduct of socio-political activities in Nigeria particularly, and the world over is laudable. It equally shows that social media are playing a dominant role in political mobilization, participation and electioneering campaigns in both developed and developing countries across the continent of the world. It is on record that since President Barrack Obama of the United State of America efficient use of the social media, there has been a growing use of new media technologies in facilitating political communication in contemporary times. Obama's victory is largely attributed to the massive deployment of social media by his campaign organization which provided inspiration to other world leaders.

Despite the fact that the huge impacts of social media on election has been acknowledged, the establishment of a strong measurement of the its influence of voter's behavior has not been really established and also the challenges associated with the usage for political activities. In response, literature is replete with determining its influence and solutions on how to curb the challenges associated with social media usage.

Extensive review of literature is concluded with the discovery of pertinent gaps within previous studies; much of it has focused on the roles of social media has a tool of electoral



campaigns while ignoring its variant of behavior, which deals with the extent to which social media influenced the behavior of voters in election, which further exposes the fact that individual level analysis of social media platforms has been neglected. However, this is an important area of analysis of social media since various social media platforms exist, then influence can be measured when these platforms are measured individual. As this present study focused on Facebook and Twitter as a social media platform.

Recognition of methodological and empirical gaps in the literature has facilitated the development of three research objectives and two hypothesis focusing on the central objective underpinning the thesis which was to investigate the extent at which the usage of Facebook and Twitter influence voter's behavior in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis. It also seeks to determine the challenges associated with the use of social media during electioneering process in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis and assess the advantage social media had over other forms of media particularly broadcast and print media.

Methodological appropriateness is an important component in the achievement of the stated research objective. Therefore, in chapter three, a mixed method approach, involving the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods is employed, resulting to the construction of a 5-point Likert scale and 26-item questionnaire of 384 respondents and interview of 10 respondents as the research instruments. The decision to employ a mixed-method approach is built upon is dearth in academic literature relating to influence of social media on voter's behavior. The questionnaires and interview questions were validated by experts in the field of Political Science, using already constructed scales with minor adjustments. Pearson Correlation and regression analysis were employed in finding out whether there is a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables to be measured (Voter's Behavior, Facebook and Twitter). Therefore, the result proves that there is a significant relationship between Voter's Behavior and Facebook and Twitter usage.

### **5.2.1 The Influence of Facebook and Twitter on Voter's Behavior**

The findings of this study attest to the fact that majority of people who use social media to get political information are predominantly youths. The implication of this is that, more youths are now being mobilized to participate in the political process through the social media where their opinions and voices can be heard. Voter's choice of political candidates during

electioneering campaigns was to some extent influenced by politician's use of social media. However, regression analysis revealed that there is only 8.6% of the variation in the dependent variable was justified by the two independent variables. These implies that both Facebook and Twitter only had 8.6% influence on voter's behavior which further implies that there are other factors considered by the electorates in terms of choice and participation as the respondents also affirmed that other factors such as political integrity of a candidate, past records, achievements, and political affiliation (political party) were among the factors that influenced their voting pattern.

The responses from the qualitative interview also affirm this contention, as most of the respondent assert that the use of social media influenced voter's behavior in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin metropolis. This is evident in responses such from interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9;

*'social media really influenced my decision', 'Social Media greatly influenced voter decision', 'I believe it worked', 'social media aided them' 'yes it did', 'agree' and 'yes'.*

The implication of this import is that apart from the social media, other intervening variables plays a greater role in the voting patterns of electorate during the elections. This reveals that voting pattern in Nigeria is influence by these factors. Based on the findings of the study, Facebook has the highest correlation(.257) with voter's behavior among the two social media platforms considered in this study to be available to the electorate for political engagement during election campaigns in the 2015 Presidential Election. This, therefore, suggests that, for Nigerian politicians to remain relevant in contemporary politics, they have to increase the utilization of social media so as to woo their supporters who are mostly young people. With the emergence of social media, traditional means of political campaigns is gradually changing to modern means of communication. The implication of this is that politicians must acquaint themselves with this new paradigm shift if they must mobilize the youths in future elections.

However, Interviewees 5 and 6 had their reservations in relationship to the above findings that other factors are considered by the electorates when it comes to choice of candidate in election. One key issue that influenced the interviewee 5's decision was that:

*“Election in this part of the world is a function of sentiments and not what the aspirant have in stock that which is what social media can avail the voters. So before elections, minds are made up such that no matter what you say about a particular aspirant on social media, little defect will it have. I have been maintaining a position that responses to issues on social media is a function of interest and not objectivity”.*

On the other hand, Interviewee 6 says if at all that social media had any influence on the electorates decision, it was such insignificant to the victory of the eventual winner. The response reads;

*“I don't think it affected the elections in any significant manner”*

The second theme which focused on the role social media played in creating more political awareness and interest among the people, all the nine interviewees agreed that social media played a key role in creating awareness and arousing political interest among the electorates. Interviewee 1 made a statement that *“More people are now more interested and educated about politics”*, interviewee 2 submitted that *“More people are now more interested and educated about politics”*, same with interviewee three who said *“Social media has had large impact on voter's interest in politics and governance,”* all show that social media played a key role. Responses of interviewees 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 have been earlier reported verbatim under section 4.3.4.3.

Analyzing the third theme which sought to know if social media provided a better platform for objective assessment of the candidates who contested in the 2015 elections, the interviewees couldn't find a major common ground. While interviewees 5, 7,8 and 9 believe that social media allowed for better assessment of the candidates, interviewees 1,2,3 and 4 were of the other opinion. The response of Interview 6 could not be placed in context of the question or theme. Take for instance, key issues raised by interviewees 1, 2, 3 and 4 which informed why they concluded that social media didn't create a better platform for assessment of candidates include: *“it only created an unverifiable perception of the candidates, there was lots of*

*unverifiable claims which make it difficult to truly assess candidates and social media only focused on those candidates in power by elaborating their positive vibes but said little about the new candidates”* On the other hand, interviewees 5,7,8, and 9 backed their decisions with combined reasons such as “ *you will know about the aspirants, their biography antecedents, it made it possible for electorates to assess the capability and credibility of the candidates through series of information and their antecedents which are available online”* Thus, the respondents are split in the two dominant perspective and so, this study would just conclude that they are indifferent on this theme, while emphasizing that those who disagreed had more justifications than their counterparts.

In conclusion therefore, questionnaire and interviews findings show that social media influenced the decisions of people, it created more political awareness and interest but failed to portray reliable details about candidates in the election. The first research objective is to examine the extent at which the usage of Facebook and Twitter influence voter’s behavior in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis. This was tailored in line with the first hypothesis which states that “there is no significant relationship between Facebook usage and voter’s behavior”. The hypothesis was tested and was rejected based on the decision rule ( $p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, the second hypothesis states that “there is no significant relationship between Twitter usage and voter’s behavior”. The hypothesis was tested and was rejected based on the decision rule ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The stated findings are in contrast to existing body of literature. Although there are limited academic literature on how Facebook and Twitter influence voter’s behavior, certain scholars have attempted to analyze it. Jonathan Bright and Scott A. Hale (2017) stressed that the overall impact of Twitter use is small in absolute terms. The hybrid fixed effects regression

which made use only of Twitter related variables (model 3.1) had an R2 of just 0.03, indicating that a great deal of the variance is unexplained by social media use. When the volume of tweets sent is considered, our most conservative model (3.2) suggests that tweets would need to be increased by 175% to generate a 1% increase in vote share.

Additionally, findings from this study is also in contrast to Okolo, Ugonna, Nebo and Obikeze (2017) work; to them, there is a significant positive relationship between usage of Facebook as an awareness social media tool and projection of a political candidates' image in Nigeria ( $r = 0.764$ ;  $F = 418.677$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Their submission is that Facebook have a positive influence on the image of political candidate in Nigeria. Facebook is an inevitable and indispensable tool for projecting and creating awareness by political candidates.

Furthermore, findings from the study also align with that of Alex Budak (2010:38); reveals that despite commentary to the contrary that suggests that Facebook, Twitter and other forms of new media were crucial in the 2008 election, this model shows that neither engaging politically on Twitter nor following a candidate on Facebook are significant. While creating an election-related group on a social networking site has a significant and positive effect on one's likelihood of voting, this is probably a function of external factors rather than directly attributable to new media itself.

### **5.2.2 Challenges associated with use of social media in Election**

“In a world where everybody is connected, everybody is at risk” (Udende, 2011). This statement gives a vivid picture of the omnipresence of the social media and inherent dangers in them. For example, Nimmo and Combs (1990) report that the social media devote more coverage to the horserace than to the substance of the political issues, to the personae of the election than to the issues that divide, top outcome than to the campaign, to day-by-day events of the campaign than to enduring trends. Thus, the social media work at cross-purposes in mediating

expectations. Social media are inundated with such questions and posers as to who will win? how would he win? where do candidates stand at a given time? who is ahead? what will determine voting pattern?, what differences would it make if ‘A’, ‘B’ OR ‘C’ wins?.

The second research objective sought to examine the various challenges associated with social media usage in the 2015 Presidential election. Findings from this study reveals that the challenges associated with social media usage in the 2015 Presidential election ranges from lack of adequate access to the internet by the electorate, use of social media to attack political opponent, disseminating of false information, propaganda and fake election results as well as the issue of lack of adequate regulation for social media usage which has resulted in abuse of its usage in the 2015 Presidential election. Responses from the qualitative interview are in contrast with the quantitative findings. This point was carefully explained by Respondent in italics below:

*“Social media is the major tools used as a medium of propaganda by all political parties; Social media was a very effective propaganda tool in the 2015 Presidential election., Many facts and fiction were widely spread through social media; Yes, most times. But the working minds will always have a way of sieving information to get the real one. Yes, social Media has been a tool for propaganda, and was used during the 2015 presidential election.”*

Many of the respondents also believed that absence of regulation was another reason why falsehood, hate speech and fake news thrived on social media. Interviewee 2 noted that:

*“Lack of regulation of social media has been the major challenges to the usage of the platform. Fake news, fake videos and propaganda has caused a lot of electoral problems in the society.”*

Furthermore, interviewee 3 commented that;

*“The general challenge due to lack of regulation of social media has always and will always be in the area of misinformation. Fake news as it is now called is widely circulated and gets accepted easily. This was a big threat in 2015 presidential election”*

To buttress the point, interviewee 6 emphasized that:

*“It afforded the spread of fake news and often sensationalism in a bid to arouse sympathy. But the question is who regulates the social media”* Interviewee 7

described it as *“It was a medium used to spread false information and misrepresentation”*

Thus, it is clear that the interviewees all considered absence of regulation as a challenge. Lastly, the third theme was an open comment session where the interviewees were allowed to identify other social media related challenges encountered during the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin. Many challenges were brought forth which include: *“flux of unverified information and lack of gatekeeping, circulation of fake results, poor updates from social media handles of INEC, defamation and devaluation of people’s dignity, character assassination and bad image printing, rumours, misinformation and disinformation, creation of fear and tension as well as voter apathy, propaganda, facilitation of electoral violence and promotion of hate speech.”*

In summary, issues related to challenges posed by social media in the 2015 presidential election are lack of regulations of social media platforms, spread of falsehood and propaganda, fake news, misinformation and disinformation, spread of unverified information that creates fear and tension, facilitation of electoral violence, cyber bullying, stalking, character assassination and hate speech.

In contrast to the findings in this study, most literature found out that there are notable challenges in the use of social media in election. In her study, Fatimah (2016); which showed that social media platform played a major role in the voting pattern of the electorates; Nigerians became politically aware as a result of the activities of the platform, but with records of unpatriotic and divisive postings as evident from the responses. Her submissions are that the social media postings were mainly based on religious, propaganda and ethnic divide, therefore violates the ethics of communication. Both tweets and postings from twitter and Facebook respectively had very few objective messages. Gender and disability had little or no influence, while linguistic affiliations and religion were considered in their postings and made great impact. These show that most of the information posted on the social as the time in question was not reliable.

This was re-emphasized in Edegoh (2016) who stated that the conflicting information that emanated from the party structures of the two frontline parties, particularly their accusations against one another and against the electoral umpire (INEC) eroded voters' confidence in PDP and APC party structures as their source credibility could not be trusted. This explains why voters in Anambra State turned their attention to individuals contesting the elections and voted on the basis of merit of the candidates, not minding party affiliation.

The logical explanation for this was also discussed when Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, appeared before US lawmakers in April, 2018. He was questioned on the role his company played in the 2015 and 2016 election in Nigeria and US respectively;

*“In 2015 and 2016, a UK company called **Cambridge Analytica** interfered with elections held in Nigeria and the United States respectively, after it was allowed access to millions of Facebook user information and data.*

Additionally, in 2018, a whistle blower, **Christopher Wylie**, who worked with Cambridge Analytica, confessed that the firm was hired by persons working for former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan, to swing the 2015 Presidential election in the incumbent's way. He reveals that;

*“Cambridge Analytica reportedly deployed all kinds of fake, negative news and hate and propaganda messages to sway the presidential vote Jonathan's way. Buhari was painted as Lucifer incarnate by Cambridge Analytical and negative ads demonizing him were pushed to Nigerians with social media accounts. Jonathan would go on to lose the election, however”.Reuters (2019)*

Facebook director of global politics and outreach, Katie Harbath, states that;

*“from Wednesday, January, 2019, Facebook resolved that only advertisers located in Nigeria will be able to run electoral ads”. Reuters (2019)*

The study perceived that fake news is a danger to Nigeria's fledgling democracy and an avalanche of foreign interference in Nigeria's elections at this time could leave the country's nascent democracy on the brink.



### **5.2.3 Advantage of Social Media over Traditional Media (Print and Broadcast Media)**

The third research question seeks to understand the advantages social media posed over the traditional media. The analysis showed that the respondents considered social media as a better platform for political mobilization, voter's education, crowding pulling, level playing ground for all parties and candidates and provided more political information than the mainstream and other forms of media. This result is consistent with the assertions of many researchers on the importance of social media on the political information management process. Social media promise a whole new and interesting political horizon characterized by boundless possibilities and opportunities for proper participatory political process. This emerging trend transcends the old order and tends to bring both the politicians and the electorate into a closer bond without physical contact, leading to a more robust and sophisticated political process (Nwabueze & Ezebuenyi, 2012).

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The present study was conducted to see the Influence of Social Media on Voters Behaviour in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-Metropolis. The main objective of the study was to determine the The Influence of Social Media (Facebook & Twitter on Voters Behaviour in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-Metropolis. Subsequent objectives include; to determine the extent at which social media (Facebbok & Twitter) influenced voter's behaviour in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis. To determine the challenges associated with the use of social media during electioneering process in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis and finally to assess the advantage social media had over other forms of media particularly broadcast and print media. It was an ex-post factor study in which a self-designed

questionnaire and an interview were conducted to get resourceful information from the respondents in order to answer the objectives.

Based on the findings, the study therefore concludes that the respondents' behaviour, political interests, political decisions and participations were influenced by the social media particularly Facebook and Twitter. Although the level of influence is low at a variation of 8.6%, what this implies is that there are other factors considered by the electorate which include the political party of the candidate, the personal political integrity of the candidate as well as the candidate's manifesto.

In answering the second objective of the study which sought to determine the challenges associated with the use of social media during the electioneering process in the 2015 presidential election in Ilorin-Metropolis. Findings from both the survey and interview concluded that lack of access to the internet, hate speech, fake news, propaganda and cyber bullying are challenges that characterized the use of social media in the 2015 presidential election.

The findings in answering the third objective show that respondents considered social media as a better platform for political mobilization, voters' education, crowd pulling, level playing ground for all parties and candidates and provided more political information than the mainstream and other forms of media. However, it is necessary to note that much of the information on social media was considered inaccurate and unreliable and may be responsible for why active engagement on social media didn't translate into more votes and turnout in the election.

#### **5.4 Contributions to Knowledge**

This study has made contributions to existing literatures in various ways. Significantly, in the methodological ground of mixed-method research, qualitative interview contributes to

understanding of the subject of study and adds to the current understanding of the use of social media in election through the provision of a detailed and in-depth body of knowledge. Statistically on the other hand, quantitative aspect is also contributory through the development and validation of reliable constructs in the measurement of voter behavior using item scales of voter choice, turnout and social media platforms particularly, Facebook and Twitter on a 5-point Likert scale. The items were drawn from relevant literature and modified to suit the focus of the study. Through reliability tests, the items were adjusted and affirmed to be valid and reliable to the analysis of influence of social media on voter behavior. Most of the qualitative findings are also in consonance to the quantitative findings which further validates the conclusion. This methodological importance of mixed-method research has thus freed social media use in election from the box of being “Narrative-Inclined”, “Not analytical” and offering little basis for choice of scientific framework” as argued by Jega (2015:2).

From a theoretical perspective, the current study explored three basic theories to gain an in-depth knowledge of the roles of media in election; agenda Setting theory, economic theory and technological Determinism Theory. The use of agenda setting theory to gauge influence of social media on voters behavior further explains the day-to-day relationship between, and decision making of the electorates through a framework, thus exposing the implications of such agenda set by media on electorates behavior during election.

Indirectly, the study contributes to the attempt to gain better understanding of benefit inherent in social media to influence voters choice and some of the notable challenges associated with social media usage were equally identified in the study

## **5.5 Limitations of the Study**

Certain constraints were faced while conducting this research. Firstly, there were difficulties in the process of data collection, particularly qualitative data. Most of the respondents were hesitant in answering the questions. However, the researcher managed to elicit necessary and relevant information from the respondents.

In addition, considering the fact that this study was conducted in Kwara State, precisely Ilorin-metropolis, some of the findings might be more appropriate in the context. It might not be appropriate for this study to make the claim that the findings are applicable to all Kwara State

and Nigeria at large. Nevertheless, the study managed to ensure that the whole of the three Local governments in Ilorin-metropolis are represented in the research and it is hoped that the study can be replicated in other parts of the country with major significant consistency.

Also, the study focused the analysis on how only Facebook and Twitter influenced voter behavior. Results from the analysis therefore show that there might be other social media platforms influencing voters behavior as well as on how there can be increase in the influence social media has voter behavior and should also be investigated.

## **5.6 Recommendations**

In light of the findings from this study, the following recommendations are logical in ensuring social media have a more significant influence on voter behavior;

- i. The government should think of trying to regulate the operations of social media. They should think out a way of verifying or regulating “who posts what” in these media urgently and there has to be concerted efforts to sanitize news dissemination to minimise fake news.
- ii. The electoral body needs to be very active online. For example, the website and social media handles of INEC were not giving real time updates about the elections. Or this reason , many adhoc updaters sprang up.
- iii. The trust of people in social media needs to be worked on. There are still a large number of Nigerians who believe that social media is for trivialities and hence do not subscribe to it. This category of people will no doubt avoid its application in our electoral process.
- iv. The embracing of social media for successive political campaigns that grants the electorate the interactive opportunity with the political candidates.
- v. The National Communications Commission should introduce stiff sanction on telecoms and service providers that engage in nefarious activities of arranging faceless internet Skype calls/texts messages for desperate politicians. The indiscriminate release of people’s phone directory by these providers should be matched with sanctions or legal actions. These should wipe out the fears of the public about the use of the new media and their contents but rather encourage them to utilize the gains.
- vi. Government/INEC should put in place well-articulated guidelines (regulatory framework) on how political parties should use the online media networks for electioneering

campaigns and other political activities to stem the ugly tide of utilisation of the platforms for selfish reasons.

### **5.7 Recommendations for Future Research**

To start with, this study only investigates the influence of social media particularly with respect to two main social media platforms; Facebook and Twitter on voters behavior. Therefore, it is important for future research to incorporate other social media platforms that may be significant to the study.

In addition, since this research investigates influence of social media on voter behavior in Ilorin metropolis, other research might attempt a comparative analysis by investigating Kwara State as a whole with a view of measuring it across the three senatorial districts in Kwara State.

Furthermore, during the course of this study, the researcher discovered a dearth of quantitative instruments in measuring influence of social media on voters behavior. Therefore, the study has developed some construct measures and scales that were tested and found to be reliable and valid in the present context. Other researchers can help to help validate this scale or develop another scale in this regard. Any similar research influence of social media on voters behavior can therefore include these measures to further test the reliability and validity.

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## APPENDIX I



**KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE**  
**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Ma,

It is my pleasure to recommend **Jimoh Modibbo Ibrahim (16/27/MPS003)** of Political Science, Kwara State University Maletе. The candidate is now in the last stage of the program and required to conduct a research project in partial fulfilment of the requirements for M.Sc. Degree in Political Science. As such she needs your kind assistance to collect data and necessary information.

At this juncture, I humbly seek your help and cooperation to help her get the data and achieve the objective of the study. I really appreciate your time and efforts to make this a success.

Thanks.

Sincerely

**Prof. Abdul Rauf Ambali**

HOD, Politics and Governance  
Kwara State University Maletе,  
Nigeria.

## APPENDIX II

Department of Politics and  
Governance,  
College of Humanities, Management  
and Social Science,  
Kwara State University,  
Malete-Ilorin  
PMB 1530  
June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Dear Respondent,

I am a postgraduate student currently undergoing a Masters degree in the above institution. I am carrying out research on: **INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON VOTER'S BEHAVIOUR IN THE 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN ILORIN METROPOLIS, KWARA STATE.**

I am therefore, appealing to you to complete this questionnaire as honestly and truthfully as possible which is designed to gather relevant data for academic purpose. All the information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Jimoh Modibbo Ibrahim

## SECTION A:

Demographic Information of the Respondent

**Instruction:** Indicate by ticking in each of the boxes that best describes you.

1. **Sex:** Male  Female
2. **Age:** 18-30years  31-40years  41-50years  51years & Above
3. **Educational Background:** Secondary school level [  ] University/Polytechnic level [  ] Other institutions [  ]
4. **Occupation:** Employee (  ) Self-Employed (  ) Unemployed (  ) Student (  )

## SECTION B:

Please respond to each of the items conscientiously by ticking (√) on the option that fits your response.

### ISSUES ON VOTERS BEHAVIOUR

SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, UD= Undecided, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree.

| S/N | QUESTIONS  | SA | A | U<br>D | D | SD |
|-----|--|----|---|--------|---|----|
| 1.  | Political party of candidate inspired your choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election.        |    |   |        |   |    |
| 2.  | The personal integrity of candidate inspired your choice of candidate in the 2015 presidential election. |    |   |        |   |    |
| 3.  | Political campaigns messages received on social media platforms aided my choice of candidate.            |    |   |        |   |    |
| 4.  | The manifesto of candidates influenced my voting decision in the 2015 presidential election.             |    |   |        |   |    |
| 5.  | Lack of interest in politics constitute a reason for low voters turnout in election.                     |    |   |        |   |    |
| 6.  | Lack of adequate provision of security for electorates makes people participate less in election.        |    |   |        |   |    |

**ISSUES ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH FACEBOOK IS USED AS A MEDIUM OF INDUCING VOTERS PARTICIPATION IN THE 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

| S/N | QUESTIONS   | SA | A | U<br>D | D | SD |
|-----|---|----|---|--------|---|----|
| 7.  | Every adult of 18years in Ilorin-Metropolis has a facebook account.   |    |   |        |   |    |
| 8.  | Facebook is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis.                        |    |   |        |   |    |
| 9   | Facebook changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election.  |    |   |        |   |    |
| 10. | Facebook pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them and make informed political decision in the 2015 presidential election. |    |   |        |   |    |
| 11. | Political discussion on facebook in the 2015 Presidential elections is more robust and informative.                                       |    |   |        |   |    |
| 12. | Use of facebook for political campaigns arouses electorate interest in politics.  |    |   |        |   |    |

**ISSUES ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH TWITTER IS USED AS A MEDIUM OF INDUCING VOTERS PARTICIPATION IN THE 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

| S/N | QUESTIONS   | SA | A | U<br>D | D | SD |
|-----|---|----|---|--------|---|----|
| 13. | Every adult of 18years in Ilorin-Metropolis has a twitter account.  |    |   |        |   |    |
| 14. | Twitter is the most frequently used social media platform in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis. |    |   |        |   |    |
| 15. | Twitter changed the political orientation and campaign methods in the 2015 presidential election.                 |    |   |        |   |    |
| 16. | Twitter pages of candidates in helps in learning more about them in the 2015 presidential election.               |    |   |        |   |    |
| 17. | Political discussion on twitter in the 2015 Presidential elections is more robust and informative.                |    |   |        |   |    |
| 18. | Use of twitter for political campaigns arouses electorate interest in politics.                                   |    |   |        |   |    |

**CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.**

| S/N | QUESTIONS  | SA | A | U<br>D | D | SD |
|-----|--|----|---|--------|---|----|
| 19. | Lack of internet access constitutes challenges to social media usage in 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin metropolis.                 |    |   |        |   |    |
| 20. | Social media is easily used to smear opponents in the 2015 Presidential election.  |    |   |        |   |    |
| 21. | Social media is used to spread hate speeches in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis.                                     |    |   |        |   |    |
| 22. | Lack of adequate regulations of social media constitute a challenge to its usage in the 2015 Presidential election in Ilorin metropolis. |    |   |        |   |    |

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND TRADITIONAL FORMS OF MEDIA**

SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, UD= Undecided, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree.

| S/N | Questions   | SA | A | U<br>D | D | SD |
|-----|---|----|---|--------|---|----|
| 23. | Social media provide additional political information which traditional forms of media do not provide in the 2015 Presidential election.  |    |   |        |   |    |
| 24. | I believe that social media is a strong tool for reaching more people and creating awareness for political purposes than traditional media  |    |   |        |   |    |
| 25. | With social media Nigerians were better mobilized for political participation in 2015 presidential election in Ilorin metropolis than the previous elections in which traditional media was used. |    |   |        |   |    |
| 26. | Social media provides a level playing ground to all aspirants in the 2015 Presidential election than traditional forms of media.  |    |   |        |   |    |



## APPENDIX III



**KWARA STATE UNIVERSITY, MALETE**  
**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE**  
**CONSENT FORM**

I, Jimoh Modibbo Ibrahim with matriculation number 16/27/MPS003 from department of Politics and Governance wish to conduct an interview with you. This interview will be conducted basically to gather information for my research titled **“Influence of Social Media on Voters Behavior in the 2015 Presidential Election in Ilorin-metropolis”**.

All of the interview information will be kept confidential. I will store the tapes/notes of our conversation safely. Your identity will be kept confidential and I will use a code number/pseudonym to identify your interview data. Neither your name nor private information will appear in the final research project, though your occupation will be mentioned.

Your participation is voluntary. You are free to refuse to take part, and you may refuse to answer any questions or may stop at any time. You may also withdraw at any time up until the work is completed. If you have any questions about the research, you may contact me at [madibbah@gmail.com](mailto:madibbah@gmail.com).

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the above. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to refuse to answer any questions and to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I understand that my name will not appear in the final project.
4. I agree to take part in the above study.

Date

Signature

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## **APPENDIX IV**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

#### **ISSUES ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCED VOTERS BEHAVIOUR IN 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN ILORIN METROPOLIS:**

1. Did social media platform influenced voter decision in 2015 presidential election?
2. To what extent did social media create more awareness for 2015 presidential election compared to previous election?
3. Do you think social media arouses voters interest about politics and governance generally?

#### **ISSUES ON CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE IN 2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN ILORIN METROPOLIS:**

4. Do you think social media was often used as a tool for propaganda in the 2015 presidential election?
5. How has lack of regulations of social media constitute challenge to its usage in the 2015 presidential election?
6. What other challenges do you think is associated with social media usage for election purposes?

#### **ISSUES ON ADVANTAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND OTHER FORMS OF MEDIA**

7. Did social media create a level playing ground to aspirants than other forms of media in the 2015 presidential election?

## APPENDIX V

### HISTOGRAM OF KURTOSIS AND SKEWNESS

