



Analysis of the Role of Social Media in Promoting Credible Electoral Process during the 2023 General Elections in Nigeria

¹Jude Omaka Okoro, ²Uchenna Alefia Nwanchor, ³Anthony Nku Obi, ⁴Okon Effiong Udoyo, ⁵Anthony Bassey Igiri, ⁶Egere Nicholas, ⁷Abu Patience, ⁸Ushie Charles Utsu, ⁹David Edadi, ¹⁰Dominic Ugochukwu Onwuzuruigbo, ¹¹Okugo Chukwuemeka Uzoma

^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11} Department of Mass Communication, University of Calabar, Nigeria

¹⁰Department of Mass Communication, Amadeus University, Amizi, Abia State, Nigeria

¹<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-9064-1155>

²<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-7385-3684>

³<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-5829-0139>

⁴<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6280-7956>

⁵<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-0857-2318>

⁶<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3507-5312>

⁷<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-9827-3806>

⁸<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-1036-0323>

⁹<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-0403-629X>

¹⁰<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8018-0191>

*Corresponding Author: unwanchor@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Background: Globally, increased recognition of the relationship between the media and the government in fostering credible elections and acceptable governance processes have given rise to increasing demands for freer and more credible elections. Today, the increasing demands for transparency and accountability by stakeholders and the need to adhere to global best practices in election administration and operations necessitated this study. Whereas numerous studies exist on the relationship between the media and elections, there remains a gap on how social media particularly promotes credible electoral process during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

Objective: This study interrogates the role of social media in promoting credible electoral process in Nigeria, with specific reference to the 2023 general elections with a view to mirroring into 2027.

Method: The work adopted conceptual and analytical approaches which involved the review of extant related literature on issues of elections, social media and governance in Nigeria with a view to garner experiences during the 2023 general elections and mirror into 2027.

Results: In the findings, the research found that, social media, governance and elections are compatible, that good governance fosters credible electoral process just as the mass media are reliable partners in ensuring credible and acceptable elections, none can progress without the other. Also, it was found that the roles media played in the past elections in Nigeria were commendable and the combination of social media and conventional media in the 21st century further fostered more credible electoral process.

Conclusion: The study concludes that both social and conventional media have substantial potential to foster credible electoral processes in Nigeria through information dissemination, voter education, and accountability, its actual contribution in the 2023 general elections was undermined by structural, technological, and socio-political constraints and efforts by the ruling parties to manoeuvre opposition political parties which could be averted during the 2027 general elections.



Unique contribution: This study no doubt has provided a new deep leap into the exponential increase on the influence of social media in enthroning credible, free, fair, transparent and acceptable electoral process which had over the years eluded Nigeria. It is hoped that, the nation's electoral umpire, political parties and other key stakeholders will gain fresh insight useful enough in enshrining electoral credibility during electoral process.

Key recommendation: Review of the Nigeria's Electoral Act to include specific guidelines on social media use during elections, such as provisions for admissible digital evidence in courts, mandatory fact-checking protocols, and penalties for deliberate disinformation.

Keywords: social media, Governance, Watchdog, Elections, Mirroring, Politics.

INTRODUCTION

Credible elections remain one of the strongest pillars of democratic governance and citizen participation, particularly in emerging democracies such as Nigeria, where technologically advanced communication platforms, especially social media, increasingly play pivotal roles in promoting transparent, inclusive, and acceptable electoral processes. Siegle and Wahila (2025) and Aligwe et al. (2017) argue that democratic progress requires policymakers, electoral stakeholders, and journalists to recognize and promote genuine democratic participation. In this regard, the media are expected to perform their agenda-setting function by stimulating informed political discourse, encouraging issue-based campaigns rather than ethnic or sectional politics, and promoting peaceful, free, and credible elections, particularly as Nigeria prepares for the 2027 general elections.

The legitimacy of any democratically elected government depends largely on the transparency, fairness, inclusiveness, and credibility of the electoral process. Over the years, Nigeria's electoral history has been characterized by recurring challenges such as electoral violence, vote-buying, ballot manipulation, misinformation, weak institutional capacity, and declining public trust in electoral outcomes. According to Yunana (2025), Nigeria's electoral process has been repeatedly marred by controversies and post-election disputes, thereby undermining the credibility of the country's democratic system. These persistent challenges continue to raise concerns about the quality of governance and democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Within this context, the media, particularly social media, have emerged as powerful instruments for political communication, civic engagement, and democratic accountability. Ezike, Nwafor, and Imeazue (2016) describe the media as a watchdog, agenda-setter, and mobilizing institution capable of shaping political consciousness and informing citizens throughout the electoral process. Similarly, Omilusi (2025) and Aligwe and Nwafor (2016) argue that internet-based communication and social media participation will increasingly influence politics and electoral processes in contemporary democracies. While conventional media platforms such as radio, television, and newspapers have historically promoted voter education, campaign visibility, and public debate, social media have expanded opportunities for political participation through real-time information sharing, citizen journalism, political mobilization, and interactive engagement.



Alifah, Anita, and Nila (2025), together with Nwafor et al. (2013), observe that the mass media exert significant influence on society because of their extensive reach and ability to shape public opinion across different spheres of life. Through the exchange of ideas, information, experiences, and values, the media facilitate communication among individuals, communities, and nations. Okpoko (2010) further explains that, within the Libertarian philosophy of the press, the media are entrusted with the responsibility of preventing governments from exceeding constitutional limits by serving as an effective mechanism of public accountability. Consequently, the media remain indispensable in shaping public opinion, influencing political discourse, and strengthening democratic governance.

Beyond the media, governance institutions also play indispensable roles in fostering credible elections. Effective democratic governance requires independent electoral management bodies, adherence to the rule of law, impartial security agencies, accountable public institutions, and political actors committed to democratic principles. Udeze (2012) observes that governments in many societies often impose restrictions on the press, particularly when political leaders become authoritarian or corrupt. Such restrictions frequently place journalists in conflict with government officials as they strive to perform their constitutional responsibilities of informing the public and holding public office holders accountable.

In Nigeria, public confidence in electoral outcomes depends not only on the performance of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) but also on the effectiveness of broader governance institutions responsible for security, justice, electoral dispute resolution, and policy implementation. Consequently, electoral credibility cannot be explained solely by media performance or governance structures independently; rather, it is shaped by the interaction between effective governance and responsible media engagement.

Although numerous studies have examined elections in Nigeria, most have focused independently on electoral violence, voter behaviour, media coverage, social media influence, or the performance of electoral institutions. Comparatively little scholarly attention has been devoted to examining the combined influence of social media and governance in fostering credible electoral processes, particularly by drawing lessons from previous elections and assessing the implications of the 2023 general elections for future electoral reforms. Furthermore, many existing studies are event-specific and fail to provide broader historical perspectives necessary for evidence-based policy formulation and democratic consolidation.

The 2023 general elections generated renewed optimism through technological innovations, increased youth participation, and expanded digital political engagement. Nevertheless, they also generated widespread debates regarding institutional preparedness, electoral transparency, information disorder, public trust, and stakeholder confidence in the electoral process. These developments underscore the need for a comprehensive investigation into how social media and governance structures jointly influence electoral credibility in Nigeria.



Against this backdrop, this study examines the role of social media and governance in fostering credible electoral processes in Nigeria by drawing lessons from previous elections, with particular emphasis on the 2023 general elections, and exploring their implications for the successful conduct of the 2027 general elections.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of this study is to examine the role of social media and governance in fostering credible electoral processes in Nigeria, with particular reference to the 2023 general elections. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the performance of social media in Nigeria's electoral process during the 2023 general elections
2. assess the extent to which the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) created an enabling environment for credible electoral processes before, during, and after the 2023 general elections;
3. identify the major challenges encountered by social media practitioners and users in promoting transparency and accountability before, during, and after the 2023 general elections; and
4. examine the influence of social media coverage and reportage on public perception of, and trust in, the outcome of the 2023 general elections in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Political Evolution of the Media and Governance in Nigeria

The political history of Nigeria cannot be adequately discussed without recognizing the significant contributions of the media to democratic development. Umechukwu (2001) and Egbon (1994) argue that the evolution of Nigerian democracy, governance, and politics has been closely intertwined with the development of the press. Throughout Nigeria's political history, corruption, abuse of power, and authoritarian tendencies have often placed governments and the media in conflict. While both institutions are expected to complement one another in promoting national development, peace, and democratic governance, disagreements frequently arise whenever governments attempt to suppress press freedom or restrict public accountability.

Alifah, Anita, and Nila (2025), as well as Odoemelam and Nwafor (2012), observe that the relationship between the media, politics, politicians, and government has long been established. This relationship encouraged political parties, religious organizations, pressure groups, and influential individuals to establish newspaper organizations through which they could disseminate their political ideologies and influence public opinion. However, successive governments have often attempted to regulate or suppress these media platforms.



A notable example is the establishment of the Zik Group of Newspapers by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe to advance his nationalist and political aspirations during the colonial period. This and several other historical developments demonstrate the close relationship between the evolution of the Nigerian press and the country's democratic development. Baharuddin (2025) similarly argues that journalists depend on politicians and government officials as major sources of information, while political actors rely on the media to communicate policies, programmes, and decisions to the public.

Globally, the press is widely regarded as a vital political institution. In democratic societies, the mass media constitute an integral component of political life by serving as the principal channel through which citizens obtain political information necessary for making informed electoral decisions. Alifah, Anita, and Nila (2025) further observe that although the media generally exert broad political influence, the extent of that influence depends largely on the nature of a country's political system.

Beyond providing information about political processes, the mass media, particularly social media, influence public opinion, shape political decisions, and stimulate citizen engagement on electoral and governance issues. Gilardi et al. (2021) argue that social media platforms create both new opportunities and significant challenges for political agenda-setting. They possess the capacity to confer legitimacy and public recognition on political actors and issues, a phenomenon commonly referred to as the status conferral function of the media. Through agenda-setting, the media determine the issues that receive public attention, thereby contributing significantly to democratic consolidation and credible electoral processes.

Moh'd (2025) describes elections as a fundamental component of democratic governance, emphasizing that the conduct of free, fair, and credible elections remains one of the defining characteristics that distinguish democratic systems from authoritarian and totalitarian forms of government.

Media and Elections in Nigeria

The media are essential to democracy, and democratic elections are impossible without the media. A free and fair election is not only about the freedom to vote and the knowledge on how to vote, but also about participatory process where voters engage in public debate and have adequate information about parties, policies, candidates and the election process in order to make informed choices. Alifah, Anita and Nila (2025) note that, as the primary source of information, mass media provides voters with free access to election-related information. Furthermore, media acts as a crucial watchdog to democratic elections, safeguarding the transparency of the process.

The 2005 the yearly World Press Freedom Day international conference produced a declaration that stressed that, “independent and pluralistic media are essential for ensuring transparency, accountability and participation as fundamental elements of good governance and human-rights based development”. Furthermore, the declaration urges member states to “respect the function



of the news media as an essential factor in good governance, vital to increasing both transparency and accountability in decision-making processes and to communicating the principles of good governance to society”

In order to fulfill their roles, the media need to maintain high level of professionalism, accuracy and impartiality in their coverage. Alifah, Anita and Nila (2025) observe that, the role of the mass media is crucial in determining the success of the election by providing educational and empowering information to enable the public to make informed decisions. Laws and regulation should guarantee fundamental freedoms essential to democracy, including freedom of information and expression, as well as participation. Omilusi (2025) notes that, the takeaway from the Kenyan and Nigerian examples is that home-grown influence operations around the 2022 and 2023 elections respectively were a prelude to future developments.

A prime concern of media coverage of elections is the right of voters to full and accurate information, and their rights to participate in debates and dialogue on policy matters and with politicians. Furthermore, the Electoral Management Body has a need to communicate information to the electorate and to variety of other groups, including the political parties and candidates. Yunanna (2025) describes, the Independent National Electoral Commission as the oxygen of Nigeria democracy and plays a crucial role in ensuring free, fair and credible elections. The media themselves have a right to report freely and to scrutinize the whole electoral process to sustain the oxygen which is INEC.

Alifah, Anita and Nila (2025) note that, in addition to serving as an information provider and mediator, mass media also functions as a social decision-maker and an educational tool. This scrutiny is vital to guard against interference or corruption in the management or conduct of the electoral process which also includes inadequate presence of the needed technical or technological knowhows or outright technological glitch during the election or transmission of election results as witnessed during the 2023 general elections. In corroboration, Yunanna (2025) observes that, another serious challenge that hampered the credibility of 2023 Presidential election is that technology is not enough and the record of technological failure, the outcome of the elections showed that the deployment of technology was not enough.

Siegle and Wahila (2025) lament that, the limited credibility of some of these electoral processes is not occurring in isolation but rather is part of a concerted efforts by certain incumbents of ruling parties to further insulate themselves from the public will and popular accountability. Oni, Faluyi Asumu & Olutola (2025) maintain that, the maladministration of elections witnessed in Nigeria’s Fourth Republic cannot be divorced from the security challenges confronting the country and weak state institutions with debilitating effects on democratic consolidations. Moh’d (2025) insists that, credible elections play important roles in the furtherance and strengthening of democratic consolidation and good governance. Therefore, the greatest role of the media in the election process is to ensure adequate coverage during and after voting. In the evening, radio and television stations and online press could provide live results that were posted at polling stations for the listenership or viewership of the electorate.



The emergence of social media across the global has assisted in reporting election pre- and post-election matters in Nigeria, though the activities of the social media handlers must be checked and regulated to avoid conflicting news stories. Nwanchor, Okoro and Nnodim (2021) states that, “it is clear that the usage of social media platforms for (mis) information is evident amongst the Nigeria populace, information that is passed across is mostly assumptions cum speculations which are disseminated to spread panic to other members of the citizenry” (p.207). However, Nwanchor and Nkwuda (2021) observe that, “media of all forms and sizes have the primary roles to inform, educate, sensitize and entertain the masses and bring to the knowledge of the public what goes on in all areas of life in the right dosages and proportion” (p.40). The mass media has the primary responsibility to educate and inoculate the citizenry the spirit of effective participation in all elections to enable them elect credible candidates who will ensure quality representation at all levels.

THEORETICAL ANCHORAGE

This study is hinged on Gatekeeping and Agenda-setting theories. The two theories addressed media surveillance/coverage and therefore helped to determine media roles in specific social situations. Therefore, the theories that arose from the accepted media functions of gate keeping and agenda setting have continued to remain relevant in addressing media roles and contributions to national and international issues, politics and election management.

The Gate Keeping Theory

Kurt Lewin formed the term “gate keeping” at about 1951. He used the term to describe those individuals who control the “gates” or channels through which information or news passes from the source to the final consumers. Lewin’s point here is that no media house, no matter the size and level of operation, can transmit all the messages it receives in the course of a day’s business. Some persons have to decide which news to transmit, which to defer its transmission to another date and time, which to modify, which to delete completely or which to kill out rightly. Gate keeping as a mass media function does not stop at opening and closing the news gate, or rejecting and accepting news/information for publication or broadcast, it also involves the shaping and reshaping, display, timing, repetition etc of the news and information in the various media establishment. According to Nnoli in Attah (2006), “the media provide a consistent picture of the social world which may lead the audience to adopt the media version of social reality of fact and norm, value and expectations” (p.42).

The Journalist is first and foremost a gatekeeper and may have to perform this role at different periods in the news process. According to Folarin (2002), the factors influencing gate keeping decisions include timing, ownership pattern, management policy, perceived needs and preferences of the audience. This theory is relevant to the study because it helps the electorate to decide and learn what may have passed the gate and how they interpret election events.

Agenda-Setting Theory

The second theoretical standing which helped to analyze the performance of the mass media in reporting, managing and ensuring successful 2023 elections conflicts, is the agenda-setting



theory. According to McComb and Shaw (1974), the media emphasis on an issue influences the audience to also view the issue as important. The media attach certain weights to news stories through placement, size and frequency of appearance of such stories. Agenda setting posits that audiences learn these salient issues from the news media, thus incorporating a similar set of weights and importance into their own personal agenda.

Shaw (1983) reaffirms this view when he posits that “the media, by focusing repeated and major attention on an event or set of related events, can transfer that event into an issue” (p.132). The social media, particularly has the capacity to transfer knowledge and create events on daily transactions. Umechukwu (2001) also agree that “the mass media have an impact on agenda setting in that they have the ability to choose or emphasize certain topics thereby causing the public to perceive the issues or topics as important” (pp.148-150). This implies that the media, especially the social media pre-determine what electoral issues are considered as important at a given time, particularly in setting the agenda that could ensure credibility of the electoral process.

METHOD

This work adopted conceptual and analytical approach which involved the review of extant related literature on issues of elections, media and governance in Nigeria. This implies that secondary sources of data which included text books, academic journals and the Internet sources that relate to the subject-matter were used. This method helped to reduce direct interaction with human subjects, thereby minimised ethical concerns like consent, privacy risks and harm.

DISCUSSION

In analysing thematic areas of this research, it was discovered that the social media has the capacity to enthrone election credibility and transparency and that good governance brings about and fosters credible electoral process just as the media are reliable allies and partners in ensuring credible and acceptable elections, none can progress without the other. Also, it was found that the roles media played in the past elections in Nigeria were commendable and the combination of social media and conventional media in the 21st century will further foster a more credible electoral process in Nigeria.

It was discovered that during the 2023 general elections, the media evolved significantly with the proliferation of social media platforms such as Twitter/X, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube and more technologically conducted media approaches are expected during the 2027 general elections in Nigeria. This discovery was supported by the views of Alifah, Anita & Nila (2025) that social media plays major role in the rapid dissemination of political information through various platforms such as Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, and others.

These tools amplified political activities and boosted voter mobilization, especially among the youths and enabled citizen journalism to thrive that exposed some instances of electoral malpractices, such as irregularities at polling units. Social media campaigns played a notable role in persuading voters, shaping public opinion, and increasing political participation and awareness. For instance, social media helped disseminate party manifestos, candidate debates,



and live updates, contributing to higher engagement in urban centers. Alifah, Anita & Nila (2025) was also of the view that the social media is expected to continue having a significant impact, particularly in spreading political information that influences public opinion regarding Presidential candidates and political parties.

Nevertheless, the findings accentuate persistent and exacerbated challenges in the Nigerian electoral process as disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation proliferated, including AI-generated deepfakes, false news linking candidates to ethnic or militant groups, and coordinated bot-driven campaigns. These tactics fuelled polarization along ethnic, religious, and regional lines and sowed distrust in the electoral process which undermined public confidence in the outcomes. Traditional media faced accusations of bias, hate speech, and uneven coverage, while regulatory sanctions on broadcast stations highlighted tensions between press freedom and electoral integrity. Technological interventions like the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) and INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV) were intended to enhance transparency but encountered glitches, infrastructural deficits (poor internet, power supply), and perceived manipulations, further complicating media's role in ensuring proper check and verification.

It was also found that governance dimensions revealed weak institutional synergies with limited collaboration between media, INEC, civil society, and security agencies. While the media acted as an agenda-setter and partial watchdog, issues like vote-buying often framed as driven by poverty and desperation persisted and took the centre stage, with media coverages sometimes amplifying rather than curbing divisive narratives. Overall, the 2023 elections mirrored historical flaws which resulted to litigations, public scepticism, and questions about the legitimacy of results despite some gains in voter turnout and awareness.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while social and conventional media have substantial potential to foster credible electoral processes in Nigeria through information dissemination, voter education, and accountability, its actual contribution in the 2023 general elections was undermined by structural, technological, and socio-political constraints and efforts by the ruling parties to manoeuvre the opposition political parties which could be averted during the 2027 general elections. This should not be in a democratic setting like Nigeria still struggling to find its feet in the comity of nations. The eroded confidence needed to be rebuilt for the people to have trust in the electoral process again, especially as 2027 general elections approaches by addressing the noticeable lapses such as governance failures, including INEC's logistical shortcomings, technological failures and regulatory gaps. The media as a strong organ of democratic process must breast up to the dynamics of collaborating with other stakeholders in the electoral process to realize free, fair, and credible elections in Nigeria in the future.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Review the Electoral Act to include specific guidelines on social media use during elections, such as provisions for admissible digital evidence in courts, mandatory fact-checking protocols, and penalties for deliberate disinformation.
- ii. INEC should establish dedicated social media monitoring and tracking units in partnership with civil society organizations, media houses, and security agencies. This would ensure verification of citizen-reported irregularities, improved voter education campaigns via digital platforms, and proactive counter-disinformation strategies. Media organizations should prioritize ethical, conflict-sensitive reporting and invest in capacity-building for journalists on digital verification tools.
- iii. The Federal government, INEC, and NGOs should launch sustained public awareness campaigns on identifying misinformation, responsible social media use, and the dangers of vote-buying and polarization. This would empower citizens to engage critically with social media contents.
- iv. Media outlets should adhere to voluntary codes of conduct emphasizing balanced coverage, avoidance of inflammatory social media contents, and promotion of national unity.

Ethical Clearance

Ethical consent was sought and obtained from the participants used in this study. They were made to understand that the exercise was purely for academic purposes, and their participation was voluntary.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge, our mentor Professor Chukwuemeka Uzoma Okugo for inspiring us to write and students of the department of Mass Communication, University of Calabar for assisting us with data collection. We equally appreciate the University of Calabar Library staff for their cooperation and support.

Sources of Funding

The study was not funded.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Authors' Contributions

Uchenna Nwanchor conceived the study, Jude Okoro, strengthened it scholarly, Anthony Obi, and David Edadi proofread it, Nicholas Egere and Dominic Onwuzuruigbo did the design and collated the data, Anthony Igiri, and Okon Udoyo handled the analysis and interpretation, while Uchenna Nwanchor wrote the initial manuscript. All authors have critically reviewed and approved the final draft, and are responsible for the content and similarity index of the manuscript.



Data availability statement

The datasets on which conclusions were made for this study are available on reasonable request.

Citation

Okoro, J. O, Nwanchor, U.A, Obi, A.N, Okon, E. U, Igiri, A. B, Egere, O. N, Abu, P. E, Ushie, C. U, Edadi, D.I, Onwuzuruigbo, D.U & Okugo C. U. (2026). Analysis of the role of social media in promoting credible electoral process during the 2023 general elections in Nigeria. *International Journal of Sub-Saharan African Research*, 4(2), 706-719

REFERENCES

- Alifah, K, Anita, D & Nila, Z. (2025). The role of mass media in shaping public opinion after the 2024 election. *Journal of Communication Science*, 2 (1), 1-10.
- Aligwe, H. N., Nwafor, K.A. & Nwasum, C. J. (2017). Journalistic Concern about Uncivil Political Talks in Digital News Media during the Electioneering of the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria. *IDOSR Journal of Arts and Management* 2(2): 69-90, 2017. Available online at: <https://www.idosr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/IDOSR-JAM-22-69-90.pdf>
- Aligwe, H.N. & Nwafor, K. A. (2016). ICTS, Social Media and Participatory Politics in Africa: Mutual Friends or Man-Made Foes. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research* 24 (12): 3932-3940. [https://idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr24\(12\)16/34.pdf](https://idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr24(12)16/34.pdf)
- Attah, V. (2006). *Nigerian media and the challenges of the 21st century*. Akwa Ibom: Government Press.
- Baharuddin, R. (2023). Relasi media massa jelung pemilu 2024 Anara pemerintahdan masyarakat. *Journal peurawi: Media kajian komunikasi/slam*, 6 (2), 10-23.
- Baran, J. & Davis, K. (2003). *Mass communication theory: Foundations, Ferment and Future*, United States. Thomson and Wadsworth.
- Egbon, M. (1994). Social responsibility and the Nigerian mass media: Struggles and tactics for a balanced media coverage of crises. *Media Review*, 6- 30.
- Ekeanyanwu, T. (2005). The Nigerian press and political conflict reporting: A case study of the Ngige-Ubah political conflict in Anambra State. In Yakubu, A.M. (Ed.). *Crisis and Conflict Management in Nigeria Since 1980*, Kaduna: Nigerian Defence Academy. 221-235.
- Ezike, M. O., Nwafor, K. A. & Imeazue, G. A. (2016). Facebook Political Campaign and Its Effects on the 2015 Governorship Election in Ebonyi State, *International Journal of Communication*, 19(1), 17-27.



Folarin, B. (2004). Communication and conflict management: A clearing of decks in Folarin, B. (Ed.) *Topical issues in communication arts and sciences* (11), 181- 198.

Folarin, B. (2002). *Theories of mass communication: An introductory text*, Abeokuta: Link Publications.

Gilardi, F, Gessler, T, Kubil, M & Muller S. (2021). Social media and political agenda setting. *Political Communication*, 39 (1), 39-60.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2021.1910390>

Kraus, T & Davies, D. (1996). *The Effects of mass communication on political behaviour*, Pennsylvania: University Press.

Moh'd, A. (2025). Credible elections and consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. *International Journal of Advanced Academic Research*, 11 (8), 51-64.

McCombs, E. & Mauro, B. (1977). Predicting newspaper readership from content characteristics. *Journalism Quarterly* 54(1), 21-29.

McCombs & Shaw, (1974). The agenda setting function of the press. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36, 32-41.

Mytton, G. (1983). *Mass communication in Africa*, London: Edward Arnold Publishers.

Nwafor, K. A., Odoemelam, Orji-Egwu, Nwankwo & Nweze (2013). Social Media and Political Participation in Africa: Issue, Challenges and Prospects. In Des Wilson (Ed.), *Communication and the New Media in Nigeria; Social Engagements, Political Development and Public Discourse*. Pp. 64-84.

Nwanchor, U, Okoro, C & Nnodim, E. (2021). Influence of social media messages on covid-19 pandemic in south east Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanitatis Theoreticus*, 5 (2), 198-207.

Nwanchor, U & Nkwuda, J. (2021). Strategic communication and responsive governance in curbing herdsman-farmers crisis in Nigeria. *EBSU Journal of Mass Communication*, 7 (1), 15-32

Nwuneli, O. (1985). Africa and New World Information Order in Nwuneli, O. (Ed.) *Mass Communication in Nigeria*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.

Odoemelam, C. C. & Nwafor, K. A. (2012). Role of Social Media in Political Conflicts and Political Communication in Africa. In Des Wilson (Ed). *The Media, Terrorism & Political Communication in Nigeria (ACCE)*. Pp. 175-186.



- Okpoko, J. (2010). *Understanding development communication*, Zaria: Ahmed Bello University Press.
- Omilusi, M. (2025). Fake news, election-related disinformation laws, and citizen's rights in African political ecology. *Journal of African Elections*, 24 (1), 1-25, doi: 10.20940/JAE/2025/v.24i/a/
- Omu, A. (1978). *Press and politics in Nigeria: 1880-1937*, London: Longman Publishers.
- Oni, E, Faluyi, O, Asumu, L & Olutola, A. (2025). Security challenges and election administration in Nigeria's fourth republic. *Font. Polit. Sci.*7: 1458303.doi: 10.3389/fpos.2025.1458303
- Shaw, L & McCombs, M. (1977). *The emergence of American political issues: The agenda setting function of the press*, St. Paul's: West Publishing.
- Siegle, J & Wahila, H. (2025). Africa's 2025 elections: A test of credibility to uphold democratic norms. *Africa Centre for Strategic Studies*. <https://africacentre.org>.
- Udeze, S. (2012). *Media law and ethics*, Enugu: Rhyce Kerex.
- Udeze,S. (2002). *After the whirlwind: A discourse on international communication*, Enugu: Echrisi
- Umechukwu, P. (2001). *Mass media and Nigerian society: Development issues and problems*, Enugu: Thompson Printing and Publishing.
- Rodman, G. (2006). *Mass Media in a Changing World*, New York: McGraw Hill
- Yunanna, U. (2025). Credible elections in Nigeria: A study of the independent national electoral commission's performance. *Journal of Political Science and Leadership Research*, 11 (11), 1-7.